



# Ottawa Area Dressage Group

[www.ottawadressage.ca](http://www.ottawadressage.ca)

## Newsletter



OADG is a chapter of CADORA Inc.

OADG is a Dressage Canada affiliated riding club.

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### *April / May / June / July 2013*

We're mid-way into the show season already! Some of us have already been to shows; some of us are starting to think about it; and some of us are wondering if we will ever make it into the ring (or \_back\_ into the ring – sometimes, life just gets in the way!). Whether your dressage dreams involve showing or not, keep on striving!

#### *In this issue*

Message from the OADG President  
Updated show schedule  
Article: Auditing the Anky clinic  
Article: Insurance for competitive riders

Message from the Awards Director  
Looking back on the Cindy Ishoy clinic  
Perspectives  
Contact us/Directors

#### *Message from the President*

Our season started with a full success with the Cindy Ishoy clinic on April 27 and 28. Congratulations to Peggy McQuaid, our education director and her support staff in achieving a major success. Thanks also to the people from Oakhurst who provided fantastic cooperation to our organizers on those 2 days. It goes without saying that Cindy Ishoy lived up to expectations and gave all present their money's worth, whether they were riders or auditors. The clinic made a profit of \$2000.00 and since we are not a profit-oriented organization, \$1000 was returned to the OADG to cover the grant they had volunteered and following a decision by the OADG Board, \$850 or so will also be given back to the riders to help them reduce their original costs.

Our show season has also started with Silver shows at Spiritwood, Rainbow Ridge and Dewmont, Gold shows at Centaur and Rainbow Ridge and Schooling shows at Spiritwood, Heroncrest, Oakhurst and Numtech.

Two venues originally listed have been cancelled this year for different reasons, namely the Friends of the Park Gold and Silver shows and the Gold and Silver shows at Huntingford. However, on the good side of things, Rainbow Ridge agreed to add a Gold and Silver show at their place on July 6 and 7. So, even though we have fewer shows than last season, we have enough of every group to make it an enjoyable season for all. Furthermore, different indications already given this year, tend to predict that 2014 will carry more shows.

At the June meeting of the OADG Board, it was unanimously agreed that Anne Galt, our "show ambassador", would organize an ad hoc meeting with show organizers in July. The main purpose of the meeting is to hopefully streamline our show season for the benefit of all concerned, i.e. members, OADG and organizers. Catherine Maguire, the Award director and myself will also be present from the OADG. All three of us will then report back to the Board on the matter. The Board is also contemplating having a "think tank day" to reflect on the role of the OADG in the future and if changes should be made that would benefit even more the membership.

As you know already, our 2013 banquet will be held next November 23rd, at the Hellenic Centre again this year and I am happy to confirm that Dr. Yves Rossier has accepted our invitation to be the guest speaker at the event. More details on our speaker and the banquet will be issued in the near future.

I wish you the best of luck for the rest of the show season and I want to assure you that your board of directors will continue to work hard to make dressage most enjoyable and interesting for all concerned.

**Pierre Paquette, OADG President**



### **A quick update on the shows...**

The revised show schedule is shown below, and it is kept up to date on the OADG website. Please check the website regularly ([www.ottawadressage.ca](http://www.ottawadressage.ca)) to make sure you've got the most up-to-date information!

Unfortunately, we lost two show venues for this summer. One venue may be back next year, or the year after – Dressage at the Park, organized by Friends of the Park and held for 13 very successful years, will not be proceeding in 2013 (it was originally scheduled for July 20-21). Unfortunately, the organizers feel that, this year, the facility is unable to offer them the type of support and services that they have had in the past, so their committee has decided to forego the show for this year. They would like to thank their sponsors, service providers and the competitors for supporting the show, and they wish everyone a great summer. We hope to see the show back again next year at the refurbished facility!

Another show venue has, unfortunately, closed down. However, Rainbow Ridge Ranch (Lynda Maltby and Stephen Curtis) kindly offered to host the show, on the same weekend as the organizers' original date. Rainbow Ridge Ranch is also running their own shows, so any volunteers who can help out, for any of the shows, would be much appreciated! A big THANK YOU to Lynda and Steve for stepping up to "X"!

