

Centre Line



KZN DRESSAGE NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2009

Chairman: Sue Horne

Kzn Dressage Website – www.kzndressage.co.za

Upcoming Events – Clinic at DSC on 18 April 2009 (9am – 3 pm)

The KZN Dressage committee together with Bev Pendock, will be holding an open training seminar for all ages, disciplines, trainers, riders, friends and parents who are interested. This clinic is aimed at improving knowledge and techniques essentially needed in flatwork. We encourage riders from the disciplines of eventing, show-jumping and equitation to join us. Bring your own chair and refreshments. The Cost is R50 per person, funds raised will go towards upgrades of the dressage venue at DSC.

The above seminar will be followed by a judging seminar (open to all) conducted by an FEI Candidate Judge, Sharon Rode, visiting from Germany. This seminar is also open to all and will start at approximately 12:30. Sharon will focus on judging aspects and this is included in the cost of the above.

Training show at DSC on 25 April 2009, Entries close 14 April 2009. Schedule available on the KZN Dressage website.

WE'VE SPOTTED YOU

These are new rider and horse combinations to the discipline, welcome and we wish you success and welcome back to those combinations that we haven't see for some time.

TRACY KING	and JABULANI'S BY FAITH & JABULANI'S THE ROCK
GWEN TOMPSON	and SON OF RESPECT
JULIA VAN NIEKERK	and ZANDOR
CHRIS MUDGWAY	and DAVENPORT POSIDEN D
SUE HORNE	and TA-DU
JESSICA HODGKINSON	and MY BOLERO
PASCAL DESFONTAINE	and BERG CHARMER
CHRIS HAMMOND	riding L Webber's EFFEREVESENT

HITS, TIPS AND COMMENTS FROM OUR JUDGES

This month I asked one of our Judges, Anita Adendorff, to write an article addressing the questions received regarding 'how you know when your horse is ready to move up to the next level'. When deciding whether or not your horse is ready for his first Prelim Dressage Test, you will need to ask yourself a few fundamental questions.

Dressage is all about training and following a basic system to gymnasticise your horse so that he can perform certain exercises to the best of his ability just as any athlete would. At Prelim and lower Novice level, these exercises are fairly simple, with large circles and progressive transitions from one pace to another. Having said this, they are still designed to test whether the rider is training the horse along the correct lines. It is not enough to be able to get just from A to B without jumping out of the arena!! It is the way in which one does it that counts.....

The first three levels of the German "Scale of Training" refer to Relaxation / Suppleness.... Rhythm.... And Connection, and form the foundation on which to build true Impulsion, Straightness and ultimate Collection. Without these prerequisites there can be no progress. So before rushing to your first show, you need to be confident that you can ride your horse actively forward in a relaxed and consistent rhythm in all three paces. That he accepts the contact to the bit correctly, whilst working over his back in a "rounded" frame, and can perform basic transitions in a balanced way, without resistance. At the lower levels one certainly doesn't expect perfection, especially in a show environment, where there are many distractions, but despite maybe the odd spook or mistake, it is the overall way of going that is important and it is this, upon which you will be judged.

As one moves from Prelim level to Novice, or indeed from Novice to Elementary or above, the requirements of the training scale remain the same. It is the movements themselves which become more demanding as well as the quality and precision of their execution. The entry/ halt, or circle, which earned you a "7" in a Novice test, may well only warrant a "6" at Elementary level, because now the Judges are looking for that bit more; More straightness, more self-carriage, impulsion and balance etc. Because of this, many riders are upset and confused when they move up a grade and their marks suddenly drop. Often this is a transitional phase where the horse and rider just need to become more established and confident at the new level.... But sometimes it can be indicative of a far more serious problem! Perhaps there is a "weakness" in some aspect of the training thus far. Maybe the contact and carriage is not good enough, with the horse often lacking 'throughness', and either hollowing, coming behind the vertical or leaning on the riders hands. Maybe the horse lacks suppleness, is being overfaced and is becoming really tense. Maybe the Rhythm is inconsistent. Any of these things will impact on the quality of the performance and on the marks.

With Show schedules usually allowing cross entries between grades, a rider can at least test the waters by riding say a higher Novice and a lower Elementary Test, without officially upgrading. This allows one to assess ones readiness for the next level. Generally speaking, from my own experience, I still tend to advise riders to wait until they are getting consistently in the mid 60% or above before going up. This implies that the performance is still only somewhere between Satisfactory and Fairly Good! Anything less than that.... And you still need to do more homework!!

(By Anita Adendorff)

TECHNICAL QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

The response to this section has been overwhelming. We have not forgotten you and we will respond to your questions, if we haven't already done so. We are only able to publish one, at the most two, questions a month due to space constraints.

Question: "I am losing marks in my test because the judges comment that my horse has an 'unsteady head'. Why is my horse's head so unsteady and how do I fix the problem?"

