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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

IN A PAST ISSUE OF OUR MAGAZINE,

We briefly mentioned in the Publisher's Note what it takes to get to the top of the sport. In this issue we go into that a bit more and picked the brains of some riders and trainers who were able to be very successful without the help of a huge budget behind them. They elaborate on what a young person can do to reach their goals.

We also spoke with some young riders who certainly look to be the future stars of our sport. It is always fun to hear their backgrounds. There always seems to be something, or in some cases things, that surprise us.

Not to be outdone by the human side, there are many, many nice young horses out there, so we decided to highlight a few of them. After all, they are stars in their own right. It is a good bet that these horses will be able to reach the expectations their owners, trainers, and riders have for them.

While watching this year's World Show Jumping Championships, we noticed something. Focusing on the individual competition, three of the 11 riders were sons of champion riders. Switzerland's Maikel Van der Vleuten was third with Beauville Z. His father Eric successfully competed internationally with many horses.

Coming in eighth was Nicola Philippaerts, riding Katanga v/h Dingshof. His father is Ludo, who rode many horses, but might be best known for competing with the wonderful bay stallion, Darco. Nicola and Ludo are from Belgium.

The last father/son team came from Switzerland. Martin Fuchs rode Leone Jei to place 11th. Martin's father is Thomas, and like the others, rode many horses. But one that many might know was the mare, Dollar Girl. These father/son trios fall in with the theme of this issue.

Horse shows across the country and all over the world had a great summer. From coast to coast here in the states shows flourished, and trainers had many to choose from. Whether a barn wanted to stay fairly close to home or do some traveling, there was almost always a show to attend. And make no mistake; competition was consistently fierce.

The 'indoors' were going on as of this writing. The Capital Challenge Horse Show was held September 29th through October 2nd at the Prince George's Equestrian Center in Upper Marlboro, Maryland. Following that, the Washington International Horse Show will move back indoors after a two-year swap to an outdoor venue in North Carolina. It will also commence at the Prince George's Equestrian Center.

The National Horse Show is held at the Kentucky Horse Park October 26th through November 6th, and is the oldest indoor horse show in America. All three of these shows are attended by the cream of the crop in both horses and riders. They offer exhibitors the very best hunter and jumper classes with a lot of money to be won. There are also several medal finals for those top junior riders. THE Equestrian Catalog will have a lot more to say about these shows in our next issue!

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Foundation and the Basics

Still the Core of Great Riding

Whether one is walking into the hunter ring, the jumper arena, or navigating a technical medal course, good horsemanship is at the core of success. But there are many definitions of good horsemanship. For decades, riders from the United States have been known for their classic style. Was that partly due to our hunter background? Some think so, and the term 'form follows function' might certainly apply.

In contrast, Europeans, excellent riders in their own right, had a completely different style overall. Part of that was due to the fact that, while here in America we were known for riding 'hot' thoroughbreds, in most other countries the warmblood was the horse of choice. Often heavier boned and stronger to ride to the jumps, their style had to be different to achieve the same winning results.

The biggest difference between the American style riders and the Europeans is where their basics came from. On this side of the world, we had hunters and the equitation to hone our skills, with a lot of flat work included in that. In Europe they often trained in dressage. So while the visual style might have been different, the basics of learning how to get a horse broke and at the same time getting riders educated, was quite similar.

Now cut to present day. You see warmbloods around the globe, but now many, many of them have more blood and are quicker across the ground. They ride closer to what a thoroughbred is like to ride. They have in fact taken over the show ring in all three disciplines, proving themselves to be light enough be a lovely hunter, agile and broke enough to do the equitation, and fast, brave, and scopey for the Grand Prix ring.

Most of the really good riders have many of the same positive qualities. They believe that a good foundation for both horse and rider provides the best opportunities for success in the long term. Rushing to just get it done might work for a while, but when the wheels come off, it is sometimes very difficult to put them back on and have them stay there.

Of course, each horse and each rider are different. Some catch on very quickly. While you still have to be aware of not losing ground, that type of horse or rider will quite probably progress faster than another. Still, with the right amount of guidance and grit, goals can continue to be met, whether you have some natural talent or have to work harder to get where you want to go. You can't compare where your horse or you as a rider is to another. Each has his own path.

I started riding jumpers, but doing the hunters greatly improved my riding for the jumper ring, and in a very short time.

Trent McGee

The three things most important to me towards good horsemanship are consistency, dedication, and the basics.

Susan Hutchison

Horsemanship before sportsmanship is what I live by. Never jeopardize the health of a horse for any event. And the second thing I live by is do your work properly at home and the results will come. Never chase results

Ali Nilforushan

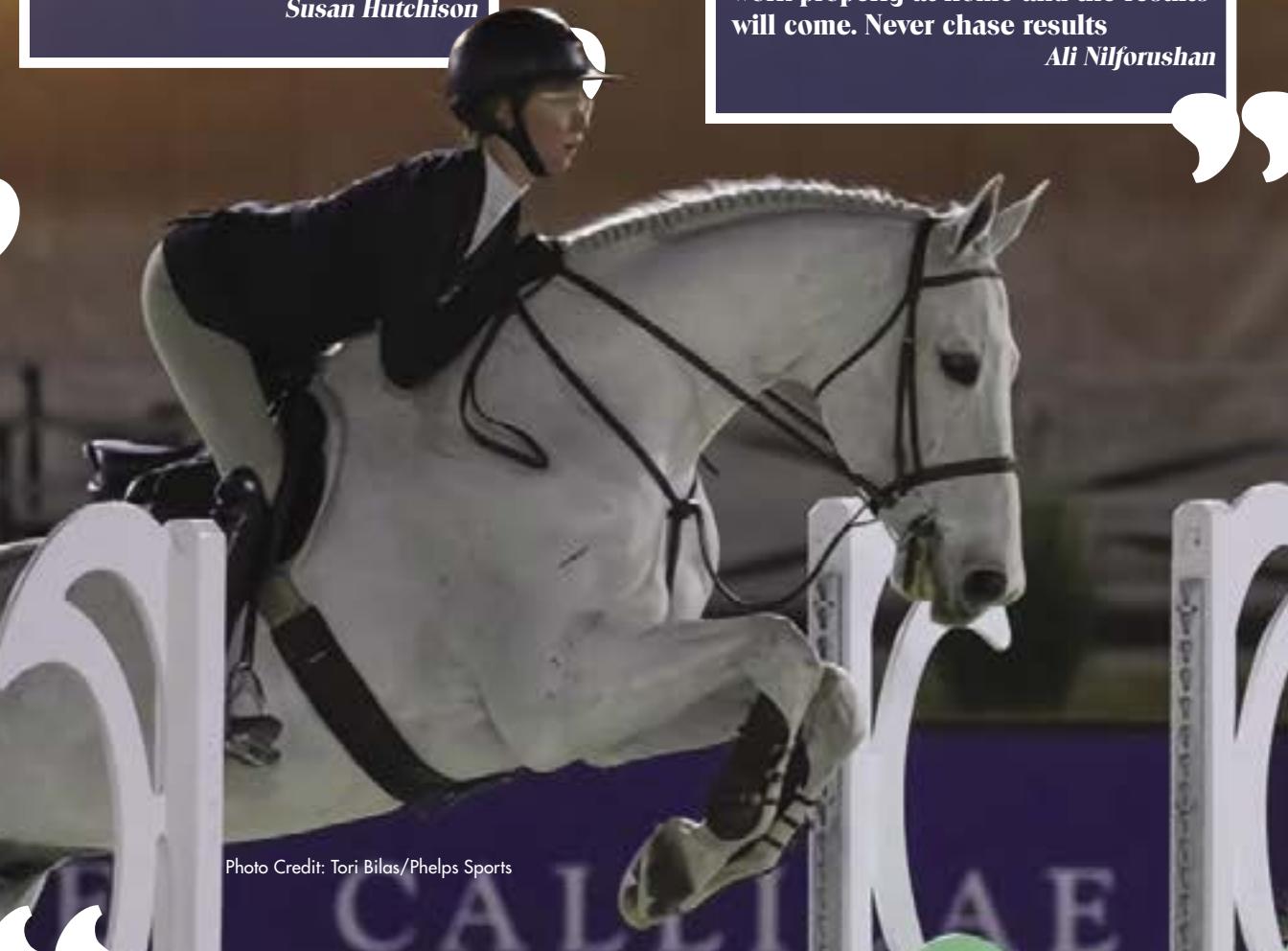


Photo Credit: Tori Bilas/Phelps Sports

If you don't have basics or a foundation, it will catch up with you the higher you jump. The lack of that will prevent riders from succeeding and climbing up the ranks. The jumps are the easy part; it's the flat work in between that catches riders off guard. If you don't have a good foundation, you can only run at the speed bumps for so long, especially as you start jumping bigger and bigger. The technicality of the courses will throw riders off because they don't have the solid basics and foundation to fall back on.

Sloan Elmassian

Setting a good foundation makes you a good rider, and makes you more effective. I also learned how to really take care of my horse, and help him perform better in the ring, and when he's feeling good or not. I learned to look for signs of colic, or scratches, and when to wrap or poultice them. I was aware of all that from the very beginning.

Alexa Leong



Photo Credit: Julia B Photography

The equitation obviously focuses a lot on position and style, but I think people underestimate that winning at the top levels of the equitation not only takes finesse, but the courses are quite difficult. I feel doing those courses really helps you later on in the sport, whether you decide to do the hunters or the jumpers. Definitely, the equitation has helped me a ton in other rings. It has given me a good foundation to move up in the hunters and the jumpers.

Avery Glynn

When building anything, you start with the base. In the American System of Forward Riding, that's the weight on the stirrup, with the heel acting as a shock absorber. Good equitation is simply, the best and most efficient way to communicate with your horse. The position of the hand is important to ALWAYS maintain a straight line to the corners of the mouth; it should never work on the bars of the mouth. These tenets have nothing to do with "equitation" and everything to do with horsemanship.

Karen Healey

And what is the key word that ties all of this together? BASICS! That foundation of horsemanship cannot take a shortcut. We see that proven time and again. Some people think that the jumps are the most important part of their course. How many jumps in a normal course? Compare that to the number of strides on the flat. No contest; if you can't do flat work the courses will at some point fall apart.

There are those who believe that taking all the time to teach those basics – and yes, it does take a lot of time – is not worth it. Just kick and go, as it were. The fun in doing this article was realizing that not only established trainers and riders who might be considered 'old school' believed in a good foundation, but young riders and trainers were of the same mind as well.

Taking that one step further is the basic care of the horse. Yes, most barns have groomers and they are an integral piece of the puzzle. But to be a well-rounded horseman or horsewoman you need to know common signs of stress or lameness. Can you do many different types of bandaging? Do you stare blankly if a vet tells you the horse needs to have a spider bandage?

Finally, the rider is ultimately responsible for his own tack. It is easy to blame the groom, but the rider needs to look at the leather and elastic to see what might be wearing thin, and when to have something repaired or replaced.

Bottom line, to be a good rider and/or trainer, there are many hats to juggle, not just get on and ride. Work hard, get as much education as you can, watch classes. Sit by the warmup ring and watch the schooling process. What are the winners doing? Just as important, see what is not working. Learn from others' mistakes. There will be many ups and downs. Enjoy the process!





