From: Karen Abbattista
To: karen@richardswf.com;
Subject: News from Alpha Dressage Association
Date: Thursday, October 29, 2009 4:33:03 PM

Alpha Dressage Association

Alpha Dressage Association Newsletter

November, 2009

Greetings!

The Prez Sez

Hi Everyone,

Well, so much is happening, let me see if I can keep it all straight.

First, many thanks to Anna for allowing our last meeting to be at her place of business. It was a very informative and interesting meeting, a person's body is so complex - thanks to Mariel for allowing herself to be our model.

Our Award's banquet was a blast, even though it was held at my house. The food was great, thanks to all who brought something. Many, many thanks to all of our Officers who are returning to their jobs next year.

Robin, your little gifty is in the mail!

The Rider Awards will be listed in this letter. Congrats to all that have won and hope to see you all next year. Remember, our November show results will go to next year.

That's it for now. Take care -

Betty

Crosstrain Your Horse

ADA is having a jumping clinic. This is not to teach stadium jumping, it is just to make you and your dressage horse comfortable popping over small obstacles and to do a little cross training for your horse.

If you are interested, it will be held at Open Gaits Farm, South Moon Drive, Venice, on Saturday, October 31st. It will be taught by Alejandro Sanchez. He will go over theory, gymnastics, warm up, jumping from the canter. The cost is $45 for a one hour group lesson of no more than 4 people. Times are 10:30 and 11:30 am. AUditing is free.

A native of Caracas, Venezuela, Alejandro has trained all over the world, was in charge of the Venezuelan National Team, and has participated in four World Cups.

If you are interested in riding, contact Martha at koeh2337@comcast.net

November Schooling Show

Show date: Sunday, Nov. 8, 2009
Closing date: Tuesday, Nov. 3, 2009
Location: Cheval Centre
9927 Fruitville Rd
Judge: Pamela Aide FL (L)
Manager & Secretary: Martha Koehnlein (941) 485-2337

Classes

1. USDF Intro Level Test A
2. USDF Intro Level Test B
3. USEF Training Level Test 1
4. USEF Training Level Test 2
5. USEF Training Level Test 3
6. USEF Training Level Test 4
7. USEF First Level Test 1
8. USEF First Level Test 2
9. USEF First Level Test 3
10. USEF First Level Test 4
11. USEF Second Level Test 1
12. USEF Second Level Test 2
13. USEF Second Level Test 3
14. USEF Second Level Test 4
15. USEF Third Level and up (indicate test(s) you will be riding)
16. USDF Musical Freestyle (indicate test(s) you will be riding)

Class fees are $30 each for ADA member and $35 for non members. Make checks payable to ADA and mail to Martha Koehnlein, 490 Percheron Circle, Nokomis, FL 34275
Limited stabling available for an additional fee.
Entry forms are available online at www.alphadressage.org

ADA Year End Awards

Intro Champion: Mariel Wrench 61.85%
Training Champion: Diana Clark 62.70%
Training Reserve: Robin Sego 61.90%
1st Level Champion: Karen Abbattista 61.53%
1st Level Reserve: Diana Clark 60.13%
4th Level Champion: Betty Brown 60.16%
Sportsperson of the Year: Martha Koehnlein

Of Note

Jennifer Aurilio Benoit, the judge at our last schooling show in September, won the 2009 Region 3 GAIG/ USDF Amateur Prix St. Georges Championship, a very large class, in Wellington.

USDF Facts & Statistics

USDF Membership
304 Business Memberships
20,177 Participating Memberships
15,214 Group Member Organization Memberships
129 Affiliated Group Member Organizations
37 Intercollegiate/Interscholastic Member Organizations
850 Recognized Competitions

USDF Members
USDF members are characterized by loyalty to dressage and their horses. The federation currently has more than 35,000 members:
90% are adults
96% are female
66% are over the age of 41 years of age
96% own at least one horse
87% compete at least one horse
37% own at least five acres of land
70% have an income of $75,000 and above

Competitive Dressage Horses
High insured values
Large investment and long-term relationship between horse and rider
Average competitive life is ten years
Peak performance age average is twelve years
Average age at which a horse is USDF lifetime registered is 7.5 years
13,666 new horses have been registered since 2005
92% increase in the horses competing at USDF recognized shows

Member News

Kudos to Renee Rains and Samir Sandro for an impressive second place finish, earning Reserve Champion at Fourth Level at the Region III Championships in Wellington.

Welcome to new member Kari Wilbanks from North Port.

Horses & Holly

A holiday celebration hosted by Clerkmark Equestrian & Equity Show Jumping to benefit the Boys and Girls Clubs of Sarasota County Adopt a Family for the holidays.

Date: December 11th from 6:30 pm to 10:30 pm
Location: Clermark Equestrian, 5982 225th Street East, Bradenton

Performances by Clermark Equestian Junior Riders, Grand Prix rider Brock Clermont and World Cup rider Keean White. Dressage performance from Jean Luc Cornille of the French Olympic Team.

Silent raffle of items donated by local businesses.

Cocktails, wine and hor d'oeuvres catered by Siesta Key Catering, with music provided by the Romanza Strings.

