

# THE NEWS

North Carolina Dressage and Combined Training Association



[www.NCDCTA.org](http://www.NCDCTA.org)

3rd Quarter Issue, 2023

## IN THIS ISSUE:

- Pg. 3-7 -Labor of Love Results
- Pg. 8 -Instructor's Workshop
- Pg. 9 -Jr/Yr Clinic with Elena Sokolovskaia
- Pg. 11 -USDF Youth Dressage Rider Recognition Pins
- Pg. 12-24 -Equine Ed. Festival Report
- Pg. 25 -Youth Scholarship -Willow Keller
- Pg. 27 -Youth Scholarship -Ellie Balakrishnan
- Pg. 28 -Junior Scholarship Info
- Pg. 29 -Volunteer for NCDCTA

## Instructor's Workshop

November 18, 2023

Ardenwood Farm, Chapel Hill, NC



[www.NCDCTA.org](http://www.NCDCTA.org) for more information!

### DAYS TO REMEMBER:

11/30/23 is the last day to show for HOY Points!

11/30/23 - Your 2024 Membership is due and  
time nominate you horse for 2025 HOY

HOLD THE DATE!

**2023 HOY NCDCTA GALA!**

**1/20/23**



NCDCTA  
**Harvest Moon  
Dressage**  
CAROLINA HORSE PARK,  
RAEFORD, NC  
**September 16-17, 2023**

Volunteers for Harvest Moon needed, this weekend,  
September 16-17, 2023! If you can help out please contact  
Secretary Patti Hildreth, email: [ncdctaentries@gmail.com](mailto:ncdctaentries@gmail.com)

**NCDCTA  
LABOR OF LOVE  
I & II**  
SEPTEMBER 2 & 3, 2023  
RESULTS!  
CHAMPIONS &  
HIGH SCORES



Make your plans now!

NCDCTA DRESSAGE  
CHAMPIONSHIP

**AUTUMN  
LEAVES**

November 3-5, 2023  
Carolina Horse Park, Raeford, NC  
Opening Date September 15, 2023  
Closing/Received by Date: October 23, 2023  
Jr/YR Scholarship Application Due: September 15, 2023



[www.ncdcta.org/al](http://www.ncdcta.org/al)



# NCDCTA 2023 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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## **NCDCTA NEWSLETTER DEADLINE IS MAY 1ST FOR THE 2ND QUARTER ISSUE!**

NEWSLETTER ADVERTISING RATES: MEMBERS RECEIVE A 10% DISCOUNT.

MEMBER RATES: \$135 FULL PAGE, \$90 HALF PAGE, \$54 QUARTER PAGE

NON-MEMBER RATES: \$150 FULL PAGE, \$100 HALF PAGE, \$60 QUARTER PAGE

NEWSLETTER EDITOR - SHANNON ST. CLAIR HOFFMAN - [NEWS@NCDCTA.ORG](mailto:NEWS@NCDCTA.ORG) OR (919) 754-7568

### **ANNUAL NCDCTA MEMBERSHIP:** (EXPIRES 11/30 ANNUALLY)

SENIOR MEMBER - \$59, JUNIOR MEMBER - \$49, FAMILY MEMBER - \$39

(FAMILY MEMBER MUST RESIDE AT THE SAME ADDRESS AS ACTIVE SENIOR MEMBER)

JOIN/RENEW TODAY AT: [WWW.NCDCTA.ORG/MEMBERSHIP](http://WWW.NCDCTA.ORG/MEMBERSHIP)

### **ANNUAL NCDCTA HORSE OF THE YEAR REGISTRATION** (EXPIRES 11/30 ANNUALLY)

HORSE REGISTRATION - \$50 OR ONE VOLUNTEER CARD

REGISTER YOUR HORSE TODAY AT: [WWW.NCDCTA.ORG/HORSE-REGISTRATION](http://WWW.NCDCTA.ORG/HORSE-REGISTRATION)

### **REMINDER:**

TO QUALIFY FOR HORSE OF THE YEAR (HOY), RIDER/OWNER MUST BE ACTIVE MEMBERS AND HORSE MUST BE REGISTERED AT THE TIME POINTS ARE EARNED.