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Kristina's knowledge of the Santa Ynez Valley was so comforting, as I knew so little of the area. I had an immediate connection with her. Her easy going attitude and punctuality are great attributes for a real estate agent. We have worked on 3 transactions in the last year, they all were so smooth with no issues that she couldn't figure out how to make good! She has such finesse in dealing with people and getting what is necessary in a kind and respectful way. It could be from her years of horsemanship to treat all beings with love and care. I would not hesitate, in the least, to recommend Kristina for my friends to work with her for their real estate needs.



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Buchalter Equine Law

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Buchalter is an esteemed full-service national law firm with more than 400 attorneys licensed in 42 states. Buchalter can easily handle all of your legal needs, but there is also a big equine law practice within Buchalter.

Photo Credit: Amy McCool

What makes Buchalter's equine practice unique is that four women, Co-Chairs Danielle Mayer, Peggy Hosking, Leah Lively, and Alexandra Bijan Pakzad, are all not only skilled lawyers, but also lifelong equestrians. This gives them a nuanced perspective that most attorneys lack when advising equine industry clients. And while Danielle, Peggy, Leah, and Alex are the major players, they certainly do not work alone.

"I think one of the big gaps we can fill in the equestrian industry is that we ride, compete, breed, and own horses and equestrian facilities and we understand the needs of those segments of the industry. For example, if you are renting a barn for the WEF season, a real estate attorney can prepare that lease. However, they may not think to ask about jump safety cups, signage for horse safety and liability issues, or issues arising from juniors—who do not have the legal capacity to contract in many states—owning horses and competing at the venue. An attorney who is not an equestrian will not know what questions to ask and, unfortunately, a lot can fall through the cracks." Danielle explained. "Similarly, someone outside the industry may not understand how much the industry relies on working students and non-resident labor—both of which come with a host of legal complexities.

"We have nearly 30 other attorneys at Buchalter who have handled a variety of equine law matters. Their practice areas complement our work and allow us to provide true full service expertise to our equine law clients. We have attorneys who specialize in trusts and estates, environmental and land use, tax, and personal injury, just to name a few of our practice areas. The equine industry needs expertise in all of these fields, and Buchalter has the bench strength to not only respond to client needs, but also proactively partner with businesses and individual horse owners to maintain smooth sailing and preempt legal problems down the road."



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Danielle is an accomplished civil litigator as well as an owner and rider. Over the last several years, Danielle has been shocked by the underutilization of lawyers in the equine industry. She has encountered many inadequate board agreements, an abject lack of liability releases or unenforceable forms, and bills of sale that do not include the most basic legal clauses.

“It still surprises me that people will buy a horse on a handshake or just wire money to Europe with no questions asked, and the only real diligence being done is a vet check.”

That started her thinking – how can Buchalter serve the equine industry?

As a litigator, she sees first-hand the impact of poorly drafted contracts. In addition to the issues above, there are, of course, the liability issues. Not only who’s liable for their own actions – but also for those of the horse. And, quite frankly, the lack of transparency in the buying and selling process. Many states are quite clear about the disclosure requirements of commission and sales agreements, violations of which may include civil penalties. Her litigation experience shapes how she drafts contracts.

Danielle says, “As a litigator, I want nothing more than to have your back and zealously represent you, but knowing the stress and costs of litigation, I’d rather keep you out of trouble in the first place. An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. And this can be said about any issue that might arise with horses.”

Peggy, Leah, and Alex joined Buchalter in 2022. Firm President and CEO, Adam Bass, lost no time in introducing Alex, Danielle, Leah and Peggy and the team was born.

Leah is a labor and employment attorney based in Oregon. She and her daughter ride on the West coast hunter/jumper circuit. She also owns and operates a horse retirement farm. Leah has been an attorney for 26 years and is licensed to practice law in five western states. She is also a third-generation horsewoman and has a degree in agriculture business. She mentions that one of the things that is often overlooked in the equine industry are employment laws, in particular wage/hour and health and safety laws.

“Those are two really important and meaningful areas of the law, particularly where states (like



California and Oregon) have stringent employer/employee and OSHA laws. Not complying with those laws can subject an employer to tens, if not hundreds of thousands of dollars in penalties or a class action lawsuit.”

Leah points out that a proactive employer or business that knows its legal obligations can be compliant. “We see a lot of lawsuits on the west coast regarding improper classification of workers as independent contractors instead of employees, failure to keep accurate time records, and failure to provide employees with required meal and rest periods. None of these are difficult concepts, but if you don’t know what requirements apply to you as an employer or business owner, it’s difficult to be compliant and subjects you to legal liability. Another question that comes up frequently is, ‘is it lawful to have a working student who receives rides or lessons in lieu of pay?’ (hint: in most coastal states, it’s not).”

In addition to being a litigator, Leah also provides advice and training on employment issues for her clients. And, with her extensive experience in the equine industry, she can provide industry specific training, not only on wage and hours issues, but diversity issues, and harassment and discrimination.



Leah offered, "A lot of small employers don't realize that many state employment laws apply to them. Simple things like having an employee handbook, making sure you have required state/federal law posters, and what to do if you see or are informed of potentially unlawful conduct (such as sexual harassment) can go a long way in not only having a better working environment. It also means you're less likely to be sued."

Leah added, "There is a lot of overlap between Safe Sport and employment laws. Lack of reporting may be a Safe Sport violation, and it may also be the basis for a sexual harassment or negligent hiring/retention lawsuit depending on the facts and circumstances involved. These may not be popular issues to talk about, but they are very real and very important to understand, and I can help clients do that."

Alex is a corporate and intellectual property attorney. She has competed in the 1.40m jumpers, and recently moved from Los Angeles to build out her own farm in Northern California. Alex just purchased two new jumpers and is looking forward to getting back into the show ring. Alex has many years of firsthand business experience managing the worldwide trademark portfolio of one of the most renowned luxury goods brands. This makes her particularly well-suited to assist clients in realizing their business objectives through the protection and monetization of their intellectual property assets. Alex's combined fashion, equestrian, and intellectual property expertise parlay into a big win for her clients who want to protect and monetize their brands.



“Intellectual property and goodwill are oftentimes the most valuable yet underutilized assets,” Alex explains. “There are so many unrealized opportunities in the equine world, from a grand prix rider leveraging her or his name to develop a co-branded line of horse feed or tack, to a non-equine company seeking to increase brand awareness amongst a particular demographic.”

Peggy is a highly experienced attorney with significant expertise in business and commercial real estate. Peggy understands and has experienced every aspect of the equine industry. She rode hunters and jumpers on the East coast, and is now pursuing her Silver Medal in dressage. She owns a small equestrian facility, Azure Farms, and breeds quality warmbloods for sport. Peggy serves as an outside general counsel for many of her clients, guiding them from start-up and formation through to sale, and handling all of their commercial real estate needs. She has also represented clients before USEF, negotiated the resolution of fraud and misrepresentation in horse sales, and assisted owners with a myriad of contractual issues ranging from facility leases to purchase and sale agreements for large equestrian properties.

A premier business law firm, Buchalter, is well-positioned to help you with all of your business and equine legal needs.

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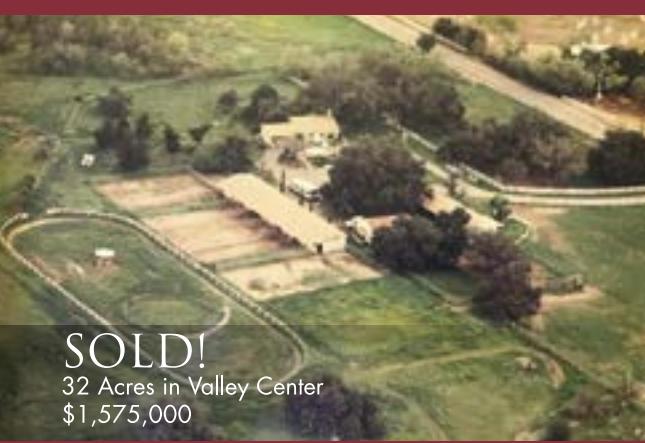
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#GETSET

HORSE SHOWS RISING STARS

By Barbara Pinnella



There are many great established riders and trainers in our sport, but time marches on. Fear not, however. With these young and gifted riders waiting closely in the wings, the future is bright. Here we speak with five young stars who look certain to continue representing the horse show community in a way that can make us proud. Read on to learn a bit more about Trent McGee, Avery Glynn, Elena Haas, Alexa Leong, and Amanda Gomez.

TRENT MCGEE

Trent first fell in love with horses at a young age by going to the Santa Anita racetrack with family and watching the horses gallop early in the morning. For his seventh birthday, his parents got him riding lessons at the Los Angeles Equestrian Center in Burbank, and his very first trainer was Caitlin Steimle. But even though he is now assistant trainer for Archie Cox / Brookway Stables, the kind of riding that Trent wanted to do had nothing to do with show horses at the time.

"I was only seven, but I wanted to be a jockey," Trent said. "But my parents told me I was going to be too tall, which is funny now, because I only ended up being 5'6". But maybe there was a little bit of safety concerns there as well."

He changed the jockey quest after watching a Grand Prix at LAEC.

"The first rider I ever saw was Richard Spooner, and from that point on I said, 'This is what I want

to do for the rest of my life.' Again, I was seven, and have never wanted to do anything else from that point forward. It did take my parents by surprise when they saw how committed I was right from the beginning, but I would say within the next two years they realized how serious I was about it. They have been nothing but supportive."

In the beginning Trent owned a hunter pony name Jaberwocky. After selling him, he followed that pony up by getting a pony named Super Mario. He was a jumper pony, and that was obviously the first time Trent did any jumpers.

"Yep, I raced around in the 1.0m jumpers. I found old videos of me showing in the pony jumpers and I showed them to Archie. He started laughing. But what was interesting," Trent pointed out, "was that when I started out as a working student at 16 years of age with Archie, I had never done the equitation before. I started doing equitation classes during my first year there.

"I learned a lot being a working student and just watching his clients do the equitation. And I also had very limited hunter experience as well. I have to say that I started doing a lot more hunters once I turned professional and became Archie's assistant. Now I'm pretty used to the hunter ring."



Doing the equitation and the hunters made Trent appreciate the times he got to go into the jumper ring. That is where his real love is. But he did admit that watching Archie up close, and people like Nick Hanes, who shows one of the Brookway Stables horses, made him really appreciate the level of riding that it takes in the hunter ring.

“You have to create a great jump in the hunter ring without being noticeable to the judges,” Trent said. “In the jumper ring you have more freedom. But the end result is the same; ‘How can I get the best out of my horse?’”

The riders in Europe have not experienced the hunter arena, but Trent pointed out an interesting fact.

“I have had the privilege to work with great European riders, and people don’t understand the level of intricacy that they teach back in Europe. If you think the Americans are disciplined, those Europeans are intense. Each has their own way.”

Trent is well aware of all of the opportunities that have been placed in front of him.

“I have been fortunate enough to work with some great people who have explained how things are done the right way. Obviously Archie is at the forefront, but he has also put me in positions to work with many different people with different expertise levels. That has allowed me to develop an understanding of learning from everyone.”

Trent owns the jumper Boucherom. The mare was originally owned by Lucy Davis. Lucy showed Boucherom for a number of years. She was always known as a very careful horse, but maybe not quite the 1.60m horse needed for Lucy at the time. Lucy, who had ridden with Archie for many years, sent the mare to him to be sold.

“She was at Archie’s for a while, before I was even in the equation. I knew about the horse just from watching Lucy at top events, going back to the LA Masters in 2014 or 2015. I had always liked the horse.