Answer "Unsteady head carriage is generally caused by the rider failing to keep a consistent or firm contact. A firm contact can only be taken and maintained as the result of energy being created by the rider's legs to make the horse go forward into the bridle. This energy is then controlled by the use of the reins. If the rider's contact is variable, the horse's mouth will receive intermittent messages, instead of a steady one. This will cause him to move his head, either fairly passively up and down, or possibly more violently as he gets fed up with the discomfort in his mouth. *(taken from Leonie M Marshall's book, Questions on Dressage)*

Email your questions to parkerqm@sos.co.za . We will not print your name without your permission. .

CONGRATULATIONS

The following KZN horse and rider combinations have been chosen to represent South Africa at the Inter-Africa Cup at the Easter Festival in Gauteng 10 April to 13 April 2009.

Pam Crompton	-	Mossandi Rienne Vas Plus
Heidi Wood	-	Quantum Leap

We wish you both you and your horse's well. GOOD LUCK.

VICTOR LUDORUM POINTS

The new KZN Dressage Victor Ludorum calculation is based on the FEI Rider Ranking format but is expanded to include our age groups and grades.

A computer database has been set up and the results of all our members are captured at all graded shows, even if they are out of Province. The results are computed on the basis set out below. The results are computed for a rider/horse combination in each grade and in each age group. To qualify the rider/horse combination must have at least 3 scores in the grade. The Ranking Index is calculated by taking the best 6 scores over the last 12 months and dividing by 6. H/C scores are not valid. Obviously the more scores you have the better your chances are of having 6 good scores and therefore rising up the Rankings. If you have less

than 6 scores the computer will still divide your total by 6. That means your ranking will be lower than your average mark.

Below are some results that will help you understand. The scores below are taken from the period 12 months ending 30th April 2009 in Adults Elementary Medium. You will notice that while John Ward has a higher average mark than David Walker, he does not score well in the Rankings. That is because his total score is divided by 6. In David's case the six best scores (marked with *) were selected and that total was divided by 6. (Names of horses and riders are fictitious.)

John Ward

Date	Horse	Score	Show	Test
11/03/2006	True Forest	68.29%	SDRC110306	AEM1
15/04/2006	True Forest	62.50%	FEP150406	AEM3
15/04/2006	True Forest	62.33%	FEP150406	AEM5
	Average	64.37%		
	Ranking	32.19%		

David Walker

Date	Horse	Score	Show	Test
30/04/2005	Jungle Cove	*63.44%	CVRC300405	AEM3
21/05/2005	Jungle Cove	*62.00%	NRA210505	AEM5
02/07/2005	Jungle Cove	*59.38%	NRA020705	AEM3
02/07/2005	Jungle Cove	55.67%	NRA020705	AEM5
24/09/2005	Jungle Cove	*59.43%	NRA240905	AEM4
24/09/2005	Jungle Cove	55.71%	NRA240905	AEM6
22/10/2005	Jungle Cove	*60.29%	CVRC221005	AEM4
22/10/2005	Jungle Cove	58.86%	CVRC221005	AEM6
08/04/2006	Jungle Cove	*61.35%	CVRC080406	AEM2
	Average	59.57%		
	Ranking	60.98%		

This "competition" is intended to heighten interest in the discipline, promote rider participation, and motivate riders to improve their standards. Victor Ludorum reflects the most consistent and worthy horse/rider combination over the last 12 months. The results will be published every three months and the latest results from the past 12 months will be reflected. That means you will always have a chance to improve your ranking by getting a few good scores in your grade.

It should be understood that riders at the top of the ranking will not automatically be selected for teams. Current form and other selection criteria play a major role. The

database will also provide a valuable source of information for analysing the current form of our horse/rider combinations.

NEW RULES AND TESTS

Please monitor the KZN Dressage site. New Dressage Rules and 2009 Test are due to be ratified in the near future and will then be published on the KZN Dressage Website.

UPGRADING, PROMOTIONS and THANK YOU'S

Congratulations to Nadine Parker on her promotion to the Provincial D Panel.

Congratulations to Jenny Dempsey on her promotion to SENIOR ANNOUNCER.

Thank you to Di Compaan who has been assisting as Show Director for KZN Dressage shows.

Thank you Gemma Horne for keeping the KZN Website so well maintained and up to date.

Leigh Webster had a nasty fall from her young horse. Leigh, on behalf of the KZN Dressage committee and all of your equine friends, we wish you a very speedy recovery.

The following combinations are on the long list for the Pony Rider Selections, very well done and good luck to you all.

Forsythe Fortune Finder & Bridesdale Rain Dragon – Kirsten Wing
Jebel Bumble Boogie and Highbirnum Gadabout – Ashley Honywill
The Sorcerer – Emily Davies
Rockyvale Bo Jangle – Keith Toucher
Lang Carel Skot – Rachal Barrett
Ashur – Shannon Fogden
Big Sky Tecumseh – Cheryl Jacobs
Bardun Desert Moon – J Pappas