## Newsletter Advertising Rates:

### **MEMBER (10% DISCOUNT)**

\$135 FULL PAGE

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To place an Ad:  
 Shannon Hoffman  
[news@ncdcta.org](mailto:news@ncdcta.org)



# Congratulations To All!

## Labor of Love I Performance High Score Winners!



**Trainer Award**  
Hannah Shook

### Training Level

Danielle Sintoni, Ovechkin R

### First Level

Hannah Shook, Saint

### Second Level

Alexa LaTorre, Lucky Luke

### Third Level

Tami Batts, Rosalyn

### Fourth Level

Dawn Weniger, Kayman

### FEI

Dawn Weniger, Claudius



### High Score Adult Amateur (Sat)

Elizabeth Essenmacher, Kubla Khan

### High Score Jr/YR (Sat)

Addison Bender, Rising Star



### Jr/Yr Team Challenge

#### First Place: The Cowgirls

Addison Bender, Fineligh Flowers, Ainsley Urban

#### Second Place: Flowersland

Ava Basinger, Reagan Payffer, Marie Seaux

#### Third Place: Katherine!

Tatum Blake, Keelin Craige, Jayna Lee



## Labor of Love II Performance High Score Winners!



### Training Level

Helen Ingersoll, Lanciero

### First Level

Hannah Shook, Saint

### Second Level

Danielle Hogland, Nighttimes Best

### Third Level

Tamara Langton, Dux MF

### Fourth Level

Aimee Klemenz, Khaleesi

### FEI

Alexa Clegg, Delovely

## Labor of Love I&II Breed Performance High Score Winners



### High Score Stock Horse

Marissa Brzescinski,  
Rogue One



### ISR/Oldenburg NA High Score

Tami Batts,  
Rosalyn



### TIP High Score Thoroughbred

Allison Sandifer,  
Uptoheavnnbakagain



### AHS High Score Hanoverian

Andrea Hammer,  
Bravissimo A



### NADWA High Score Danish Warmblood

Theresa Horne,  
Vinci Arapaho



### National Dressage Pony Cup Champion

Emeraude Dandurand,  
Halcyonia Cherry

### Reserve

Elena Chisholm,  
Rebel Without A Cause



## Labor of Love I

### Dressage Sport Horse Breeding Champions

Award	Owner	Horse
<b>DSHB Grand Champion &amp; Wendell Haymon Award</b>	Courtney Alston	Tackmann's Delicious
<b>DSHB Reserve Grand Champion</b>	Amanda Brady	Baltic Myth
<b>GAIG/USDFBC Foal Champion</b>	Ellen Ziemer	Namaste PVF
<b>GAIG/USDFBC Foal Reserve Champion</b>	Charlene Jensen	Carpe Noctem
<b>GAIG/USDFBC Filly Champion</b>	Angela Stanaway	Loriella BC
<b>GAIG/USDFBC Colt/Gelding Champion</b>	Ellen Ziemer	Mufasa D
<b>GAIG/USDFBC Colt/Gelding Reserve Champion</b>	Rose Aschenbrenner	Vermillion ASH
<b>GAIG/USDFBC Four-Year-Old Prospect Champion</b>	Amanda Brady	Baltic Myth
<b>GAIG/USDFBC Mare Champion</b>	Amanda Brady	Baltic Myth
<b>GAIG/USDFBC Mare Reserve Champion</b>	Renee O'Leary	Springborgs Device
<b>GAIG/USDFBC Stallion Champion</b>	Courtney Alston	Tackmann's Delicious

Thank you to Sandie Dennis for sponsoring  
the Wendell Haymon Award!



## Labor of Love II

### Dressage Sport Horse Breeding Champions

Award	Owner	Horse
<b>DSHB Grand Champion &amp; Wendell Haymon Award</b>	Renee O'Leary	Springborgs Device
<b>DSHB Reserve Grand Champion</b>	Rose Aschenbrenner	Vermillion ASH
<b>AHS DSHB High Place Hanoverian (LOL I&amp;II)</b>	Samantha Kidd	Elodie ASH
<b>NADWA DSHB High Score Danish WB (LOL I&amp;II)</b>	Renee O'Leary	Springborgs Device
<b>GAIG/USDFBC Foal Champion</b>	Ellen Ziemer	Namaste PVF
<b>GAIG/USDFBC Foal Reserve Champion</b>	Samantha Kidd	Elodie ASH
<b>GAIG/USDFBC Filly Champion</b>	Angela Stanaway	Loriella BC
<b>GAIG/USDFBC Filly Reserve Champion</b>	Samantha Kidd	Masako ASH
<b>GAIG/USDFBC Colt/Gelding Champion</b>	Rose Aschenbrenner	Vermillion ASH
<b>GAIG/USDFBC Colt/Gelding Reserve Champion</b>	Ellen Ziemer	Mufasa D
<b>GAIG/USDFBC Four-Year-Old Prospect Champion</b>	Amanda Brady	Baltic Myth
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<b>GAIG/USDFBC Stallion Champion</b>	Courtney Alston	Tackmann's Delicious



Thank you to Sandie Dennis for sponsoring  
the Wendell Haymon Award!





# THANK YOU TO OUR NCDCTA LABOR OF LOVE SPONSORS!

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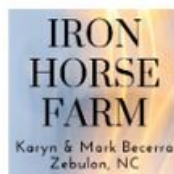
## Gold Sponsors



## Bronze Sponsor



## Hospitality Sponsors







**November 18, 2023 • Ardenwood Farm • Chapel Hill, NC**

**Join us for a day of unmounted professional development!**

Our keynote speaker, *Beth Clarke* will discuss *Equine Law* in the morning. We will have a group lunch and spend time talking about business with one another. In the afternoon, you will choose to attend breakout sessions.