“Fast forward to 2019 when I came here, and the horse I owned at the time wasn’t really working out. We were thinking of different solutions. My family was a bit limited financially, and Archie was trying to find every way to help out my career right away, which is pretty special, I would say.

“At the same time, they had this amazing horse here that most people were afraid to try, because she is a little bit intimidating to ride. She rears, she spins, she’s got a lot of blood, but for me, I looked at that as my dream horse. She does have that red-headed mare mentally, and I just love it.”

That was the kind of horse that Trent envisioned himself riding in the Grand Prix. At the time Karli Postel Schroeder was riding her. Archie called up Lucy and said that maybe Trent could start riding her a little bit. It just started with a few lessons. Trent was thrilled. At the time, he was still competing in the 1.10m. From there it turned into Trent showing her a little bit, and they had instant success.

“Probably in May Archie spoke with the Davis’s and they agreed to sell her to my family. I won’t ever forget that day. It was pure generosity out of everyone. I was at that time doing 1.20m, and now we are consistently doing the Grand Prix level. She took me to my first couple of Grand Prix wins, and it is pretty much a dream come true story. And as I said, I had been a fan of the horse before ever coming to Archie’s. So, I still can’t believe that I have this horse.”

Cassio Rivetti has also had a huge influence on Trent and Boucherom. The mare’s career has been transformed with Trent. She needed her person, and they are certainly a wonderful team. Trent has noticed the evolution of the horses at the International level has moved into the light, quick, athletic type. He gets asked if the thoroughbreds are going to come back to the sport, and he believes that they already have.



Photo Credit: courtesy of Kind Media

AVERY GLYNN

Both of Avery's parents, Hope and Ned, are trainers, so growing up she was obviously always into the horses. She began riding when she was about four years old. Her parents have been her main coaches, but since she was about 12, she started riding with Jim Hagman and Elvenstar Farm.

"I have been with them about five years now, and really enjoy training with them. I also train with Missy Clark and John Brennan at North Run a lot when I come to the East coast. I've also gotten the opportunity to train with lots of different trainers, like Tom Wright in the hunters. There have actually been a lot of different people that I've learned a lot from."

Avery did say that one of the nice things about having parents as trainers is that she can train with several different people, and everyone gets along, at least in her case.

Currently 17 years of age but showing as 16, Avery has the rest of this year and all of 2023 to pursue some of her goals.

"This season I'm competing Indoors at Harrisburg, Washington National Horse Show, and the National Horse Show in Kentucky. I'm hoping to be successful at those shows. Then next year I really want to get back in the jumper ring more than I am now. I really enjoy showing the jumpers.

"Last year I did more, but this year I've been focusing more on the equitation and the hunters. So I'm really hoping next year I'll be able to move up and do more with the jumpers.

"I have tried all different types of sports. I've done fencing, gymnastics, swimming, I did a couple of triathlons when I was a kid. I also did a lot of dance. But between all of those it was always the riding. It would get to the point where I would do another sport, but if I had to miss a horse show for that sport, I would give up the other activity. I would never give up the horses."

Any thoughts of becoming a trainer in her own right have to wait right now. Avery is committed

to riding for Auburn and being on their D1 Equestrian Team starting next year. She has not yet settled on a major, but does know one of the things she will be doing when she arrives at Auburn.

"I would say that right now my plan would be to probably go professional after that, but I will probably stay an amateur through college, and see how I'm feeling towards the end of that. I never really know if I go off to school, if I will feel differently."

In her spare time, Avery loves to travel. Fortunately for her, that comes along with horses, so it is the best of both worlds for her.

"I get to travel all across the country almost weekly. I was just in Traverse City, Lake Placid, Sonoma where I live, Kentucky last week, I'm in Vermont (when we spoke), and next week I'm in the Hamptons.

"I also get to go out of the country. Earlier this year I got to go to Ireland to ride horses, and I loved that trip. If not traveling, I like to spend time with my family and friends."

When discussing the differences between competing on the West coast as opposed to back East, Avery had an interesting observation.

"In the last couple of years, and of course I was younger, but I would say that in California there are a couple of top junior riders that make all of

the classes more competitive with them in there. I do think it's nice that we have been more competitive at the Finals on the East coast.

"On the East coast, I do see that there is a very, very large group of talented junior riders. There are more people in the classes I would say, but at the top of the classes there are some very nice rounds. When I go to the East coast, I definitely learn from watching all the different junior, amateur, and professional riders. But I do think that there is a top group on both coasts."

We know Avery certainly falls into that top group category. In June of 2021 she won The American Tradition of Excellence Equitation Challenge aboard Cocon 4. The early this year she won the first major equitation class of the 2022 Desert Circuit, the Platinum Performance/USEF Show Jumping Talent Search 2* on Donatello.

In May she made her first trip to Devon a winning one, capturing the Section B of the Show Jumping Talent Search 3* riding Gerardus. July brought another big victory when she and Adventus teamed up to be the Overall Grand National Champion 3'6". Still not finished, she came back in Kentucky in August to win the ASPCA Maclay. This time her partner was Gambler B.

We would doubt that this young lady is finished, and look forward to many other victories for her in the future.



Photo Credit: courtesy of Kind Media

ELENA HAAS

When we spoke with Elena she had just finished setting up her dorm room at Wake Forest University in North Carolina. Originally being a California girl and wanting to show at Wellington next year, she realized that selecting a school on the East coast would be beneficial for her.

"I'm really happy about this," she told us. "It's beautiful out here, and the college is a nice size, so it all seemed to work out well."

Elena's dad grew up on a farm in Missouri, but it was a cattle ranch rather than a horse farm. Her grandparents still live out there, and they used to go visit several times a year. They did have one older horse on the property, and she sat on this horse when she was very young, possibly only six months old.

"I loved that horse. My parents were not at all involved in the sport, but I just loved the horses; all animals really. I don't know how I found out that riding lessons were an option, but I just was always asking my parents to ride horses. From the time I was about three years old until six, they threw me into every other sport imaginable, but finally I got my way and I started taking lessons.

"It was just by chance that it was at an English barn," she continued. "I fell in love with it, and have been riding ever since. My family didn't have any idea what they were getting themselves into."

Since college has entered her life in a big way, we wondered what her future riding plans were and just how far she wanted to take it, career-wise.

"One day I would love to pursue this full time, but right now as I said, I'm just starting college. For now, I am majoring in economics and minoring in environmental studies. I am also considering studying politics and international affairs as well.

Elena has three horses that she is currently

Photo Credit: courtesy of Andrew Ryback Photography



"I am very passionate about protecting the environment. My dad started a renewable energy company that builds wind farms, so I would love to be able to do something like that. But at the end of the day, riding is my greatest passion, so if there is a world where I can do that full time, I really would love to."

competing; two mares Centana and Global Jativia, and the gelding Koss Van Heiste.

"I have had Centana the longest. I got her in October of 2020. She is an 11-year-old mare and has been absolutely incredible for me. I got her when I was just starting to do the high junior jumpers, and we have stepped up together quite a bit. My first Grand Prix was also her first Grand Prix.

"I took her to Young Riders last year on the junior team, and Prix de States as well. We jumped our first 1.50m together, and she is incredibly special to me. I think as I have developed as a rider she has also developed as a competitor, so we have gotten to really grow up together. She is a sweetheart that loves food, but when she gets in the ring, she is a fighter. She tries her heart out every time and has never let me down."

Elena said that there is kind of a joke in the barn that she and Centana have personalities that are the same, in a good way. She thinks she lucked out, because those similar traits work well together, and the two do not oppose each other.

"Then there is the mare Global Jativia, and I got her in January of this year, but she didn't actually arrive in the states until mid-February. I really haven't spent that much time competing with her. She has been a lot of fun to get to know. She is a very different type from Centana, she is very, very hot, she definitely goes in her own style, but she is also incredibly brave. It has been really amazing for me to get to step up in a lot of bigger classes with her and just have the confidence and feel that I can do it. She is making me a much better rider."

This pair jumped the Derby at Spruce Meadows, which Elena admitted was very daunting, and she said it was definitely not her idea to enter it, but rather one of her trainers, Meredith Herman. (Elena also rides with Richard Spooner). But the trust she has in this horse got her around that tough course.

"I thought we were all joking, just sitting around at dinner. But then Meredith said that she thought my horse could do it, and we started looking at the schedule. At the end of the day, I don't know if I'm ever going to have another horse that will slide down a hill, and jump through a Devil's Dyke, so this class was sort of a bucket list item. I had the opportunity to do it, and now I'm very glad that I did." (They actually finished 10th in the class, over a new course and going first!)

Her third horse is Koss Van Heiste. Elena was not looking for another horse, but when the opportunity presented itself, he had to join her string. He is very experienced, and she could not be happier with him, as well as her other horses.

"He is an incredibly special horse, and I'm so excited to have him in the barn. He has competed at the 5* level, and some Nations Cups. He is one of the sweetest horses I've met, and he just naps around the barn. But in the ring, he has the most incredible feel and power in the air. So, I am really excited. I have a lot of big goals to keep moving up and I think he's going to be an amazing partner to do that with. I feel very lucky that he fell into my lap."

With three very nice and competitive horses in her string, Elena has goals going forward that they can all contribute to with her.

"My ultimate goals in the sport are to jump for the U.S. Teams, and all of the major championships, and really become the best rider and horsewoman that I can be. So for the next four years I will really be balancing both, and I will play it by ear as I start to dive into another potential career. But if I could I would like to do this professionally. I'm not exactly sure what the balance between riding and doing some environmental work will look like in four years, but I would love to work with horses full time."



ALEXA LEONG

While Alexa's parents did not ride, her older brother did, and she began riding with him as a summer hobby. But while he took a few lessons, Alexa took it quite seriously. Eventually she began competing while her brother took up basketball.

"I just started going to shows. Sonoma Horse Park was my first time doing walk/trot with Jill and Jan Humphrey, and I've been with them ever since. It's been 12 years now, and they've taught me the basics, and everything else I need to know. I'm very grateful for them."

At 18, Alexa is not looking to be a trainer right now. She told us that possibly 10 years down the road she might revisit that, but she has other goals in mind right now.

"I would like to compete in Europe and represent the U.S.A. in some Nations Cups. I kind of want to do my own thing. I also love the sales of horses, so I would like to have my own sales

business, as well as work for other trainers. I think that would be great, to work with other riders and trainers who are at the 5* level. I think that is unique and impressive; to learn under trainers like that."

Similar to Elena, Alexa is in college, so she has been focusing on her academics. That will take up a lot of her time over the next few years.

"Also during that time, I will think about what I really want to do in the horse show world."

Alexa does not have to ride a horse very long to win with it. She proved that in Traverse City when she paired up with Dom Perignon to be the Junior Hunter 3'3" Grand Champion. This lovely bay gelding is owned by Samantha O'Brien.

"He was a catch ride actually, at Junior Hunter Finals," Alexa explained. "I had just ridden that one the weekend before. The trainer asked me if I could ride it just to school it for the owner before she got to the show. Then the week of Junior Hunter Finals they had me ride it because the owner a second horse that she was wanting to ride. So I had the pleasure of riding Dom Perignon, and he is so lovely. I had such a great time riding that one."





Even though she rides a lovely hunter, Alexa has been focusing a bit more on the jumpers this season.

"I've had my jumper Carlsson 72 for about a year now. I got him from Mexico actually. We started in the high junior jumpers last year, and then this year we just started doing more national Grand Prix, and just came back from North American Young Riders in Traverse City for Zone 10.

