

OUT ON THE RANGE
Riding the Drag

*Quincy Dufurrena out on the desert.
Words & photo © Amy Dufurrena.*





I rode everyone's horse that day," Quincy (12) smiles as she recalls that long ride. It was day two of trailing the "Arritola" bunch of cows down from Mahogany Mountain to the Lodge Ranch northwest of Jordan Valley, Ore., for processing. The day started just the same as the previous one; before daylight, catching and saddling horses under the bright lights of the barn.

The cattle were spread out enough that day as we gathered, that we all ended up leaving the field through different gates, pointing the cows towards the Lodge. By the time Quincy and I topped the rim on the flat, we could see Zack and Buster's cows strung out on the trail as far as the eye can see. Cow Lakes, off in the distance, looked close but we knew it would take hours for us to get there. Our destination was the meadow, just out of sight at the edge of the lake.

The excitement of the day wore off as the sun was getting hotter and the snacks and water in the saddle bags dwindled. Quincy and I were in the drag, fighting cows that preferred to spend their time just grazing along or fighting the dogs and a few calves that just won't mother up.

It was dusty. And it was hot.

While I was off leading my colt along, Quincy decided to beat the monotony of the day and steal a chance to ride her. She handed me the reins to her little horse and stepped up on mine. With stirrups a little long, they rode off together to push a few more wanderers back in line.

Another hour or so had passed. "Dad's horse seemed kinda tired," she says with a big grin. "He rode up alongside while I was off leading Milkshake. He hopped from his colt to mine. I thought that was pretty lucky for me because I wanted to try out his colt too...and his saddle."

With stirrups even a little longer, she rode off again, this time with all her dad's dogs, too. ■