Topics will include: Bookkeeping, Navigating Client Drama, and Reimagining Income.

**Visit: [www.NCDCTA.org](http://www.NCDCTA.org) for more information and to register!**

**Thank you to our first Workshop Sponsor!**

Contact Ail Perkins if you would  
like to become a sponsor!

[dressage@ncdcta.org](mailto:dressage@ncdcta.org)



[www.blueprintdevelopmentcoaching.com](http://www.blueprintdevelopmentcoaching.com)



**November 3-5, 2023**

**Carolina Horse Park, Raeford, NC**

**Opening Date September 15, 2023**

**Closing/Received by Date: October 23, 2023**

**Jr/YR Scholarship**

**Application Due: September 15, 2023**

**Autumn Leaves Qualifying Dates: 12/1/22 - 10/22/23.**

"Eligibility for both the Dressage and Eventing Championships requires at least one qualifying score to be earned by the horse/rider pair in the division(s) they wish to participate in the Championships during the qualifying period of the Championship."

Any questions about your eligibility to ride in the NCDCTA Dressage Championships should be directed to the Membership Secretary: [Membership@NCDCTA.org](mailto:Membership@NCDCTA.org)



# *Save the date!*

*NCDCTA will be hosting a JR/YR  
clinic with Elena Sokolovskaia  
October 21-22 at Full Circle Farm in  
Statesville, NC.*

*There will also be a special lecture given by  
Dr. Jose Castro DVM.*



Contact [jryr@ncdcta.org](mailto:jryr@ncdcta.org) for more info and to sign up!



# JOIN TODAY!

## North Carolina Dressage & Combined Training Association

NEW  
HORSE OF THE YEAR AWARDS  
FOR 2023!

- **National Eventing Track**  
Nationally-recognized Horse Trials track. Nationally recognized shows and qualified out of state Horse Trials are included in this track.
- **NCDCTA Schooling Track**  
NCDCTA-recognized Horse Trials track. War Horse, Portofino, Heather Ridge Farm, etc. If you are only competing in schooling shows, this track is for you.
- **NCDCTA Recognized CT Track**  
NCDCTA-recognized Combined Training track. A new category of recognition for Horse of the Year Awards.

**JOIN & REGISTER  
YOUR HORSE NOW!**

For more information on HOY Divisions  
[www.ncdcta.org/horse-of-the-year](http://www.ncdcta.org/horse-of-the-year)

JOIN NCDCTA  
[www.ncdcta.org/membership](http://www.ncdcta.org/membership)

REGISTER YOUR HORSE FOR HOY  
[www.ncdcta.org/horse-registration](http://www.ncdcta.org/horse-registration)

**Other Membership Benefits:** Eventing Grants, Annual Scholarships, Clinics, Awards Gala, Newsletter, Business Directory, and more!



**NCDCTA**







# Congratulations to our NCDCTA Youth/Jr Members!

## 2023 Recipients of USDF Youth Dressage Rider Recognition Pins Named

**For Immediate Release, Wednesday, September 6, 2023**

Lexington, KY (September 6, 2023) – The United States Dressage Federation™ (USDF) is pleased to announce the 2023 recipients of USDF Youth Dressage Rider Recognition Pins. This program recognizes the accomplishments of youth dressage riders in not only dressage, but also in academics, volunteerism, and equestrian education. Earning their recognition pin was no small task, with each recipient being required to achieve and submit two dressage scores of 60 percent or higher at any level, maintain a 2.5 GPA, record 16 hours of equine-related education, and complete 20 volunteer hours, for each year of enrollment in the program.

This year's recipients are:

**First Year Recipients:** Kirsty Alexander (WA), Addy Batcheller (AR), **Claudia Foushee (NC)**, Darian Kauk (NE), Walker Lefkowitz (NV), Isabelle Montes (KY), Adalynn Nelson (IA), Teagan Niles (VA), Finley Peterson (VT), Natalie Porto (NY), Britney Richwine (IN), Emma Szachnieski (MO), Carlee Jean Turner (OR)

**Second Year Recipients:** Lauren Anderson (PA), **Harper Kane (NC)**, **Hayden Kane (NC)**, Margaret Raffo (NY)

**Sixth Year Recipient:** Gabriella Escobar (VA)

For anyone interested in the USDF Youth Dressage Rider Pin Recognition Program, the program year runs July 1-June 30, and pins can be earned in each year of enrollment. Students who are currently enrolled in grades six to twelve of a middle/high school or home school program, and are current USDF Group or Participating Members, are eligible to enroll. For more information about this or other youth programs and offerings, visit the USDF website at [www.usdf.org](http://www.usdf.org), e-mail [youth@usdf.org](mailto:youth@usdf.org), or contact us by phone at (859) 971-2277.