"I know him really well; I take care of him at home and do everything with him myself. He's an interesting horse on the ground, but in the ring he's all game. That's what I love about him. He is so focused and all business inside the ring. But when he gets out of the ring, he can be a little quirky at times. But I think some of those special horses have those quirks."

Since Alexa does well on both the hunters and the jumpers, we wondered which ride she preferred.

"I think for me, I am a pretty soft rider, so hunters I feel are not difficult for me. I just let go and let the horse jump and show its best qualities. I don't do much with my hands, and like to ride the hunters like it's a trail ride; even and consistent.

"Rather, in the jumpers I feel as you go higher you have to be very precise. Things happen faster and you have to be on the game the whole time. Everything comes up so quickly, and it's kind of like an adrenaline rush. That's why I love jumpers."

Alexa used to play volleyball and basketball, but being in school there is not a lot of spare time right now. But when she has a bit of a break, she enjoys wake surfing. She has also been skiing since she was two years old, and all of her family ski, so that is a sport that she enjoys doing with them.



Photo Credit: courtesy of Julia B Photography

AMANDA GOMEZ

As most people know, Amanda has been surrounded by horse people her entire life. Her father Garrett was a top jockey, and mother Pam was also involved in horses. Pam took a step back during the time Amanda was four until she was about eight years old, as the family concentrated on Garrett's career. Even though Garrett would have loved for her to become a jockey, once Amanda got a taste of the horse show world, she knew that is where she wanted to be.

This turned out to be the perfect decision for her, as the 19-year-old already has a thriving business, with some lovely horses and good clients.

"I obviously have future plans for most of the horses. Two of them I have entered in the Retired Racehorse Project this year. Those would be Racing Ace and Takeo. Both of those will go to Kentucky in October and compete in the show hunter and show jumper divisions.

"I have my five-year-old Flexible filly So Fly, who just recently won the Five-Year-Old Young Horse Championship, which was awesome! Then I have All Star, who is my little thoroughbred, who is pretty much my go-to guy. We bred both So Fly and All Star, so I have had them forever," she laughed. "The difference is that All Star was actually bred as a race horse. He was supposed to run, but he didn't enjoy it.

"I also have my bigger jumper Cold Play, but I don't show him a lot. Then there is the one I recently purchased, named HJ Honored. Honored was second in the first 1.30m class we went in. Because we also breed, I have a baby by Emerald out of a Contender mare. We are

excited about her. She is the cutest little thing! She is a gorgeous little paint filly with one blue eye and one brown eye. Her mom has two blue eyes."

Amanda she is blessed to have a lot of clients as well. There is a mare named Dahlia that Amanda showed several years ago. The mare was leased, came back after a couple of years, and then one of her clients, Ashley Aandahl, bought her. Ashley also owns the nice hunter Calligraphy, who recently won a hunter derby.

She also has Calesco, a horse she did in another derby which she also won. Back in the day he was her high junior jumper, so to now win a National derby with this now 18-year-old was quite a thrill. He had a score of 94 in the handy round. That special horse is being leased by another client.

All of her clients do ride at the present time, and Amanda pointed out that she couldn't do everything without the support and help from her mom.

"My mom is half owner of the barn, so we run the business together, teach together, things like that. At shows, if we have clients going at the same time in different rings, we can split up and get the job done. We make it work."

At the moment she does not want to grow much larger. She wants to be able to run it and be productive, and believes she can do that the way things are right now.

"I want to leave myself a little bit of a gap to travel and experiment on the different coasts, here and there. I don't want to necessarily be locked down to California. So the clients that we have now are willing to travel and play with different coasts, which is just awesome."

In the event that not everyone could leave the state, there is the possibility that Pam would stay home, but that has not really been discussed in detail as of now. But Amanda feels that her mom would travel back and forth every couple of weeks, just to make sure things are running smoothly.

"My mom is such a big part of everything, and all of the success that happens in our barn, that she would always be included."

Like so many younger riders, her goals are to go to the Olympics. But she has other things that

would be very important to her.

"Speaking realistically, I would love to be on a Nations Cup team at some point. I slowly want to build up. Right now I don't have a top horse that I can go jump the 1.50m on yet. It's something that I have to develop, or maybe something will come along that I can get my hands on, that has been there and done that.

"That would be incredible, but being real, I'd like to continue to develop the horses that I have. My young horse All Star, I think that he has the scope to do the bigger stuff, but I want to slowly move him up. Yes he is 10, but I didn't get him until he was five, because he was on the racetrack. So that is a lot of years lost. But I think that if I really do things right with All Star, he could possibly be the horse that takes me into the Nations Cup qualifiers.

"A World Cup qualifier would be super cool in a couple of years," she continued. "Maybe sooner than I think, but I'm not going to set unrealistic goals. I want to keep everything that is achievable, and keep myself and my horses happy."

She quite likes the Major League Show Jumping teams as well. The point system was confusing at first, but the more one watches it, the more intriguing it becomes. It opens up more opportunities, and Amanda feels that it is a great experience to be a part of it.

There is nothing standing in Amanda's way right now. With her mom behind her, nice horses to ride and train, and supportive clients, the sky is the limit.



Photo Credit: courtesy of Julia B Photography

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WEEKS 1,4

FEI 3*
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FEI 4*
WEEKS 6,9

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WEEKS 4,8

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Additionally, Lynn and Amalia are competitive Dressage riders and have competed in state and national competitions.

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Behind the Scenes

WITH

ROBERT BLANCHETTE

By Barbara Pinnella

Robert Blanchette and his wife Tammy make up a dynamic duo. Both of them teach, but right now it is Robert who does the riding. He shows both hunters and jumpers for their clients. Tammy runs the business and organizes the schedule every day, as well as fielding all the questions. She also is a mom, and that is the big priority. Robert and Tammy have twin daughters, Sophia and Charlotte. When we spoke, the girls had just done their first leadline class.



Photo Credit: ABJ Photography



The Equestrian Catalog - Give us a little bit of background regarding your riding.

Robert Blanchette – Well, while I started riding in California I did three-day eventing, and trained in dressage in Germany. I later switched to show jumping and started doing that in Sweden. I have been back in California for 12 years.

TEC - Have you had to overcome obstacles along the way, like coming back from injury, nerves, something like that?

RB – As far as an injury, yes. It was in a small class, the horse stopped, and I fell off into a combination. He then jumped and landed on my leg. I had five surgeries and have five metal plates in my leg. I had a big bone infection, and all of this was while Tammy was pregnant with the twins. (The girls came at seven months.)

I was in a wheelchair for a year, and was told that the injury was career-ending, and that I might even lose my foot.

I had to learn how to walk again. I pushed on because I just felt that I have more to do.



Photo Credit: courtesy of GrandPix



Photo Credit: courtesy of ESI Photography

TEC - You show both hunters and jumpers. Which is your favorite and why?

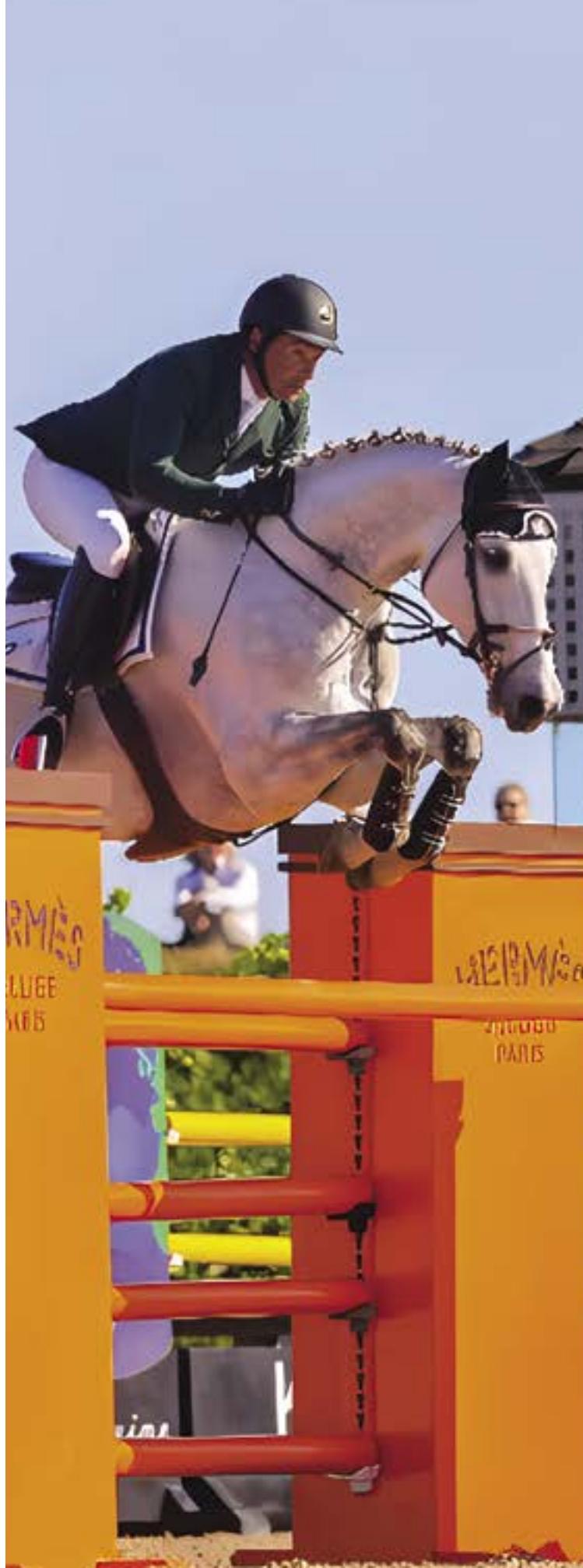
RB – Jumpers, but mainly because for the first 10 years or more that I did this, it was just jumpers. In Europe there are no hunters. I learned to do hunters about 10 years ago. But riding a good hunter is very enjoyable, and we have some very nice ones. I have won some International derbies. In Thunderbird last year I won the \$100,000 Grand Prix and the International derby. We have one horse that is both a hunter and a jumper. Within one month he was second in the 1.45m Grand Prix and won an International hunter derby.

TEC - Who has been the biggest influence in your riding career?

RB – My biggest influence was my first teacher, Herman Koopmans. He was a Dutch cavalry lieutenant. He spent four years in a POW camp; touch guy! You know how you do something with horses and then realize you were wrong? Every time I do something that has consequences I think, 'Yeah, he was right.'

Oh, and as a rider to look up to, I have to say it was John Whitaker. And one more would be Peder Fredricson. (At the time of this writing he was number three in the World standings.) I lived near him, so I would see him ride a lot. He was always very good, but this was before he was famous. A friend and I were watching him in a 1.50m class. We were trying to fault him on something. The only thing we could come up with was that his part wasn't completely symmetrical.

Currently Tammy helps me on the ground a lot. I wish she'd give me more advice, but she's very careful. (He did chuckle here.) I have friends that I send videos to that help me out. Bernie Traurig comes and gives clinics, and Paul O'Shea is a good friend of mine. He just won the Queen's Cup, and I send him videos and get his comments. He also helps me find horses, things like that. But I don't really train with anybody at the moment.



TEC - What would you be doing if not working in the equestrian world?

RB – Probably something with linguistics, interpreting or translating, something like that. I speak German, Swedish, Spanish, and English. I can translate Swedish to Spanish, and German to Spanish, Swedish to English, things like that. So if it wasn't horses, I'd be doing something along those lines.

TEC - Favorite venue to show in and why?