Tickets $45. Please RSVP to Tiffany at tiffany@equityshowjumping.com or call 941-322-9196.

Black tie.

Ask the Judge....

"How are we supposed to ride that stupid loop in Training Test 4?"

The one word answer is WELL. You're supposed to ride it well. The question is HOW. What do we see as judges that usually goes wrong?

The exercise is mainly about suppleness and bending and showing that the bend can be changed smoothly and without resistance. Riders very often dig themselves into a hole right from the start by riding the figure itself incorrectly and giving themselves no opportunity to show those bend changes. Typically what we see is a figure that looks a lot like the walk pattern in Training Test 2: The rider goes from the corner letter on a diagonal, "changes her mind" at X, and goes back to the corner letter on the same side on another straight line.
What we want to see is a figure of continuous curves--no straight lines at all. Think of a "bell curve." After a normal corner between C and M, peel your horse gradually off the track aiming not at X but almost towards E. You should cross the quarter-line right opposite R, and that's the point where the bend should change. Then you ride a "fat dome" whose point furthest from the track is at X. The second half of the dome as you return to the rail, should match the first half. Don't aim back at F; think of a sharper curve almost as though you are going to P. Then DO change your mind and the bend as you cross the quarter-line in line with P, and ooze gracefully back onto the track approaching F as gradually as you see the space shuttle touch down at Kennedy.

When the movement was new, a diagram on the front of the test sheet explained how it should look. I wish the Test Writers would restore that picture. It would make it a lot simpler for the riders, and I wouldn't need to order a rubber stamp which explains to the people I judge what they keep doing wrong!

Bill Woods, R judge, and author of Dressage Unscrambled

To preview Bill's new book, and for general entertainment, visit

www.woodsdressage.com

Jane Savoie's Training Tips - What Does It Look and Feel Like When My Horse Is On The Bit?

So many people ask me what it looks and feels like when a horse is on the bit. So here are some tips for you:

When a horse is on the bit, here's what he'll look like:
His entire outline from back to front looks round.

His hind legs step actively underneath his body, his back is up and swinging, his neck is long and low enough to be in line with the "power train" of his hindquarters, his poll is the highest point, and his nose is about 5 degrees in front of the vertical

From the saddle his neck is widest at the base (just in front of the withers) and becomes progressively narrower as you get closer to his ears.

From the side, his neck looks longish and relatively low rather than up in the air and short.
He's "pumped" up or "blooming" at the base of his neck. There's no dip just in front of his withers.

When a horse is on the bit, here's what he'll feel like:

He's one unit rather than a jumble of "disconnected parts".

He's more comfortable to sit on because his back is relaxed.

In trot and canter, he feels like a beach ball bouncing along.

His back (behind the saddle) is up and swinging rather than dropped and tense.

His energy is self-perpetuating. The power comes from behind, over his back, through his neck, and gets recycled back to his hind legs. But if your horse, let's say, is crooked and pops his shoulder out, the energy is going to go diagonally across his body. Then, you'll have to use your driving aids again to recreate the energy.

You feel like anything is possible within the next step. For example, he can immediately go from trot to canter. Or he can immediately go from working canter into a canter lengthening. Or he can promptly do a canter depart.

If you're not sure if "anything is possible" within the next step, ask for one of those transitions. If it's easy to do, then you know that your horse is on the bit.

Visit JaneSavoie.com to sign up for her newsletter and to shop for her many quality instructional videos.

Top Dressage Training Tips from Kyra Kyrklund...

Kyra Kyrklund attended a symposium held at the Kentucky Horse Park. Here are some training and riding tips that the five time Olympian passed on to the attendees.

1. A good rider lives off a small number of good steps and builds on them.

2. Good riders forget about the bad things. Inexperienced riders think mostly about the bad things. There are many roads to the top of the mountain, but the view is always the same from the top.

3. In transitions, horses find their balance by themselves.

4. You must reward immediately. A horse has a memory shorter than a dogs, about three seconds.

5. In a proper pirouette, there is no suspension and it is bound to be four beat.

6. Even a foal can do one-tempi changes.

7. I have had to work to get flying changes. Because I didn't have a schoolmaster when I was learning. I count the steps: 1, 2, 3. Here is what I do:

- I check that my horse is listening to me by doing a big half halt.
- If he is not listening I don't ask for the change until he is sharper.
- I take my new outside leg back.
- I ask for the change.

8. A horse only works for 45 minutes. He can carry us for that 45 minutes. Never work a horse until he is sour... especially young horses in the arena.
9. Don't bother with shoulder-in if you can't influence the length of the horse's steps. There is no hope in hell until you can. The same goes for other movements

10. When you train at home, do one thing at a time. Pirouette one day and half pass another, so you have time to do each thing with quality. You might choose canter work on one day and trot work on another.

11. Use the Fillis method of holding the reins of a double bridle. You take the bridoon as if you were driving. It will make the muscles of the lower arm soft and it is easier to use each bit separately.