<https://usdf.org/press/news>

Founded in 1973, the United States Dressage Federation is a nonprofit membership organization dedicated to education, recognition of achievement, and promotion of dressage. For more information about USDF membership or programs, visit [www.usdf.org](http://www.usdf.org), email [usdressage@usdf.org](mailto:usdressage@usdf.org), or call (859) 971-2277.



# Experiences from the:



## EQUINE EDUCATION FESTIVAL

Fun Filled and Educational weekend for the Equine Enthusiast!

Hosted by: North Carolina Dressage and Combined Training Association

PortoFino Equestrian Center, Clayton, NC

**July 21 - 23, 2023**

**ALL ARE WELCOME!**

**Mark your Calendars now!**

Phillip Dutton (Eventing) is one of the top-ranked eventers in US History. Phillip is a 7-time Olympian and 3-time Olympic Medalist and has represented the US on several WEG and Pan-AM teams with great success. Phillip was USEA Leading Rider of the Year in 1998, 2000-2010, and 2012. He was name Top FEI Event Rider in 2005, 2nd in 2016. Phillip and his wife Evie, run New Prospect Farm in West Grove, Pennsylvania.

### Eventing with Phillip Dutton



### Dressage with Leslie Morse

Leslie Morse is one of the United States most accomplished dressage riders and has represented the United States at five FEI World Cup Finals, earned a Team Bronze Medal at the FEI World Equestrian Games in Aachen, Germany, won the Exquis World Dressage Masters Grand Prix Special twice, was a two-time alternate to the U.S. Olympic team, and been a multiple National Grand Prix Champion.

An equestrian for over 40 years, Daniel Stewart combined 25 years as an international coach and clinician with a degree in physical education to create a series of equestrian clinics, lectures and training camps. As the internationally acclaimed author of Pressure Proof, Ride Right, Fit and Focused, and Bolder, Braver, Brighter he's widely considered one of the worlds leading experts on equestrian sport psychology, athletics, and performance.

### Sports Psychology Rider Fitness Daniel Stewart



**Auditors,  
Ed. Seminars & Shopping**

## Thank you High Time Photography!

[High Time Photography Free Photos from the  
NCDCTA Equine Education Festival](#)



# The 2023 Equine Education Festival at PortoFino

By: Sandra Thompson, PortoFino's Summer Email Newsletter

All Photos Credits to: High Time Photography



The Equine Festival was a three-day event that showcased three world renowned clinicians: Leslie Morse, USA Olympic Dressage Rider; Daniel Stewart, International Coach, Clinician and Author focusing on Equestrian Sports Psychology and Rider Fitness Bootcamp; and Phillip Dutton, a seven time Olympian and three-time Olympic medalist.

Leslie Morse worked with riders across various levels of dressage on Friday and Saturday. Each rider submitted what they wanted to work on with Leslie prior to the Festival. During each rider's time with Leslie, she focused on the rider's and horse's needs in accomplishing what the rider has submitted as areas of focus. There were several individuals that audited all the dressage riders on Friday and Saturday.

Daniel Stewart kicked off his clinic on Saturday afternoon with the dressage component in the covered arena. Performance Anxiety is a real thing. Daniel Stewart said, "Pressure makes you do three things: freeze, go fast (speed up) and forget". His exercises on Saturday were focused on making you be present in the moment, making proper decisions and remembering what he asked you do in the moment. There were approximately 3-4 riders in each of the three groups of riders.

Sunday Daniel took the groups to the show jump arena and provided "rules for the round". For example, the jumps were numbered, the higher number jumps earned you more points, the "squirrel" jump earned you the most points, you had to be on correct leads all the time, you had to count your strides out loud, finish in pre-established time allotment and go through the cones to stop clock. Each rider accumulated points and faults. Depending on how many faults you had, determined how many sit-ups you had to do at the end of the session. Another great point that Daniel continued to drive home was "horse before course". Put the horse first always!



Phillip started his clinic on Saturday afternoon on cross-country and continued through Sunday. He meticulously trained groups from Green as Grass to Intermediate riders! His expertise in the field and show jump arena is hard to match and all riders took home more skills than they came with!

Phillip's skills are unparalleled, and we were super proud to have him here in PortoFino Equestrian Center! Look for a return visit in a clinic format coming in Spring of 2024!

## NCDCTA's many thanks for hosting the Festival!



# NCDCTA EQUINE EDUCATION FESTIVAL

## Leslie Morse Dressage Clinic Highlights

By: Laura Pendleton

**Leslie Morse used a great thought process about training horses at all levels.**

She Said, "Horses are forever like three year old kids. They need a lot of patience and understanding with boundaries."