RB – My favorite venue in North America would be either Spruce Meadows or Thunderbird. They are so different. Spruce is the top of the sport in North America I believe. For Thunderbird, you can bring your students there and they are very, very welcoming and nice. My favorite horse show in the world is Falsterbo in Sweden. The atmosphere makes it special. I would say that it is the social event of the year for the country.

TEC - What goals are still on the table for you?

RB – Oh, my goals are still pretty big. I would love to be in the World Cup Finals and the Olympics. We have some very nice younger horses that are coming along really well, so the future looks bright.

TEC - Is there a particular favorite part of your job?

RB – I enjoy teaching students that want to learn, and I enjoy training a lot. But really what excites me these days is showing good horses and winning big classes.

Photo Credit: courtesy of ESI Photography



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QUINE NGSTERS THE SHOW RINGS

By Barbara Pinnella

There seem to be many very fancy, winning younger horses that are quickly carving their own path to stardom. Here we highlight five, three hunters, Gotham (Jake Evans), Kobe (Jordan Lubow), and Chosen (Nick Haness), and two jumpers, FF Blade Runner (Trevor Gaffney) and Fair Play (Nick Haness hit the board with two). It is uncertain if, at the time this article comes out, the horses are still in the same hands, for the special ones don't always stay around. For some reason, people want to buy them! But regardless, their lights will almost certainly still shine brightly.

GOTHAM

Hunter - Jake Evans

Gotham, or Bruce as he is known in the barn, is a six-year-old gelding by Clinton. Standing at roughly 16 hands, this darling grey horse has the look of an overgrown pony, but with a nice, big stride. He is not a bit spooky. Calm yet confident, he is also the class clown of the barn.

Jake Evans and Jordan Lubow found him in Germany. He had not been exposed to the hunter lifestyle for very long when they saw him. He was raised by an amateur rider.

Jake admitted to having a soft spot for horses that have heart.

"I will take a horse with lots of heart and not much talent any day," Jake said. "When I first sat on him, I said to myself, 'Wow. This horse is absolutely phenomenal!' You could just feel that he really wanted to do it right every single time; he had that fire in his heart."

"I originally wanted to buy him for myself. I



hadn't owned a horse for myself in years, and it takes a lot for me to want to buy one. But the owner for Jordan and I, Valerie (Kalderon) ended up buying him for her string of horses. So that was great that he got to stay in the barn, and for Valerie to allow me to develop him and really bring him along."

From the time he first landed here in the States, Jake said he has just shined, and answered every kind of question they have asked of him. He has the personality that, when you put a jump in front of him, he asks, how high?

"He is not hard to get ready. He goes out and gives a good effort each time. It brings a smile to my face. I must admit, I'm kind of hoping that he doesn't sell right now, because I want to do him in the first year. The difference from 3' to 3'3" already was night and day. Over the 3' he felt like it was boring for him. I knew we needed to take our time and do it right. Just because he can do it doesn't mean he should do it.

"But eventually I did decide to let him jump around in the big ring at 3'3" and see how he is coming along. Of course, he goes out there and makes me feel amazing. That evening we decided to just do the 3'3". By day two, people were asking who was that horse; what is that?? He has been phenomenal. But now I almost want to put him in the first year and lose that first year!"

For Jake, what makes Gotham, and other green horses, a star is heart. He cannot emphasize that enough. He believes that you can bring horses so much further along in a shorter period of time when they want to do the job.

"That's what makes him different from so many other young horses. He's always willing, and he tries hard. Sometimes when you get one that is very, very talented they don't jump as well, because it's just not hard for them. Gotham wants to jump very well and give you that effort, while remaining very brave."

Jake said he is good about making horses feel confident with him, but he doesn't want them to just jump around only for him. He wants to know that the horse can do it so much on their own, that he can put a kid or an amateur lady on and know that the horse has enough heart for the both of them. Sometimes if a kid or adult gets nervous, the horse needs to be able to pick up that slack and continue on. That gives the rider confidence. Gotham is that type of horse. Beyond that, he is incredibly kind.

"From the first day in Europe he had his head in my lap," Jake said. "I was just loving on him. The next day they asked me if I wanted to ride him for the second time. I declined. I don't ever need to ride a horse like that a second time. I think this horse will make an absolutely amazing International derby horse. Even a junior hunter; he can jump as good at the 3'6" as he can at the 4'. He doesn't jump too hard, but you always get a very correct jump."

As of this writing, Gotham was Champion at the WEC Ocala Summer 6 Young Hunters, winning every class over fences. He was also 12th in his first 3'/3'3" Derby.

"I'm going to be really sad to see him go, but this horse is really special. I think he's going to be an absolute superstar."



FF BLADE RUNNER

Jumper – Trevor Gaffney

FF Blade Runner is the very handsome 8-year-old stallion owned by Jill and Trevor Gaffney/Free-styling Farms. He was the 7-year-old national champion at Traverse City last year. He was the only horse to jump clear every day. They did not even do the jump-off the last day. Since he had the overall championship won, they decided to save him. This year he has jumped a couple of big Grand Prix and looks to be very special.

Trevor and his wife Jill not only buy horses, but do some breeding as well.

“Blade Runner has his first foal on the ground, but yes, we do it all. We buy horses in Europe and we buy embryos. We also buy foals. Just last week we bought a very, very good foal, a Chacco Blue II foal out of a half-sister of Catch Me If You Can.

“We try to do everything,” Trevor continued. “We try to breed, but you have to diversify the mares. Unfortunately, right now if you want to be breeding off the top, top mares, you’ve got to go to Europe. We buy them and import them to America, so that for the future we can diversify the mares that we have for breeding. Like next year I will have eight three-year-olds and six of them are mares, and they are all out of very good dams that we bought in Europe.”

Blade Runner was born and bred in Ireland. The business partners that they have over in Ireland spotted him as a five-year-old.

“Actually,” Trevor admitted, “I watched him as a four-year-old and I didn’t really like him. So I didn’t inquire much about him. He was super green and not very rideable, so I didn’t have much interest. But then all the business partners over there watched him, and they actually got the horse when he was five years old.

“One of the partners, Olive, called me about him and I was a bit hesitant at first. She said she thought he was going to be special. I had originally said that I thought he’d be a good hunter. I wasn’t too wrong, because a lot of people wanted to buy him as a top Derby horse! But he’s very, very special. He has jumped a lot of 1.50m classes this year clear, and I think he

could go all the way. The problem that I’m running into right now is to keep him. I have a lot of people in Europe and in America that are interested in purchasing him.”

People chasing down a special horse in an effort to buy it is not uncommon. Trevor told us that besides being the seven-year-old champion last year, Blade Runner also won the six-year-old championships in Kentucky the previous year.

“We took him to Ocala this year, and he jumped his first couple of Grand Prix there under lights, and he was very good. He was also good in Kentucky this year. He placed in the Grand Prix there. He was clear



in the first round, and just had a little green mistake under the lights in the jump-off.

"He has to learn his job now, so that will be the next thing we will be doing. We have to teach him to go on in the jump-offs. We have been minding him, but now he needs to step up and go. But I think a lot of him; he's going to be a very good Nations Cup horse."

It probably won't stop with Blade Runner, however. Last year they bought his full sister. She was a yearling at the time, and the owner did not really want to sell her.

"She knew she was going to a good home, so she reluctantly sold her to us. She is two right now, and we brought her over when we came back from Florida, along with a couple of other ones. She doesn't look anything like him, actually, but with these horses, you never know.

"We do a lot of the breaking of the young horses ourselves, and you have to know when to push and when to back off. We have several three-year-olds that we broke and were riding, and now they are turned out in the fields again. They will have a bit of a break, then we will look at the schedule and decide which ones we will take to Florida next year."

Trevor and Jill both feel that it is very important for the young horses to go see different rings and the new environments. They don't necessarily need to jump, but they mature from the experience, and they get a great education from that.

As far as being a stallion, Trevor said that Blade Runner is quite easy to deal with. Yes, he can whinny a little bit, but there is nothing bad in him. He has a very good temperament, both at home and at the shows.



KOBE

Hunter – Jordan Lubow

Photo Credit: Courtesy of Sportfot



This lovely gentle giant was imported last May, but he came to Wellington just as the circuit was ending. Jordan Lubow spent the summer in Tennessee, so he spent the summer there with her. He was not bred to be a hunter however. By For Romance, he has all dressage lines in his background, and was bred to walk into that arena.



"They had taken a couple of clips of him jumping, but his movement is spectacular," Jordan said. "He is probably one of the best movers that I have ever seen. He is midnight black, no white on his face, with four perfect white ankle socks. He is so striking to look at! And then, he is a really cute jumper, too."

Jordan was sent a video by an agent, who knew what the specifications were as far as what was needed by Jordan. She had sent other videos as well, but none of them excited her as much as Kobe's.

"I was driving from Wellington going to my home barn, and I got rapid-fire texts. I stopped at a light, and she told me I had to watch the video right now, because if you don't tell me you're vetting him, we are going to lose him.

"So I pulled my car over and watched the video, and I called Virginia Burton/Littlewood LLC, who was going to invest with me, and told her she needed to tell me right now! By the time I looked at the video, called her, and then set up the vetting, probably six minutes had passed."

Jordan has really taken her time with him. He hadn't jumped that much, so she didn't want to just throw him into the ring. She spent all summer training, and then took him to Wellington. His first show out he won both classes the first day and was reserve champion.

"We just played with him the rest of the circuit, and then I brought him to WEC. He's been first and second a couple of times, other ribbons a couple of times – we're just going very slowly with him. I don't want to throw too much at him too fast, but he's very exciting."

The Westphalian gelding is seven this year and, according to Jordan, has the most comfortable canter of any horse she has ever been on. It makes you feel as if you are floating. He has a beautiful head carriage, and the jumps come up so nicely. He is delightful to ride.

Up until fairly recently, Jordan had been the only one to ride Kobe. But due to a temporary physical issue, both Jake Evans and Abby Strohmeier have taken over the reins. Abby will probably be Kobe's only rider until Jordan returns to Wellington.

"Special ones like Kobe don't come around that often."

FAIR PLAY

Jumper – Nick Haness

The seven-year-old Selle Francais stallion Fair Play was purchased when he was three by Nick in Columbia. Nick had been introduced to a top breeder in Columbia, and they had imported a lot of blood lines from Europe. They had an amazing breeding farm in Columbia.

"It is just beautiful countryside, by the way," Nick told us. "It was a little bit nerve-racking at the airport, but once we were at the farm where he was bred, it was absolutely one of the most breathtakingly stunning, gorgeous facility, with miles of grass, rolling hills, and all of the horses were just really happy. They are brought along carefully and raised the right way.

"I had watched some videos of Fair Play free jumping and he jumped through the jump chute unlike any horse I've ever seen. He did like a full handstand over the last oxer. His front end was up and high, and then all of a sudden, his back just cracked and his hind legs went straight over his head. I thought that there was no way a horse could jump like that consistently. But he did; time and time again."

At the end of his three-year-old year, Nick went down there and saw him in person. He was a big guy and kind of a goofy horse. Like Nacho, he was young and gangly and had a huge head to boot, but Nick saw that he had a great demeanor and the temperament to make a great horse.

"It's important that they have the talent but also have the brains. Fortunately, we were able to find a syndicate to put together to purchase him for me to develop for the Grand Prix ranks. The horse has been a superstar from the beginning. When he was doing the .90m and 1.0m when he was four, he had an amazing presence to him. He is big, bold, and powerful, and jumps even those small jumps so well.