12. Horse-and rider-combinations are a bit like a marriage. You have to find the horse you can work with. I like energetic, hot horses for myself

13. In training you have to be very honest. You cannot lie to your horse or your trainer or the dressage judge.

14. If you only do something 1 out of 10 times at home, then you have to be lucky at the show. We know we're not always lucky. There are two ways of riding. At home you have to be very aware of your problems but you can't be too picky at the show.

15. If I don't have control in walk. I won't get it in trot or canter either.

16. At shows, we see many poor pirouettes in Fourth Level and Prix St. Georges. The collection in pirouette must be as great as it is in piaffe. For that reason, I teach the piaffe first, even though the pirouette appears much earlier in the tests.

17. Many horses and riders get stuck at Prix St. Georges. You can still carry a horse around in Prix St. Georges, but when you start Intermediaire II and Grand Prix, the horse must carry himself.

18. Every time the rider uses a hand or a leg aid, the horse must respond. Even a bad response is better than no response at all.

19. Keep the good things good and don't nag about the bad things but don't ignore them either.

20. Work on the more difficult things at a basic level. Let the horse feel that he has succeeded.

21. With some horses, I am as happy with a score of 6 as I would be for a 10 on another horse. Continue with a strong 6 until the judges start to give a small 7 for it, instead of trying to overpower the horse to improve the movement and end up getting a 4. If you go from a strong 6 to a weak 7 in every movement you have gone from a 60 percent score to a 70 percent.

22. When you have had a good ride, be sure to find time to write down some notes about how it felt. Often after you have won, everyone wants to have a champagne and there's no time to remember how it felt. When you do poorly, no one wants to come talk to you and there's plenty of time to reflect upon how it felt.

23. If you always do what you always did, you'll always get what you always got. If you are not happy with what you are getting, you have to change what you are doing.

Upcoming Events

November 8th - ADA Schooling Show at Cheval Centre.

November 10th - ADA Meeting, 7 pm.
Hosted by Lydia Kolbas, 7339 Greystone Street - Lakewood Ranch, FL 34202 Phone no. is: 941-907-3948.

"Easiest way is to come off I-75 (Exit 213) and take University Parkway east about 3 stop lights to LAKEWOOD RANCH BLVD.
Turn north (left) and drive approximately 3 miles to the entrance that says The Country Club (on your right). It is a gated entrance WITH A REAL
GUARD there. Just tell him you're going to my house and he lets you in.

Once past the guard gate, my street is the THIRD street on your LEFT -- North -- turn and drive about 1/2 mile in to my address 7339...on the
golf course on the right. You can park in the cul-de-sac just next to my house or even on the empty lot (Lot 28) next to mine. I'll have lights on for
everyone as it may be dark by then!"

November 25-28th - AHAF Annual Thanksgiving Show, Tampa Fairgrounds

December 11th - Horses and Holly, Clermark Equestrian

January TBA - Postural Alignment Clinic

February 6 - 7th - American Dressage Concours, Fox Lea Farm, Venice

February 27-28th - Florida Dressage Concours, Fox Lea Farm, Venice

Classifieds

New this month:

Balance Dressage Saddle, 10 years old, excellent condition, 18" seatm black, wool flocked, 8X width, includes Balance pads and 2 rope girths. Does not include stirrups or leathers. $1800. Call Martha at 941-320-7673.

Cherokee 2 hourse trailer, straight load, bumper pull. Drop down ramp. Swing divider, manger divider. No tack room. $2500. Call Glen at 941-320-7640.

Tack

Custom western saddle for sale. It was made by Frecker Saddlery and is only 8 months old. It's a Modified Assoc. with a 15.5 seat a 90 deg tree with the bars spread to 93 deg. It has Monel stirrups and is in new condition. It also had the matching martingale breast collar. It has been kept in an air conditioned tack room ever since I got it. Asking price is $4200. For more information, pictures, or to demo, I can be reached at 904--534-3090 Stephanie

Horses

Free to good home! Hawk's Flight Farm must find homes for some of their yearling geldings. This horses will be given to approved homes. These are high quality prize Arabians. For more information, contact Karin McMurtrie at 941-685-3007 or email hawksflightfarm@aolc.om

Trailers

Four horse Trail-et 1999 gooseneck. Full matts, drop windows, everything you could want in a trailer. Contact Deborah at debmagicmare@aol.com or 941-224-3220

Misc

Want to keep riding your horse is ready for winter? Show and body clipping available -
A CUT ABOVE - Jeanne Cathrae 941-350-2709

Sittin' Pretty Horses: professional horse and farm siiting; excellent vet and client references. Amie Di Piazza 941-356-3713

Order in Time for the Holidays! Custom Equine Portraits on Canvas Purses, Clip Boards, Jean Jackets, etc. Provide a quality photo (s) and you can give a portrait of an equine friend painted on canvas, shirts, jackets, purses, clipboards, etc...you decide!
Professional artist, professional results, one of a kind gift and affordable! Prices start at $40.00 for a canvas tote!
Contact Deborah Herbert 941-302-7631

To post a classified listing in the newsletter or on the website, email Karen at karen@richardsw.com
Ads will run for 3 months, unless other arrangements are made.

Sincerely,

Alpha Dressage Association

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