**Another gem from her was:**

"Don't let your horse train you?"

**A few more thoughts from Leslie:**

- Be wicked quick with your leg.
- After a strong correction, under ride the horse.
- Even pressure in the reins.
- Energize the canter on the short side in your test.
- Pirouette in the canter.
- Think of using your outside leg more into the belly of the horse.
- Really bend in the corners of a test.
- Use leg then release.
- Stay light with your seat.
- Rhythm control, helps a tense horse.

**The final point that Leslie would certainly want me to include:**

Leslie said, "Make sure to use every inch of the real estate inside of the arena when performing your tests!", she continued. "If I am coming down centerline after you have cut corners, I am happily going to gain the four points that you lost in every corner. That makes me the winner, and you?"

**Thank you, NCDCTA, for bringing this event to our state. We all need fresh ideas and understanding as we work with our horses. Students need help to achieve more harmony and vision everyday.**

**We are never too young or too old to learn about the sport that we have grown to love!**



Dressage Clinician Leslie Morse answering questions from the crowd of auditors. Photo credit : High Time Photography



Professional Educational Talks under the tent were very popular!  
Here Janine Malone, USDF R Judge is speaking to a packed tent!



# NCDCTA EQUINE EDUCATION FESTIVAL

## Daniel Stewart Clinic – NCDCTA Equine Festival

By: Sarah Bookner

I have been looking forward to sharing my amazing experience with the renown Daniel Stewart, a sports psychologist who has partnered with USEF and has worked with some of the nation's top riders all while being a popular clinician for riders of all ages and levels. The two days included mounted and unmounted portions of his "Pressure Proofing" Clinic. Daniel Stewart pushed the riders to acknowledge their anxieties and fears. Then he gave us tools to move on past them.

Day one included a mounted exercise focused on dressage. Multiple groups trotted into the dressage ring, broken into groups by experience level. This allowed everyone to ride at their own level but still benefit from the exercise.

The premise of the exercise? Ride your test under pressure. The pressure? A crowd of auditors watching as Daniel tells you your dressage test (just 6 movements in total), as you are trotting past X. We didn't know our test beforehand! You had to ride the movements in order, under an allotted time. Any forgetting a movement or running over the time allowed, took away points, and possibly leading you to having to do sit ups after your ride. At one point during the exercise, he told us our test as we trotted down centerline, only then to be told we had to ride it backwards. Talk about pressure and nerves kicking in!

Daniel's Clinic was challenging but fun! He used this exercise to teach us to focus on the ride at hand and the horse underneath you. Any fear around being watched melted away as you worked to ride the test in order and hopefully not rack up any sit ups!

That evening, riders and auditors gathered under the big tent to listen to Daniel speak about what fears we all share. He reviewed handling your riding under pressure, some pointers, and the tools or mental tasks to overcome them. He encouraged riders of all disciplines to grab one of his books. This way they would have the exercises to work on at home or with a trainer.

Day two featured the "Squirrel" exercise. This included ground poles for our dressage riders and jumps for the more experienced jumpers. Each jump meant points, and you had a certain amount of time to get as many points as you could, with encouragement to attempt the "squirrel", a jump in the center of the ring that was higher than the rest and sat in upside-down cups. Riders had to create their own course as they went, with a reminder to focus on three mental tasks, to get the job done.

My horse decided there was one jump he didn't want to jump, refusing multiple times, which lead to my nerves kicking in. Refusing in front of a crowd of onlookers is sure to leave room for anxiety! Daniel pulled me in front of the auditors, to share my experience and to discuss what happens when fear kicks in. A good reminder on when to use those important mental tasks to overcome. I needed to focus on supporting my horse underneath me, determining my course, and quality of canter. With that in mind, we dug deep and popped over all the fences to earn those points!

After the clinic, I shared my experience with my trainer, discussing the exercises we could to work on at home. Sometimes you just have to live with fear, acknowledge it, then "move on". Daniel has an endless amount of guidance, exercises, and tools. To help us work through our fears, perform at our best under pressure, and set us on a path to achieve our goals, both in and out of the show ring. I highly suggest reading any one of his books to set yourself up for success!



Daniel Stewart (center) surrounded by clinic riders and auditors during the NCDCTA Equine Festival, July, 2023. Photo Credit: High time Photography



# NCDCTA EQUINE EDUCATION FESTIVAL

## My Experience in the Phillip Dutton Clinic

By Lea Dardess

On the weekend of July 22nd my lease horse Monty and I traveled out with two other barn mates to participate in the NCDCTA Equine Festival in the beginner novice/novice level of the Phillip Dutton clinic. Monty and I have been working hard on our confidence over cross country fences these past few months. Even though we have recently had two double clear cross country rounds at War Horse in starter, I still worry through cross country schoolings and struggle not letting him stop and sniff jumps before we attempt them. I have been disallowed from doing this at home and knew it was way outside of the realm of possibility when riding with an olympian, and I was honestly preparing myself for a run out or three.