"It actually took me some time to teach him to not try that hard every single time, and to channel his ability and scope in the right direction. He is kind and smart and big strided and brave, but at the same time he is extremely knowledgeable about where to put his legs. But I have definitely been patient with him and took my time developing him, and I'm still doing that."

When he was five Nick did the five-year-old Young Horse Finals at Blenheim, where he jumped three out of four clear rounds. At six, he was basically turned out and given more time to grow up. He went on trail rides a lot, up and down hills.

"I'm glad we did that, because he came out at Thermal end of his six-year-old year in November at the 1.20m level. He did not have experience at that level, but walked in the ring with so much confidence and ability."

Nick said that people were really watching not only Fair Play, but himself as well.

"They were in awe of his ability, but also because I'm more known as a hunter rider, and there I was in the jumper ring with this nice, young jumper.

"Now he is seven, and we really put the test to him. I showed him in Tryon in the seven-year-old classes, which was 1.30 - 1.35m. Now in Kentucky he is consistently winning at that level, and I think he is showing his potential to be a top Grand Prix horse. I think he has the ability to jump 1.60m, World Cups, all of those things, and that's the goal for him.

"He is by nature a very good jumper. He spends a lot of time in the air, so he's not going to be your conventional speedy, fast horse, but he will be your consistent clear round at 1.60m who will jump a double clear and get a really good piece of big-time competition."

When not on the road, Fair Play lives at home with Nick in Temecula. He is so easy to be around, that Nick says he doesn't even know he is a stallion. The most exciting part of his day is when he gets food. When they go into the feed room, he is the first to alert all the other horses that it is time to eat.

While he was originally bought by a syndicate, he now has one owner, Bernadette Mulliken. She is an amateur, and while she does not show Fair Play, she rides him around the horse shows, takes him out for hacks, and rides him on the trail. She will also hack him before Nick gets on for a class.

"It's pretty rare to find a horse that is a seven-year-old stallion who is also an extremely talented, scopey Grand Prix horse, but also kind enough to have an amateur be able to ride him on the daily. He is a really special horse to us."

And what about Nick being known as a hunter rider? He explained that to us.

"I have been doing the jumpers my whole career, just not that often. Being a jumper rider in the Grand Prix you really can't be running to the pony ring. I have had a successful but busy career training people and having clients, with the main focus on the clients.

"In 2014 I won a Grand Prix in Spain. But it seems that every time I have a jumper and win a class, they usually sell the next day. They figure I'm just a hunter rider, so if I can do it they better buy it. I love doing the jumpers, but it takes more of your focus. So now I'm at the point in my career where I can focus more on having jumpers and I'm hoping that the journey continues for me in the jumper ring. I certainly love my reputation as being a hunter rider, but I would like the next chapter of my career to be able to do the jumpers."



CHOSEN

Hunter - Nick Haness

Photo Credit: Kate at the In Gate



Chosen, or Nacho as he is known around the barn, is six years old, and his proud owner is Lindsay Maxwell. Lindsay purchased Nacho in Europe about a year ago. He only showed one time last year.

"He was a bit of a late bloomer," Nick said. "He was still growing and coming into his body, as well as his rideability level. So Lindsay let him have time to grow up and be a horse, then she brought him to me. I rode him for the first time in June this year.



"He is a beautiful horse to look at; an elegant plain bay with not a lot of white, with a very pretty face and expression and beautiful conformation. So people notice that first, but when he starts to jump, the whole show grounds just has to stare at him. He is a wonderful jumper and takes beautiful pictures"

Nick said that his first show or two he was kind of green and overjumping. In the 2'9" young hunters he was jumping the top of the standards. So Nick worked with him so he could figure out his job and level out. He had to relax and learn to do the hunters without jumping so high.

"It took him one or two shows, and then he just understood what was being asked of him. He was champion in Kentucky the last time he showed. We just finished our summer tour with him, and all of the Lindsay Maxwell horses headed back to California. Lindsay plans ahead, and she will pick and chose when to help a horse bloom and not rush them.

"She really wanted him to get his feet wet this year with me in some classes and get some championships, which he did, without overdoing it. She wants to preserve him for bigger and better things for next year. I think the plan is now that he's learned the job and how to be a champion, we are really excited to allow him to transform into this amazing hunter that we are hoping to have next year. A lot of people offered to buy him while he spent the summer with us, but she does not want to sell him."

It is not set in stone, but Nacho will probably either do the first year or the 3'3" green hunters. It will most likely be the 3'3" green at Thermal; that's their winter destination. They will then move him up to the first year at 3'6". He will make a really nice conformation horse.

"I think he will be very successful in both rings," Nick said. "Not only is he beautiful, but he really has that text-book, classical front end. He studies the jumps and is very careful. He is a very correct jumper, and I can't get a bad photo; every jump is the same. It's exciting to have a horse like him for kind of a secret weapon for next year."

Surprisingly, Nacho is not a big horse. He is 16 hands tops, maybe not even quite that big. But he has a huge stride and just walks the lines. He also goes in a rubber snaffle; yet another thing to love about him, and proof once again that good things can definitely come in a small package.

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interior design

Riding on a Budget It Can Be Done!

By Barbara Pinnella



Horse racing has long been considered the Sport of Kings, but showing horses certainly runs a close second. Buying or leasing a horse, the boarding, training and lessons, shoeing and veterinary bills, entry fees, stall fees, and everything else that comes with owning and showing a horse adds up to a lot of money each month.

But what if you are a parent who has a child that is obsessed with horses? Maybe they want to take lessons like one of their friends, or have watched other kids riding at a local stable and want to do the same. But when you look into it for your child, you realize that your pocketbook just won't allow for it. Are there other ways to get your horse crazy child involved? The good news is the answer to that question is a definite yes!

There are many very talented horsemen and horsewomen out there who did not come from privileged means that are having great success, both as riders and trainers. One of those individuals is rider/trainer **Will Baker** of Coast to Coast Equestrian. Will is based in West Milford, New

Jersey, This is a subject that is very important to him, and he really wanted to discuss it with us.

"As someone that came up 'the hard way' starting off as a working student and progressing through the levels by hard work and the help of older professionals, this topic is something that is very close to me," Will explained. "I am quite passionate about helping the next generation to become top horsemen and horsewomen, especially those that came up the way I did. I did not have access to million-dollar horses and Olympic trainers."

Will had many ideas for those younger riders that are coming up today.

"The best advice I can give them is to put yourself out there with no preconceived notions.

It is so easy to get caught up in the ribbons and accolades, but that's not what makes good horsemen and riders. Volunteer as a working student at a barn and do every job with a smile. Don't expect to just get on and ride.



Photo Credit: courtesy of Andrew Ryback

“Watch everything on the ground and don’t be afraid to ask questions. Why did your trainer jump a certain exercise? Why did they use that bit? Don’t forget, horsemanship is not just on the back of a horse but equally on the ground. Why does a horse get a certain supplement? How do we make sure they stay at an appropriate weight for their job? Why do we feed a Grand Prix horse differently than an adult hunter? Knowing these answers is just a part of becoming a well-rounded horseman.”

Young California-based trainer **Sloan Elmasian** believes that in this sport one can come from different backgrounds and places in life and still achieve a common goal, which is riding.



“My advice would be to work hard and never give up on your passion. Just because you don’t come from a certain background there are many opportunities you can take advantage of. For example, working student positions, mentoring under a rider you admire, volunteering at summer camps. The more time you can spend being around the horses and working with them, the better.”

And Sloan still does all of her own work at the horse shows – grooming, stall cleaning, feeding, everything. Her parents help her out, but she is the hands-on person on a daily basis.

Long-time rider and trainer **Michael Endicott** also agreed with what Will and Sloan had to say.



“Depending on where they are with their riding, they should look for a working student job with the very best professional they can find. They need to start at any level of a job that is offered to get a foot in the door, and work their way up the ladder. It’s a tough climb, but if it’s their passion, it will be worth it. I guess they will find out how badly they want it,” he added with a smile.

There are many others who are making an impact in the sport who were unable to buy whatever horse could take them to the winner's circle. Young trainer **Amanda Gomez** had parents who were both into horses, but not the financial means to buy one. She has always had to start a horse from the ground up. Amanda had access to off the track thoroughbreds and trained those. That has progressed to a small and successful breeding program, not to mention that experience helped turn her into quite a good rider.



Photo Credit: courtesy of Julia B

Another young professional who told us his family was a bit limited financially is **Trent McGee**. He became a working student for Archie Cox and took advantage of every opportunity that was given him. Trent told us that he followed Archie around, watching lessons, listening to what he told his clients, and watching him school horses. All that paid off for him, and he is now Archie's assistant.

So just what is the takeaway here? It can be summed up in two words – work hard! People are much more willing to give opportunities to those individuals they see are taking each task seriously and stepping in to do anything asked of them, then those who sulk when asked to do something they don't want to do.

When a trainer, coach, or rider sees that you are willing to do the so-called 'grunt work' without a

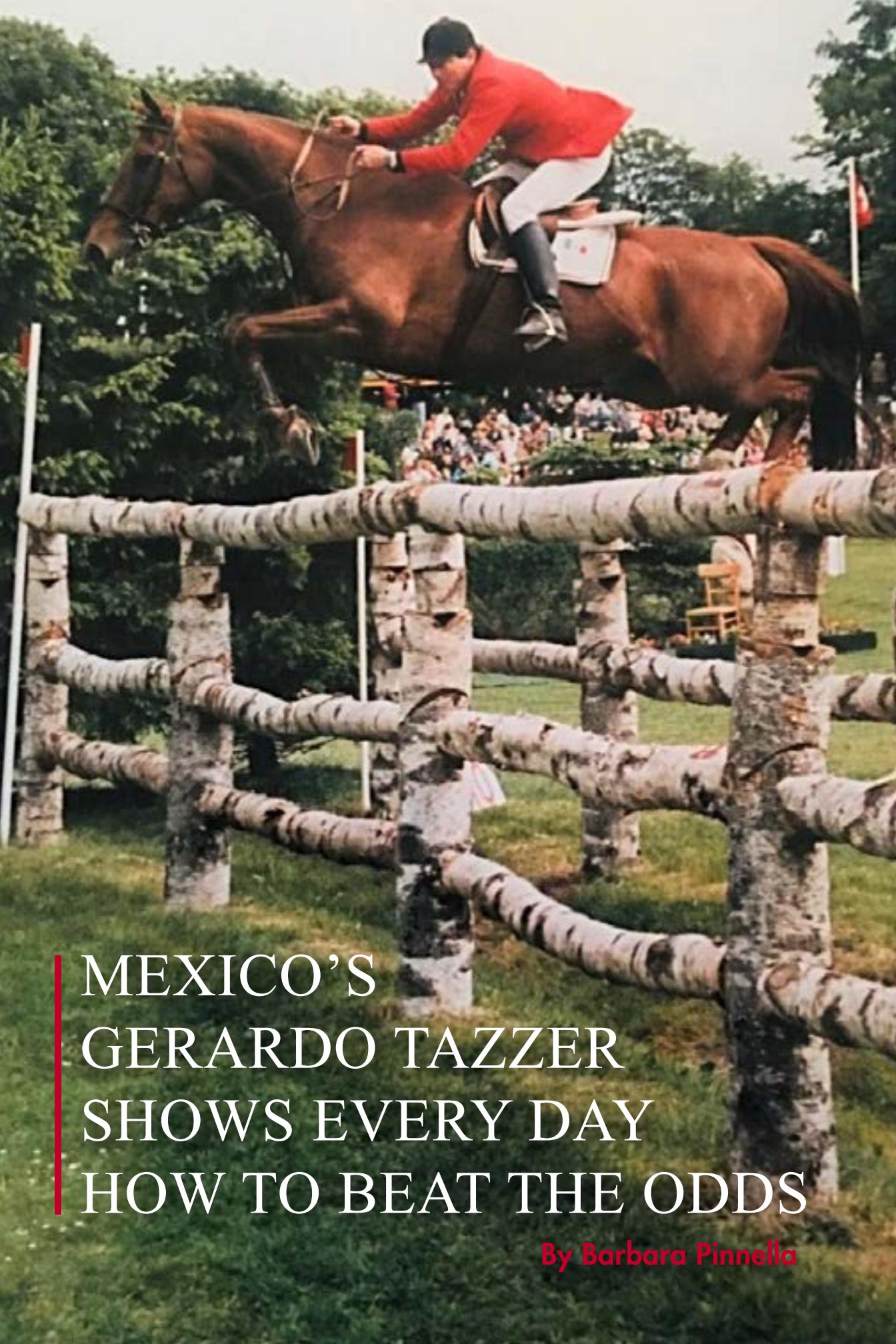
grumble, you can gain respect. With that often comes more responsibility. It won't go unnoticed that you were eager to go the extra mile to get the job done, and more importantly, done correctly. The horse industry needs the next group of potential riders and trainers that have learned everything from the ground up. It is so important, yet so often overlooked.