## **Local show schedule**

(Please check the OADG website regularly for updates and new information: [www.ottawadressage.ca/shows](http://www.ottawadressage.ca/shows))

*Purple shading indicates that the show/event is in the past!*

<b>April</b>		<b>May</b>	
April 27-28	Cindy Ishoy Clinic, Oakhurst Farm	Sun May 5	Spiritwood Schooling
		Sun May 12	Centaur Gold
		Sun May 12	Heroncrest Schooling
		Sun May 19	Starlit Farm Schooling
		Sun May 26	Spiritwood Silver
<b>June</b>			
Sat June 1	Oakhurst Schooling		
Sat June 8-9	Rainbow Ridge Silver/Gold	<b>July</b>	
Sat June 15	Numech Equestrian Schooling	July 6-7	Rainbow Ridge Silver/Gold
Sat June 23	Dewmont Farms Silver	Sun July 14	Heroncrest Schooling
Sun June 30	Spiritwood Schooling	July 20-21	
		Sun July 28	Spiritwood Schooling
<b>August</b>		<b>September</b>	
Sun Aug 4	Centaur Gold	Sun Sept. 1	Spiritwood Schooling
Sun Aug 11	Spiritwood Silver	Sun Sept. 15	ON East Silver Championships, Rainbow Ridge
Sat Aug. 17	Oakhurst ESD Schooling	Sun Sept 22	Preston Rosedale ESD Schooling

### **A few reminders!**

**OADG Membership** – to be eligible for OADG year-end awards, you must have renewed or purchased a new membership before May 31<sup>st</sup>, 2013. Both rider and horse owner must hold memberships.

**Other memberships** – For a rider or horse to compete in dressage shows, you do require certain other memberships. Check that you have your proof-of-memberships ready when you send in your entry form.

Please note that Equine Canada rules apply at all shows, and drug testing may occur at any show.



## A Synopsis of the OADG Cindy Ishoy Dressage Clinic held on April 27-28, at Oakhurst Farm

### From our Clinic Secretary -- Peggy McQuaid

Looking back at what was to be the beginning for me and how I got involved.

My horse was lame and the weather was so miserable that I probably wouldn't have been riding any way and along came this email from Pierre Paquette around the middle of February. The adage says that flattery will get you everywhere. Well from my perspective, it really gets you nothing but trouble. With nothing better to do than shovel snow and stalls, I agreed to step in and take over the running of the clinic. At this point in time, the clinician and facilities had been tentatively agreed to. The first thing was to get both of these confirmed as to dates and costs. Thus, I went from clinic helper to clinic organizer... wow what a transformation!

The mad rush was on; we were behind schedule to put together the various registration forms etc. to make the clinic happen. Thus, I hope you all forgive me for some of the bloopers that I discovered – such as, Sunday versus Saturday leading the way on the auditors form. I'm pleased to announce that everyone managed to work their way around this issue and showed up at the venue on their chosen day!

And then the wait for the rider registration forms to come piling in...but it didn't happen. With knee deep snow on the ground and bone piercing cold, it was tough for folks to get it into gear this spring. We extended the rider deadlines and kept our fingers crossed. As a result we ended up with a full slate of riders. While we didn't have any riders at the FEI levels, we did have a group of riders that really wanted to learn and had horses that represented what most of us own.

Our hosts at Oakhurst Farm were excellent. Everything was done without having to ask, including frequent raking of the roadway in. The facilities were excellent and considering the downpour we had on Saturday it did not cause any problems for the parking or the trailers going in and out or for the sound system in the arena. The seating was plentiful with excellent views and no one had problems hearing Cindy's teaching directives to the riders.

The Ashton First Field Pony Club did a great job of running their canteen and most folks took advantage of the food they offered. In fact, they sold out on Sunday.

Encore Equestrian's mobile tack shop was at the venue for Sunday only. They arrived halfway through the shortened lunch hour and were having debit machine failure. So if you didn't pick-up what you wanted, please watch out for them at some of the dressage shows over the summer.

For me I can't thank the riders enough for their support of this clinic and their willingness to share their learning with all of us. Without the riders, there would not have been a clinic. For me the gratification was from a mother of a junior rider thanking me for putting the clinic together and the notes of thanks from various auditors. And a special note of thanks goes out to an OADG member, Monique Lafleche whose efforts resulted in the remaining riders we needed for the clinic to be the success that it was.