Warming up and over the first few jumps Phillip repeatedly told me to stop hanging on Monty's face and to just let go. Finally, on our 4th jump I did and was surprised at the results. Monty came back to me simply by me sitting back, and I felt no hesitation from him. After this I knew to have a successful ride I would have to trust Monty. As the ride went on, trusting Monty was working extremely well for me, and Monty was trusting me right back. Over one of the jumps, on top of the bridge, he slowed down to a skeptical trot. In what may have been a refusal moment in past months, I put my leg on and he leaped over it.

Continued on next page...

Lea Dardess riding her horse Monty down the bank during the Phillip Dutton Cross County Clinic.

Photo credit: High time Photography



Our fearless NCDCTA President and Hospitality Table Leader, Lynn Kerin!



# NCDCTA EQUINE EDUCATION FESTIVAL

Continued from Page 16...

My Experience in the Phillip Dutton Clinic

By Lea Dardess

I learned quickly however that while I could be trusting of Monty, that didn't mean I should sit back and let him do everything on his own. About three fourths of the way through the ride Monty and I were faced with a jump more intimidating than we had ever done before on cross country which was a very large roll top. Phillip told me that while he did have to have a good canter coming up to it, I shouldn't just let him go and blindly trust him. He also emphasized the importance of patience coming up to the jump, and not just throwing him at it and hoping he got over. Which is exactly what I did. It happened- the dreaded stop. Then it happened again. We took a step back to a smaller jump to work on what needed to happen for a successful larger jump. We worked on an organized canter up to the jump, then adding a lot of forward aids about one stride out. After a few times over the smaller one, Phillip had us turn our focus back to the larger jump. I did what we had worked on; organized, non rushing canter, asking him to pay attention to my aids, and then forward aids one stride out. It worked. (Who would've thought Phillip Dutton knows what he's doing). We sailed over the jump and I was elated, ready to be done, when I heard "now come back around and do it the other way." I was nervous again, as I have a habit of ending on the first successful attempt, but we turned around and attempted it the other way with the same cues; asking him to be patient and then forward aids a stride out. We sailed over it that way as well. We then ventured over to the ditches, which have been a major problem for us in the past. We have had a few schoolings where we just had to move on because he would not go over it. I was braced for this as well, preparing for another mini private lesson, but without any hesitation from Monty we were on the other side of the ditch. We did two more ditches and it was the same for them as well. Not only had my riding allowed us to get over one of the bigger jumps we had done together, it translated through the rest of our ride into all the other jumps. Over our last two jumps Monty was feeling a bit more lazy and since they were on the smaller side I allowed him to scrape over both. This was a bad decision in many ways, including in that it resulted in us having to go around and do the jumps again. Adding more leg as I was told, at that point in the ride I wasn't surprised when I heard no thumps of hooves hitting the wood, and when we got a perfect distance to both. The clinic left me with a lot to think about. How can I encourage Monty to be more confident while also not throwing him at new obstacles? How can I allow him to have a bigger canter without getting flat or losing control? What boundaries do I need to set with Monty in cross country, and what boundaries of his do I need to respect more while jumping? I am extremely grateful that I had this opportunity to learn and grow. I am also grateful, in a way, that our ride wasn't perfect, and that we did end up having a refusal. With Phillip I learned valuable new skills in order to ride Monty fairly and to the best of my ability. If this ride, or any of my rides, were all perfect, I would get very little out of my rides and Monty's and my partnership would not be as strong as it is today.

Lea Dardess riding her horse Monty through the covered bridge and hedges during the Phillip Dutton Cross County Clinic.  
Photo credit: High time Photography





# NCDCTA EQUINE EDUCATION FESTIVAL THANK YOU TO OUR PLATINUM SPONSOR!

Click on the Ad to visit their website!