"Older professionals are always looking to help the next generation, and we don't care how much money you have or what major awards you've won," Will said. "We want you to check your assumptions and opinions at the door by keeping an open mind and being receptive to constructive criticism and new ideas. Ask questions and welcome all answers along the way. The more you put yourself out there, the more opportunities will present themselves."



Photo Credit: courtesy of McCool Photography

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MEXICO'S
GERARDO TAZZER
SHOWS EVERY DAY
HOW TO BEAT THE ODDS

By Barbara Pinnella

Gerardo "Gerry" Tazzer was a mainstay for most of the bigger competitions that Mexico participated in for years. His riding record is long, but he has also faced huge challenges. And while he has not been seen here in the States for quite some time, it is hard to forget his talent, his wit, and his humble demeanor. We hope you enjoy getting to meet this man, one whom many of you might not know anything about.

Gerry's father, Virgilio Tazzer, owned a ranch called La Teja, and Tazzer told us that since he was very young, his favorite thing to do was to go there.

"When I started school, every morning at 5:00 I used to wait for my father in the stairs with my riding boots on, wishing to go riding with him before being dropped off at school. I was almost nine years old when I started riding and 10 years old when I began competing in horse shows."

Also around that time, Gerry was given a nickname.

"I was very skinny at that time, so my friends at school named me "Mosco" because of my very long skinny legs. It has been my nickname ever since."

At Gerry's very first horse show he had to go alone, as his father could not accompany him. Tazzer admits to not really knowing anyone, and not knowing much about horse shows, either. He made friends with another young boy who told him all about the shows, and was very helpful to Gerry. That boy was the now-famous Carlos Aguirre, and the two grew up together, competed together, and became great friends.



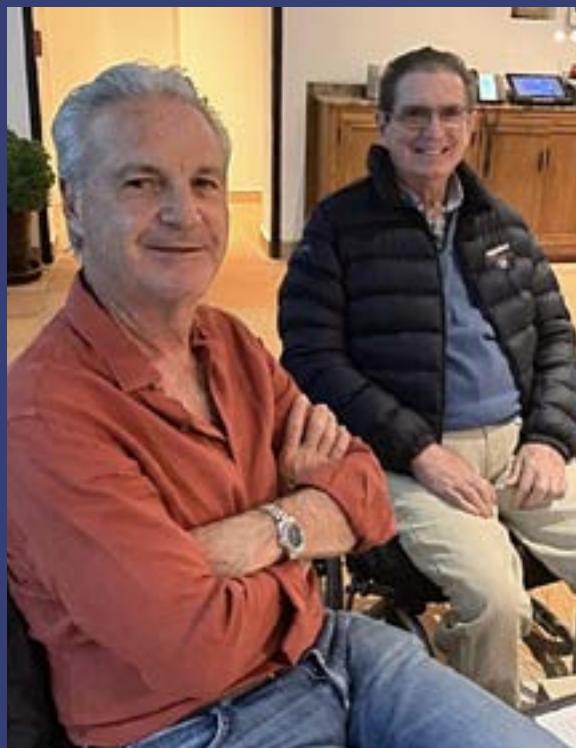
"I won my first International competition at the age of 14 in Puerto Rico," Gerry said. "I was invited to participate in a Junior team there. The Mexican team was good, and brought some of the best horses we had in Mexico at that time, so the young riders were privileged to be able to compete on their horses. I got a very good one from Rafael Jimenez called Gaylor, and won the class on Sunday. The best teams from all America were there, as well as from Canada, Venezuela, Chile, Colombia, and others. I keep such a nice memory of it."

Gerry recalled that his first very good mare was Canica. She was a small pinto, and he referred to her as the smartest, quickest little mare you have ever seen. He won almost every class on her. About that same time, he began riding other horses, among them Fili and Pajarito.

"A dear friend of my father, a famous architect named Luis Barragan, loaned me his mare Arjala. At that time, I was 16 years old and I started competing her. I had such a good time riding her in the big classes, competing with the best horses and riders that there were at that time. We were an excellent couple, but at 16 and 17 years old I was too young to participate in the Mexico Olympic Games."

He might have been too young then, but he made up for lost time as soon as he could. Tazzer rode in the Olympics five times, has ridden in four World Cups, four World Championships, and seven times in the Pan American Games. He has one Olympic Bronze medal, one Silver medal and six Bronze medals from the Pan American Games, and four Heraldos.

Those Heraldos used to be a very important prize in Mexico, and are very special ones for Gerry. He also has been awarded the National Prize of Sports, was the rider for the Mexican President, and has been a Chef d'Equipe for both the Seoul Olympics and Team Scappino.



I mentioned that he has definitely faced his challenges, and he discussed one of those with us.

"February 2, 2007. It was a Friday morning. I was in a very nice place called Valle de Bravo, waiting for my wife and daughter to spend a nice weekend together. The

Scappino Triple Crown, which features showjumping, golf, and sailing was going to be held there, and I was the Scappino Chef d'Equipe.

"The horse I was riding was very good, confident and clean," Gerry continued, "but tended to twist at the jump. Friday, we did a

small class at 1.35m. I jumped a vertical, he got to twisting a little so I lost my stirrup and my balance, and unfortunately fell off."

There was one big problem with the lovely setting for this event; it is in the middle of a forest outside of Mexico City, and Gerry was seriously injured.

"Medical help took some time. A dear friend sent his helicopter in order to bring me to a Mexico City hospital, but it was impossible getting me in; the helicopter door size was too little. Then a second helicopter came and we faced the same problem.

"Finally, at around 7:00 p.m. a good friend called the Governor and he immediately sent a big helicopter that opened up the back door so I could travel. I had a very long but excellent spinal cord surgery by Dr. Guy Broc and Dr. Francisco Montalvo; they both saved my life."

I'm sure that is true, but Gerry is a bit modest. His lovely wife Anna told us a bit more about Gerry's recovery and the doctors that were there for him.

"Gerry did not mention this, but February 2nd will be 15 years since the accident. It has been hard, but...HE HAS NOT BEEN ABSENT TO ANY REHAB THERAPY ONE SINGLE DAY. Some days he feels exhausted and painful, or some he is not in a good mood. Other days it is very cold or raining, but he has never, ever quit one day!"

The aforementioned Dr. Broc was the principal surgeon. Dr. Montalvo, who has been the Tazzer's family doctor in Mexico and a close family friend, helped Dr. Broc in Gerry's surgery. Dr. Montalvo's son Mauricio is also a doctor, and while still young at that time, was assistant for his father. But there was one other doctor who was very instrumental in Gerry's recovery.



"Dr Barth Green took care of Gerry's rehab for a year since we flew to Jackson Hospital after surgery, and we became very dear friends. The last day in Miami, right before going to the airport, Dr Green came to visit us to say good bye. The last thing he said to Gerry, staring into his eyes was, 'Gerardo, don't let anybody tell you your limits, because no one really knows. It will take time, but you keep on trying.' Those words made a difference in our lives. Thank you forever, dear Dr. Green!"

Gerry feels that the rise of the quality of the horses and riders in Mexico today has a lot to do with the horse shows in Mexico that are available to them. He believes that Mexican riders have put a lot of energy and enthusiasm in horse shows.

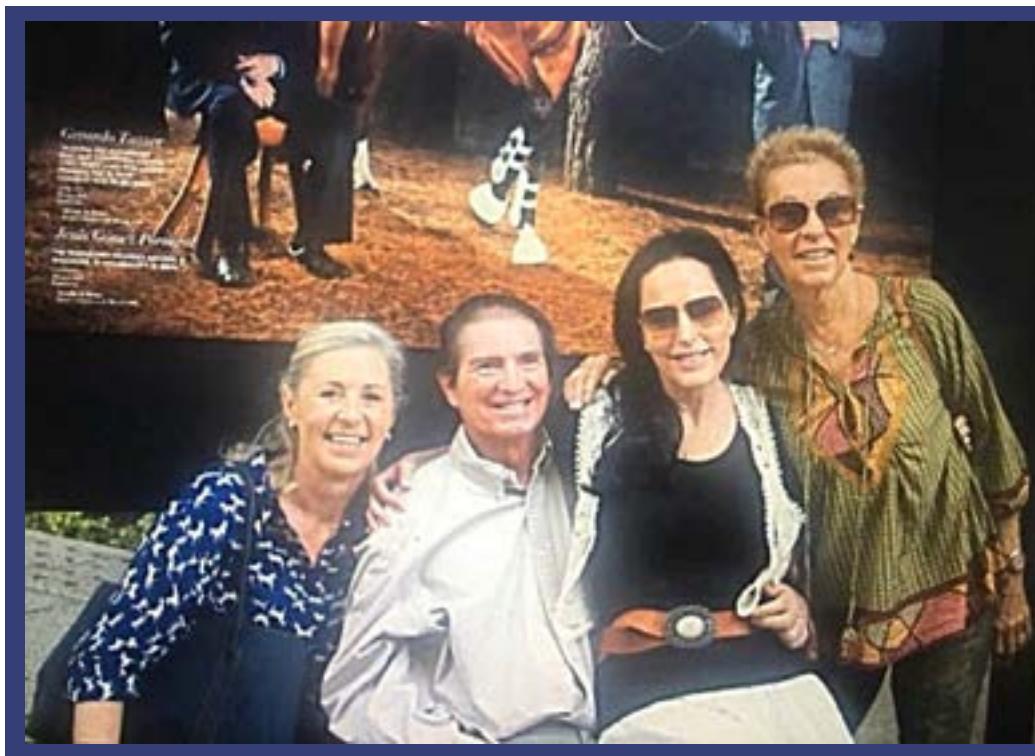
"Today we have very many beautiful and well-organized horse shows here. We have so many good horse shows around the city as well as outside it. Show organizers are also bringing in the best course designers from around the world to build the courses. Also, we have been buying and breeding good, quality horses."

