

Dressage

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A sad month

Our sincere condolences go to Karen Keller who lost her talented and successful, gelding Voigtskirch El Dorado, fondly known as 'Bokkie'. Shortly after losing Bokkie, Karen was lucky to escape unscathed when an inconsiderate driver jumped a red traffic light and wiped out the entire front of her bakkie.

Our thoughts are also with Sue Cullen on the tragic loss of her stunning stallion Vainqueur. A big thank you, Sue, for the beautiful trophy you handed out at the Musical Freestyle Festival in Vainqueur's honour.

Inter-provincial adult dressage team

The Gauteng adult dressage team has been finalised! The selections were made following the Eaton Farm warm-up for GHS Championships and these horse and rider combinations will be making their way down to Port Elizabeth for the SA Dressage Championships:

Andrea Harrison on Colleen Frew's Mandala, with Cara Frew's Dancing Queen reserve, Arina Petit on STV Highness, Candice Hobday on Filina, Elena Bosman on Videnco and Julie Mew on Loth Lorian.

Good luck and we hope you have a very successful show!

Dressage committee changes

Due to time constraints, Andre La Conte sadly left our committee in June (we'll miss you, Andre!). He has, however, found us a competent replacement in Sarah Moore who joined the committee as a co-opted member along with Anastasia Lupini, who many know as dedicated and efficient show director. Welcome!

SANEF 2010 Dressage rule books

It is awaiting confirmation, but it appears that SANEF will not be printing new rule books for sale. Please download and print your copy of the rule book from the SANEF website: www.horsesport.org.za.

Just a reminder that while most SANEF tests now dated/renamed 2010 remain unchanged, some have had minor amendments, such as Junior/Adult Prelim 3 and 4. With effect from 13 July, in the Junior/Adult Advanced Freestyle test, movements 15 and 16 are changed from 'Canter pirouette right' and 'Canter pirouette left' to 'half pirouette in canter right' and 'half pirouette in canter left' respectively. A new Intermediate I Freestyle test has also been added.

Grow dressage appeal

Please could as many riders as possible let us know whether you would like 'Grow dressage' days to continue or not. If so – *what* days are most suitable and in which format, for example, practice riding only and/or practice riding tests in front of a judge, like the format used at the last event at KEP. 'Grow dressage' organiser, Andrea Lotis, has received mixed reactions. While riders keep asking her when the next 'Grow dressage' day is, when a day is offered very few riders book and come – too few to make it worthwhile. Without direct feedback from **all** riders, 'Grow dressage' days will have to be discontinued. Please contact Andrea on andrealotis@mail2go.co.za or 082-459-4245.

July 2010 Musical Freestyle Festival

Despite the FIFA World Cup and thus entries being a little lower this year than last, the Musical Freestyle Festival held on 3/4 July proved a great success.

The standard of the freestyles improve year on year and it was great to see nine entries in the Adult Newcomer class. There may have been more but it was omitted in the entry form that this class also was open to Juniors.

Riders, judges and spectators were enthralled by Candice Hobday's display on Filina in the Grand Prix Freestyle for which she received 71.38%. It was very emotional, with spectators (and Candice) shedding tears of joy!

There was only one Quadrille team, who entertained the spectators with some really vibey country and western. It was decided before the competition that the Pas de Deux and Quadrille should become part of a series with a grand finale scheduled at the Riverleigh Charity Fancy Dress Freestyle on 24 October.

The finales were the Bett's Townsend Pas de Deux and Quadrille. Unfortunately one of the Pas de Deux teams had to scratch which left us with one Novice and one EM/M team.

Bett's Townsend is still the primary sponsor, but we received R500 from GHS, R250 from Riverleigh Stud, R1,000 from Kellow Park Stud and R500 from Penny Place to put into the pot for the Quadrilles: a guaranteed R2,250!

Kellow Park Stud also injected R1,000 into the Pas de Deux. Thank you to our wonderful sponsors. We're challenging other yards and riding schools to see what you can match as sponsors!