Becca Desper Swann  
Montee  
HIGHTIME PHOTOGRAPHY



*Bespoke Saddles  
Beautifully Functional*

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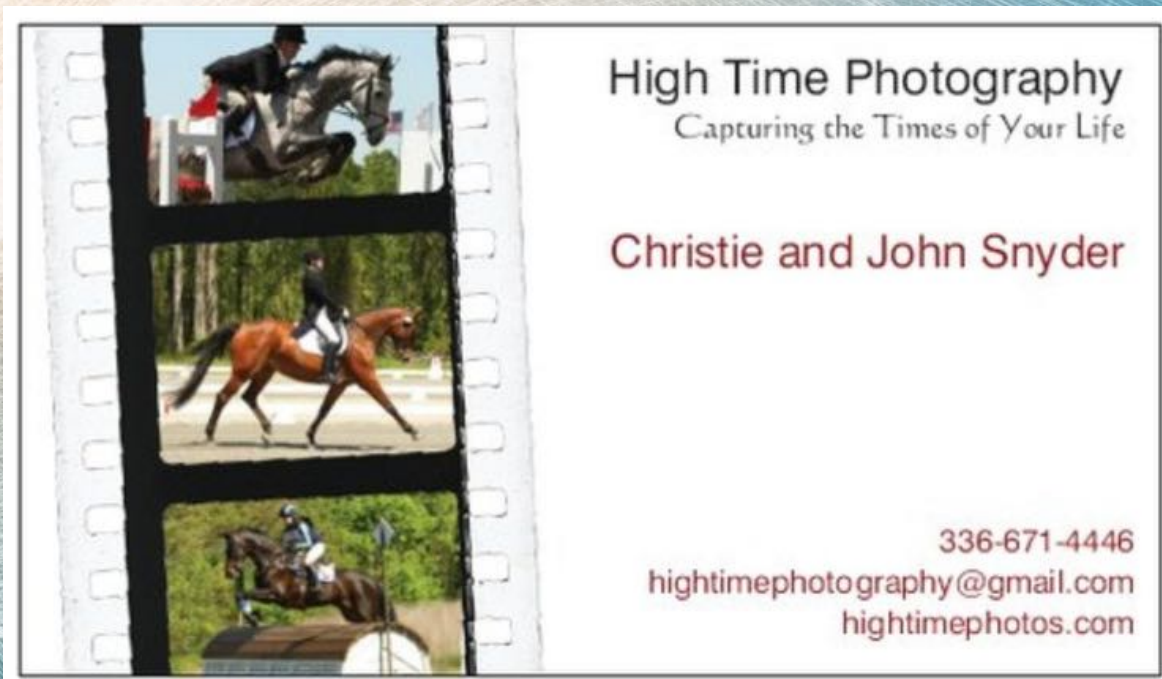
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# Capital Dressage Classic Scholarship Report

By: Willow Keller



Willow Keller riding Splash at CDC. Photo credit: High Time Photography.



Willow Keller showing Splash at CDC. Photo credit: High Time Photography.

My name is Willow Keller, I began horseback riding at the age of 5, and I am now 11 years old. I train with USDF Bronze Medalist Jordyn Dunson in Aberdeen, NC. I am an active member of NCDCTA, USEF, USDF, and the United States Pony Club. I also earned the USEF Interscholastic Athlete award for the 2022-2023 school year.

I love horses and riding, I have been training in dressage, jumping, and cross country, but my main passion is in dressage. Last year I decided I wanted to start focusing toward earning my USDF Bronze Medal. I have been working so hard and was so excited and thankful when I earned the scholarship for the NCDCTA Capital Dressage Classic Show in Raleigh, NC.

Every little bit helps, I earn a lot of my riding time by doing jobs for my parents and spending my birthday money, etc. The horse shows are fun, stressful, exciting, overwhelming, exhausting, and thrilling. My main goal when I show is to first and foremost have FUN, because at the end of the day if you're not having fun, then why are you doing it?

Secondly, learning, there is always something to learn when it comes to horses, and at the end of a show weekend, I can come out saying well maybe this did not go as planned but now I know THIS, or this went really well and I can take this from it. That makes it all worth it.

At the Capital Dressage Classic the horse I ride, Splash and I rode in 4 tests over the weekend, we did 2 first level tests and 2 second level tests. After this show I now have both the first level test scores I need for my USDF Bronze Medal! It's time to start working hard at second level!

One of my second level tests ended up being tough, I blanked on the test, we made some errors in movements, but we finished the test. We had some nice moments as well! It wasn't the end of the world, it happens. My first level tests went much better, we had never ridden in an indoor before, so that was new, We were in a new place for shows as well. All in all we had such a fun weekend!

I am planning to take it easy over the hot months of this summer but will be back at it showing in September at Labor of Love and Harvest Moon.

Thank you to NCDCTA for the scholarship to Capital Dressage Classic!





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# Capital Dressage Classic Scholarship Report

By: Ellie Balakrishnan

I am so grateful that I was awarded one of the Capital Dressage Classic Scholarships! We had a bit of a rough week prior to the show. My horse ended up being quite sore from a pulled shoe a couple weeks back. I didn't end up riding much and instead put him on stall rest with some cushioning to help his soles feel better. Luckily, he felt a lot better by Friday and we were able to trailer in, set up camp, and school. Schooling was a really big learning experience for both of us! We were pretty relaxed in the coliseum, and then some music testing began... which threw Rhythm for a loop. We managed to work through it and I'm super proud of that.

Saturday morning we warmed up and Rhythm felt really good by the end of it. We had a pretty solid second attempt at First Level, Test 1, exhibiting fair improvement in the both of us. Our score was fair, but I was overall really happy with him. We went back to stabling and hung out for the rest of the day until my second test. I was thrilled with how Rhythm was behaving in stabling because he has very strong opinions about stalls and historically has not done very well at the Hunt Complex.