Yes, the clinic was a success and everyone went home with something that they could use to help with their own horse. Based on feedback, I know the riders enjoyed learning from Cindy and I wish all of them success in this year's show season.

**(A HUGE thank you to Peggy, to Pierre for talking her into organizing, and to Ozzie for laying the initial groundwork (provisional booking of the clinician, etc.) Much appreciated by the OADG!)**



## Notes from an auditor at the Cindy Ishoy clinic (from Cathy Gordon)

Every up/down transition should be preceded by a slight shoulder-in.

Goal is for the horse to balance itself.

***Drive to a downward transition; don't pull back. Transitions promote suppleness.***

Outside rein for balance, inside rein for suppling. The more supple over the back, the better the contact.

Ask the horse to do the job and allow him to do the job.  
Mistakes don't matter – it's your correction that matters.

If a horse pulls, correct from the back end – kick him, do not pull on his mouth.

**Canter to walk: collect, collect, walk.**

***Perfect practice makes perfect.***

Look between the horse's ears, not to the inside, otherwise your balance is off. Eyes UP – don't look down!

Horses' hips are wider than their shoulders, so always position a slight shoulder-in on the wall to be straight. Think of riding tension out of a horse; don't create it (e.g., abrupt correction for cantering instead of more trot).

*Less is more: the higher the level, the less you do; reduce micro-managing the horse.  
Don't micro-manage the horse has to carry himself; don't hold the horse together.*

Think of making inside leg longer in lateral work to weight the inside sitting bone.

You lose 25% of your performance in the show ring – it's important to get the horse supple in warm-up, so warm up at 125%.

If you can't ride the corners, straight, and a correct 20m circle, you won't be able to progress in dressage.

***Don't hold into a frame – ride into a frame.***

**Your core strength balances the horse.**

Shoulder-in, canter-walk transition prevents the horse from dropping onto the forehand.

Walk pirouette is a forward movement. Enter in shoulder-in; activate each hind leg rhythmically, must be able to move out at any time. Half pass back to line.

**Don't pull-resist. Ride the energy into your hands.**

***Gymnastic exercises make progress easy.***

Collected canter is achieved through transitions that strengthen and balance the horse.

Reward your horse often so he knows when he's good. Always reinforce the positive.

Don't do any one exercise for too long. The muscles need to recover (get rid of lactic acid). For example, collected canter should be interspersed with walk transitions, medium canter, etc.

When learning changes, always circle after the change to bring the horse back.

Look where you're going and then look back to between the horse's ears, otherwise you'll be out of balance.

For canter-trot, drive to resisting hand and then soften. Use exercises to make the work easy. Ride smart, not with strength. Use circles to create balance on the outside rein.

*When the hands are too wide, you drop the contact. Hands together, so he uses his back.*

**You are training from the moment you are in the saddle until you dismount.**

### Additional notes

- *These notes are reported as they were written, in context with a horse being ridden. Please use the comments that apply to you and your horse with caution. The written comments do not replace seeing the situation and seeing the response from, and improvement in, the horse.*
- *Your OADG Board of Directors is very pleased to report that the clinic was sufficiently financially successful that a rebate will be sent to each participant. The initial costs were set based on a projected budget, and the final costs were lower than expected. Riders should expect to see their rebate soon.*



## ***Important Things to Know about Insurance for Competitive Riders***

***By Kara Edwards and Sara Runnals, BFL Canada***

At the beginning of each show season, an enormous amount of preparation is required from the conditioning of our horse to shopping for new show attire. With all these important things to consider, insurance tends to be pushed to the back of our minds; however, it is one of the many reasons that membership with the Ontario Equestrian Federation is required in order to compete, and it doesn't have to be confusing! This article offers a simple breakdown of the types of coverage important to equestrian competitors.

The insurance benefits provided with your Ontario Equestrian Federation membership are a competitor's front-line coverage that will respond up to a limit of \$5,000,000 to actions brought against the member as a result of third party bodily injury or property damage caused by his non-commercial use of a horse he owns, rents, leases or borrows. This coverage is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, anywhere in the world, subject to the policy terms and conditions. For example, this policy would respond if you are unloading your horse at a show and it gets loose and runs onto the road causing an accident, or if you are preparing for your class in the busy warm up ring when an excited spectator spooks your horse causing it to kick and injure him.