It is probably no surprise that Gerry is still around horses. He continues to share his knowledge by giving some lessons and clinics. To assure those nice horses will remain in Mexico, he is also involved in a

breeding program with Fernando Senderos. While he is a quadriplegic, his outlook on life is a great one, and he was happy to share it.

"Although I am handicapped, I am blessed with full health, and the unconditional support of my family and friends both here and around the world. The most important thing is that I have not lost my faith.

"I would like to take this opportunity to thank my wife Anna Rita, my daughter Anna, and



every dear friend that has helped me in so many ways. It is their kindness and love that keeps me motivated.

"I thank God that He put horses in my path. A life without them is no life at all!"

Gerry is a special man and we are pleased to introduce him to a lot of you who never had the pleasure. We would like to also extend thanks to his wife Anna for all of her help for this article. It couldn't have been written without her!

Benjamin Perez

Farrier Services



Client Caitlin Campbell.
Winner of the \$100,000 Grand Prix at
the Desert International Horse Park

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Augusta Iwasaki and Small Love

**Temecula Valley National Horse Show III,
Temecula, CA. June 5**

\$22,000 3'3" /3'6" Jr/AO Hunter Classic NET FINALS

Photo Credit: Ally Shaffer/Phelps Sports



Katie Taylor Davidson and L'Con Reyes

Blenheim June Classic I,

San Juan Capistrano, CA. June 12

\$25,000 Blenheim West Coast Hunter Classic

Photo Credit: McCool Photography



Trent McGee and Boucherom

Blenheim June Classic I,

San Juan Capistrano, CA. June 12

\$25,000 Rogue 3 Grand Prix

Photo Credit: McCool Photography



Hannah Loly and Quitana I I

Blenheim June Classic II,

San Juan Capistrano, CA. June 18

Blenheim June Classic II Grand Prix

Photo Credit: McCool Photography



Katie Laurie and Cera Caruso

Traverse City Spring Horse Show,

Traverse City, MI. June 24

\$36,600 Two-Phase Speed CSI3*

Photo Credit: Allyson Lagiovane/Phelps Sports



Karrie Rufer and Stern Dei Folletti

Blenheim June Classic III,

San Juan Capistrano, CA. June 25

\$25,000 Ritz-Carlton, Laguna Niguel Grand Prix

Photo Credit: McCool Photography



WINNERS





Zume Gallaher and Edita
Blenheim June Classic III,
San Juan Capistrano, CA. June 26
\$25,000 Summer Festival Grand Prix
Photo Credit: McCool Photography



Jimmy Torano and Kochio Z
Kentucky Summer Horse Show,
Lexington, KY. July 28
\$25,000 Kentucky Summer Classic Grand Prix
Photo Credit: Shawn McMillen



Lacey Gilbertson and Byzance Mail
Kentucky Summer Horse Show,
Lexington, KY. July 30
\$50,000 Rood & Riddle Grand Prix
Photo Credit: Shawn McMillen



Sophie Simpson-Leckie and Hero W
Blenheim Racing Festival,
San Juan Capistrano, CA. July 30
\$25,000 Blenheim Racing Festival Grand Prix
Photo Credit: McCool Photography



Jimmy Torano and Kochio Z
Kentucky Summer Horse Show,
Lexington, KY. August 4
\$25,000 Kentucky Summer Classic Grand Prix
Photo Credit: Shawn McMillen



Darragh Kerins and Intuitive

**Kentucky Summer Horse Show,
Lexington, KY. August 6**

\$50,000 Kentucky Summer Classic Grand Prix
Photo Credit: Shawn McMillen

JJ Torano and Paris Charm

**Kentucky Summer Horse Show,
Lexington, KY. August 7**

Pony Grand Hunter Champion
Photo Credit: Shawn McMillen



Team Sweden

Herning, Denmark, August 13

FEI World Jumping Championships



Avery Glynn and Gambler B

**Bluegrass Festival Horse Show,
Lexington, KY. August 20**

ASPCA Maclay

Photo Credit: Jessica Brighenti/Phelps Sports



Jose Maria Quintana and Catoki Boy

**Blenheim Summer Classic,
San Juan Capistrano, CA. August 20**

\$25,000 Blenheim Summer Classic Grand Prix
Photo Credit: McCool Photography



Savannah Hemby and Juju VDM

Bluegrass Festival Horse Show

Lexington, KY. August 21

\$40,000 Bluegrass Festival Grand Prix

Photo Credit: Jessica Brighenti/Phelps Sports

Santiago Lambre and Comtes 202
Traverse City Horse Fall Tournament of Champions,
Traverse City, MI. September 2

\$37,000 Speed CSI3*

Photo Credit: Andrew Ryback



Daniel Bluman and Cachemire De Braize

Hampton Classic, Bridgehampton

NY. September 3

\$74,000 Hampton Classic Grand Prix

Photo Credit: KindMedia

Ashley Bond and Donatello 141

HITS-on-the-Hudson,

Saugerties, NY. September 9

\$138,600 Saugerties Jumper Classic CSI5*

Photo Credit: Rebecca Walton



Trent McGee and Boucherom

Blenheim Fall Tournament, San Juan

Capistrano, CA. September 17

Blenheim Fall Tournament Grand Prix

Photo Credit: McCool Photography



Skylar Wireman

Blenheim Fall Tournament, San Juan Capistrano, CA. September 17

NHSAA/ASPCA Maclay Region 8 Championship

Photo Credit: McCool Photography

Mia Mannis and Hollyday V

Devon Pa. September 17

\$25,000 Devon Fall Classic Grand Prix

Photo Credit: Cassidy Kleiri/Phelps Sports



Shane Sweetnam and James Kann Cruz

Traverse City, MI. September 19

\$405,300 American Gold Cup Grand Prix

Photo Credit: Andrew Ryback



Jose Maria Quintana and Catoki Boy

Blenheim International Jumping Festival, San Juan

Capistrano, CA. September 23

\$20,000 Markel Insurance Final

Photo Credit: McCool Photography



Joie Gatlin and Uccello de Will

Blenheim International Jumping Festival, San Juan

Capistrano, CA. September 24

\$50,000 Blenheim International Jumping Festival 1.50m Grand Prix

Photo Credit: McCool Photography





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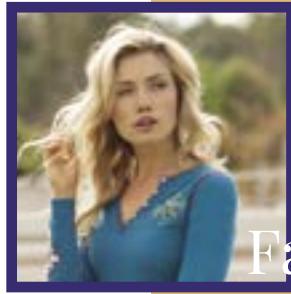
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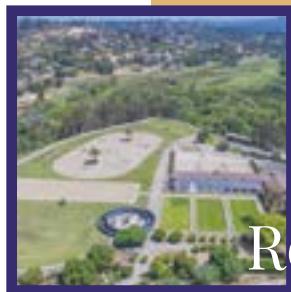
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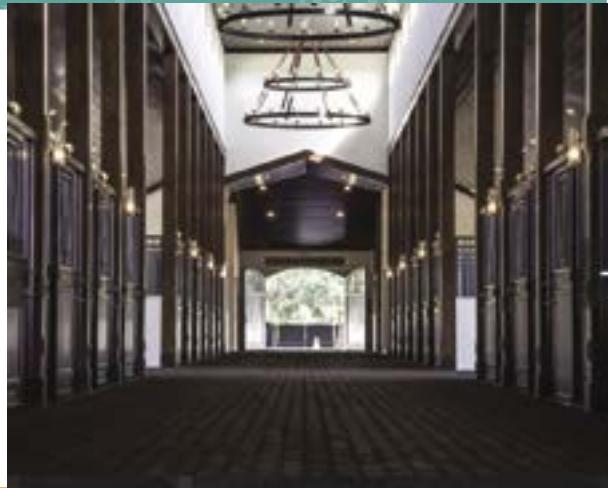
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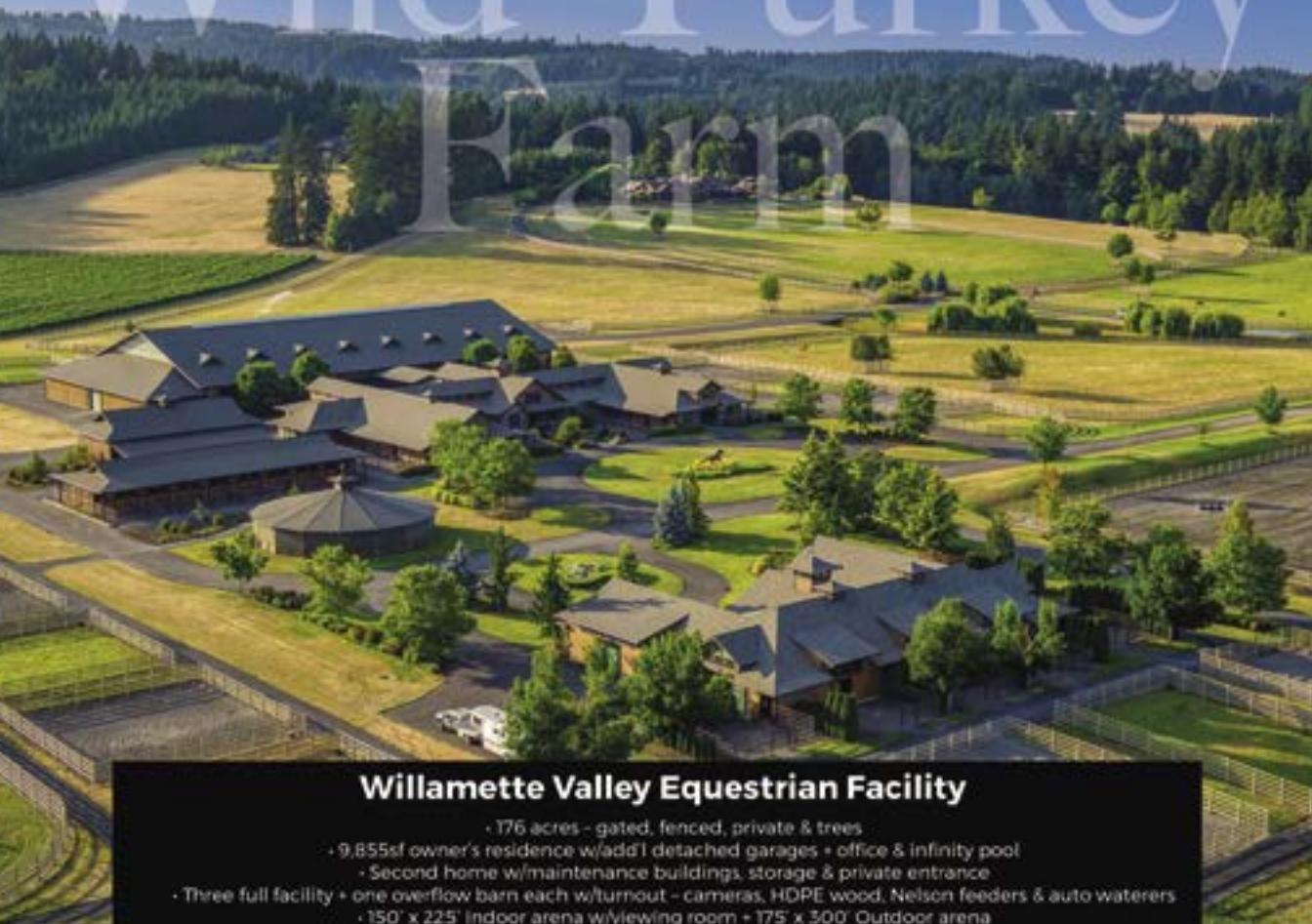
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