As always, sincere thanks to the GHS ground staff and team, in particular Kate Launder for making this show a wonderful success and taking such good care of all participants. We must mention also that despite the icy winds, the luncheon was awesome, with Di Watson and her team putting out their usual splendid spread. Gas heaters from GHS helped keep out the cold for those who attended the lunch.

The results

Pony Rider Elementary: Bobaas Sjarmant: Chiara Myburgh

Pony Rider E/Medium: Bukkenburg Estie: Theodora Michelatos

Junior Novice: Heidjer Oda: Chanelle Bothma

Junior Elementary: Gombera Arizona: Anthea Michelatos

Junior E/Medium: Brandenburg La Scalia: Ross Hughes

Junior Advanced: Octavius A: Ingrid Malan (WP)

Adult Novice Newcomer: Callaho Lamiro: Cathryn Houghton

Adult Novice: Phoenix Linton: Andrea Harrison

Adult Elementary: Royal Fleur: Mareli Smalberger

Adult E/Medium: Koos Bo: Claire Bailes

Adult Medium: Slimlite Sam: Nicole Smith

Adult Intermediate I: My Rose: Nicole Smith

Adult Advanced: Splinter: Dianne Smith

Adult Grand Prix: Filina: Candice Hobday

Pas-de-Deux: Battle Call: Chantel Plant and Unperturbed: Sarah Filby

Quadrille: Team Riverleigh: Cinnamon Song: Wilardi Van Zyl, Highbourne Roxy Rouge: Ruth-Anne Holiday, Bronwydd

Bannut Ivy: Jana-Kay Holiday, Magic: Kirsty Reid.



'Quadrille':

Bett's Townsend Quadrille sponsor, Shiree Darley, with the proud winning Riverleigh team comprising Highborne Roxy Rouge and Ruth-Anne Holiday, Magic and Kirsty Reid, Cinnamon Song and Wilardi van Zyl and Bronwydd Bannut Ivy with Jana-Kay Holiday.



"Grand Prix":
Grand Prix winners Candice Hobday and Filina.

FEI hits YouTube!

The FEI has launched an official video channel on YouTube: www.youtube.com/feichannel. This new channel offers viewing a multi-discipline range of educational videos, interviews and coverage from FEI competitions. Worth checking out!

Unaffiliated venue appeal

Checking show schedules is usually time-consuming but even more so if venues keep using an old schedule as template. PLEASE always use the GHS approved schedule as the template for each show. Otherwise we have to correct the same errors repeatedly. Since May, for example, we have had to correct the schedules at least once in June/July/August of venues holding monthly shows.

From the box with Liz Day



Liz Day in her smart hat, visiting Buckingham Palace on the occasion of her mother receiving the MBE from the Queen.

In-between her travels around the world as an international panel judge Arena was privileged to get a profile on one of South Africa's leading judges, Elizabeth 'Liz' Day. Liz's list of qualifications include FEI 3* International Dressage Judge, FEI 4* International Para Dressage Judge, FEI International Candidate Eventing Judge and an IGEQ Level 3 Dressage Coach.

Q: When did your interest in horses first start?

A: When I was very small I started on Welsh ponies and progressed to thoroughbreds and warmbloods by riding and working for the Royal Engineers as a civilian attached to Brompton Barracks in South East Kent. My duties included keeping the hunters fit and teaching young officers, officers' wives and children how to ride. In summer we were allowed to show jump the hunters if they had any talent for it.

Q: Tell us about some special horses you have owned and ridden.

A: Special horses would have to include Turkish Delight, a Basuto pony crossed with a thoroughbred – barely 15hh in his stocking feet – and with a LOT of attitude. He and I learned dressage together. I read the books and he worked out what I wanted. His highlight was winning the Medium Championship at KZN Champs (too many years ago!). He then went on to be a school master for several children and juniors before retiring aged 21. He died only last year at the ripe old age of 27, having enjoyed six years of retirement with Stewart Bowley on a farm near Port Shepstone.