Unfortunately, during warm-up for the second test Rhythm felt really off. He was very distracted, tense, and behind my leg. It didn't feel like my efforts to work him through it were effective, so I made the decision to scratch him.

I saw no point in pushing my horse through something when he felt physically and mentally incapable of doing so. Ultimately, my trainer and I made the decision to also scratch him from his classes Sunday. It was a bummer, but I could feel something was definitely not right though he was not 'lame'. We ended up schooling Sunday just to see how he came out and he felt about the same as Saturday, which affirmed my decision to scratch my tests. We had some clients from our barn come and visit, and Rhythm thoroughly enjoyed all the attention and treats!

Although this show did not go as envisioned, I am very thankful for the positive experiences that came out of it. It's never easy to scratch tests, but I know that I did the right thing for my horse and he deserves that. I'm also happy to report that he's feeling better at home right now with some stretches and core strengthening exercises. Hopefully this was also a good example that we should always advocate for our horses and try our best to look for the positives amidst a dicey weekend.

Again, thank you to the NCDCTA for awarding me with the JR/YR scholarship. I am so grateful for the lessons I learned this weekend and had a fantastic time on the show grounds with the best barn family. I can't thank NCDCTA and their volunteers enough for a fantastic weekend!



Ellie Balakrishnan and her Rhythm in the warm up arena at CDC. Photo credit: Belle Sousa



Rhythm hanging out in his stall. Photo by owner Ellie Balakrishnan



# JUNIOR/YOUNG RIDERS SCHOLARSHIPS

NCDCTA provides scholarships to Junior/Young Riders  
at our licensed competitions:

Watch the website for announcements  
of 2023 Scholarships opportunities and deadlines.



Each scholarship will cover the cost of four classes, one stall, and a shared tack stall. This application, due by the show's opening date, will be randomly selected. Applicants do not need to be NCDCTA members.

Link to Scholarship Application:

<https://www.ncdcta.org/junior-scholarship>

**To be eligible**, applicants must indicate enthusiasm, thoughtfulness in the application, and dedication to competition as part of ongoing education in dressage. All qualified applicants will be put into a pool for each show. Winners will be drawn at random. Winners will be ineligible for other scholarships in that competition year unless there are fewer new applicants than slots to be filled.

**Recipients will be responsible for the cost** of classes beyond four, as well as the office fee, the USEF drug fee, and any other applicable fees, including but not limited to the USDF/GAIG qualifying fee and non-member fees. Decisions and entry procedures will be announced before the show's closing date. Within a reasonable time after the show each scholarship recipient is expected to submit a short article and photo of their experience for the newsletter.

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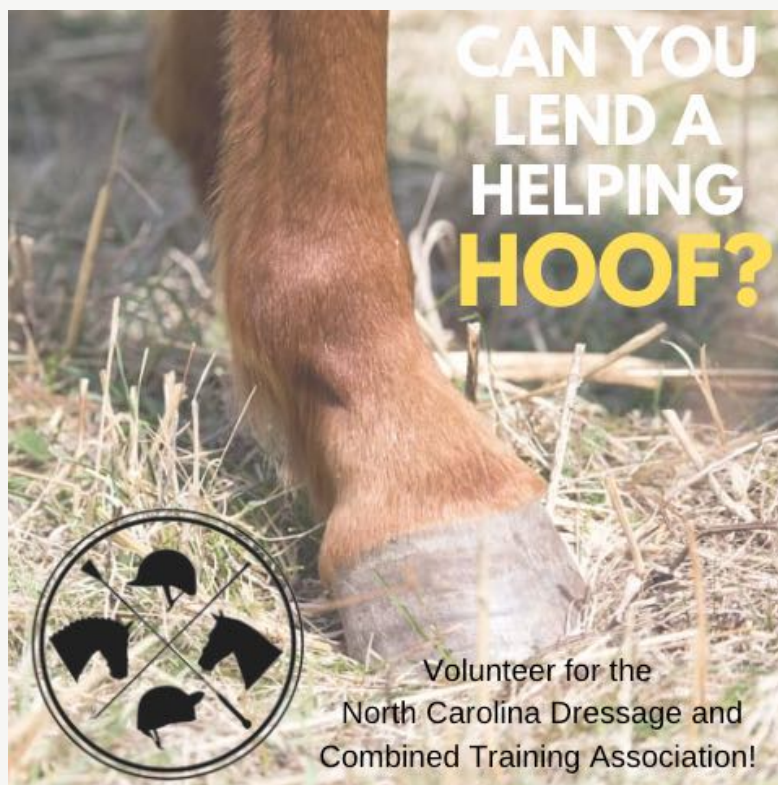
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