Another VERY special boy was my black Oldenberg stallion FDRef's Asterix, a gentle, sweet horse with lovely fluid paces. He and I worked from backing through to Advanced, our ultimate glory being third in the SANEF Competition at Advanced

level. Together, we learned tempi changes, piaffe, canter pirouettes and passage (if the water was deep enough). Since my illness now precludes me from riding, he now partners Sue Horne at Advanced level.

Q: When, how and why did you get into judging?

A: Judging started well over 25 years ago in an attempt to find out why my marks in competition were so low. By learning to become a judge I discovered the importance of correct basic training and thus was able to improve my own performances. The passion grew and grew until I trod the path to FEI qualification which has helped me to overcome the disappointment of being unable to ride any more. Judging is always an intellectual challenge and very character building. One learns that mistakes are going to happen but must learn from them and move on, hopefully a better judge for the experience.

Q: You have travelled all over the world with your judging, please tell us more about some of the events you have judged?

A: I have been extremely fortunate in receiving invitations from various countries to judge, not only dressage but para dressage and eventing. Most of the appointments are in England, but I have also judged in France, Australia, New Zealand, Scotland, Kenya, Namibia and shadow-judged at the European Para Dressage Championships in Norway.

This year, I was particularly honoured to be able to accept an invitation to judge Zone 3 of the World Dressage Challenge, with Spanish Judge Mariano Santos. It proved very hard work, but such fun. The countries we covered were the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Honduras, Venezuela and Ecuador. It was fascinating to see the different cultures and meet so many hospitable people. Teaching was a bit of a challenge as everyone spoke Spanish, with very few English-speaking riders, but we managed with interpreters and hopefully all enjoyed the experience.

Q: What in particular do you look for when judging?

A: Above all, harmony! Obviously the scale of training has to be adhered to but I personally love to see horse and rider in partnership rather than a master and servant situation. My absolute hero is Edward Gal and his magnificent stallion Moorlands Totilas who together demonstrate exactly what I look for as a judge.

Q: What changes are you seeing in dressage and the dressage fraternity these days?

A: On the up side it is gratifying to see riders attempting to get beyond the Small Tour level and having a bash at Big Tour classes. This is the only way we can progress in SA because we have been in this rut for too many years.

On the down side, it pains me personally to see a rider trying to force a horse to perform Big Tour movements when it hasn't been progressively worked towards them. Always – whether the level is Preliminary or Grand Prix, the scale of training maps out the path towards improvement. There are simply no short cuts!

Q: What is your advice to the dressage rider?

A: Firstly, enjoy your horse! Secondly, train him in such a way that he can understand what you are asking – small steps on the learning curve rather than great leaps and bounds which can be very tempting when you have a talented horse. Remember that the more advanced the movement the more mental and physical strength the horse requires.

Q: If you had \$1-million to spend on any horse globally, who would you buy and why?

A: If he could be bought for any amount of money, which I doubt, Moorlands Totilas – but only if Edward agreed to continue to ride him.

Q: Please share one or two funny anecdotes you have experienced either competing or judging.....

A: When competing Turkish Delight in one of his earlier Novice tests we entered the arena and halted at X. As I took the reins in one hand to salute he spun round 180 degrees and I had to salute the judge over my shoulder. Luckily all saw the funny side and I learnt HUMILITY.

While judging I made the comment that a lengthened trot in a novice test was "hurried". When I checked the paper, my secretary had written "horrid". Honesty above and beyond the call of duty! Thank goodness I saw it before it went out to some poor rider.

On the international front

In June, Shiree Darley took on what she calls her biggest personal riding challenge to date – competing at PSG Level in the UK on Pamina. See the SANEF newsletter for an update on how she and Philippa Johnson – who has had her own share of challenges – are doing in their overseas endeavours.