The OEF member liability insurance also includes incidental Stableman's Liability with a limit of \$10,000 per horse and \$100,000 per occurrence. This coverage protects the member for liability arising out of his non-commercial care, custody and control of horses owned by others. It is important to understand that Stableman's Liability insurance is not first party mortality insurance. It protects the member if he is negligent and causes injury or death to a horse he does not own while it is in his care, custody and control. This coverage would respond if for example you were sued as a result of offering to trailer a friend's horse to a show in exchange for some gas money and her horse was injured while on the trailer, allegedly due to lack of maintenance.

The OEF membership coverage includes \$30,000 Accidental Death and Dismemberment insurance for members under the age of 91 years. This insurance is a first party coverage that will respond if the member suffers an injury as a result of a horse-related incident. Coverage includes a lump-sum benefit that is payable for specific injuries, as well as reimbursement for out-of-pocket expenses ranging from rehabilitation to ambulance services. Fracture and dislocation benefits are doubled when the member is

wearing protective headgear intended for equestrian use at the time of the injury. If you fall off your horse while riding at a show or schooling at home and break your leg, this coverage will respond to help offset medical expenses you may incur.

A variety of different insurance coverages are available for horses of any value. Some of these coverages are available to purchase as an add-on to your basic OEF membership coverage while others require a separate policy. Owners of competition horses have often invested a significant amount of time and money into their four-legged friends. For these horses, full mortality insurance is recommended. This is a type of all-risks coverage that will protect your horse should he become injured or killed due to accident, illness or injury, subject to standard policy exclusions. Medical and surgical insurance are also available which will provide coverage for veterinary costs associated with illness or injury. Medical and surgical coverage offer peace of mind for horse owners, knowing that saving their horse with expensive surgery or medicine is a financially viable option. Horse insurance policies can also include other value-added coverages such as coverage for tack and equipment, extra boarding expense, and competition withdrawal.

Many human travel insurance plans exclude coverage for medical expenses due to sports-related injuries. Additional insurance can be purchased with your OEF membership for Travel Medical Insurance that will cover riders travelling to compete outside of Ontario including equine-related injuries.

Depending on your activities, additional liability insurance coverage may be necessary. The OEF member liability insurance program offers coverage for personal liability only and is not intended to cover commercial equestrian activities. Trainers, coaches, farm owners, and other individuals offering professional services should carry commercial general liability insurance to adequately protect themselves.

As you prepare for the show season ahead, make sure you are adequately covered. BFL CANADA is the official insurance provider for Equine Canada and the Ontario Equestrian Federation. We offer comprehensive coverage for everything equine, with discounts for OEF and EC members. If you have any questions about your insurance needs or risk management, please contact Kara Edwards, your local Ottawa area broker at (613) 454-8285. Good luck to all competitors for the 2013 show season!

## **An Analysis of the Anky van Grunsven Clinic May 3-5, 2013 – Burlington, Ontario By Peggy McQuaid, with notes from Cathy Gordon**

Cathy Gordon and I decided that we couldn't miss out on a chance of a lifetime to see Anky van Grunsven and hear what words of wisdom she had to share that would make us better riders. Thus, on a gorgeous Friday afternoon, we took off for Burlington from Carleton Place. The traffic gods were with us as we made the trip in 4.5 hours using the 401 and 403. Traffic coming against us was at a complete standstill as we went cruising by.

Up bright and early Saturday morning, we headed over to the venue. Our tickets said the clinic would run from 8am to 5pm. Once there, we found out that it probably wouldn't start until 9:30am. With time to kill, we got all the gossip of Friday's happenings. As it turns out, Anky's teaching was quite controversial since it went against everything that has been driven into our heads forever.

True to what we had been told, the sound system was not very good and combined with Anky's accent, it was really difficult to understand her until you got use to the environment. The clinic was in 2 parts – the morning session had 3 sessions of 3 riders each where the horses were Levels 1-4 – the afternoon session had 3 sessions of 2 riders each where the horses were Prix St. Georges and above.

Here's the essence of what we learned. Only use one aid at a time; hand only to stop, leg only to move forward. The horse must always be thinking forward so that you do not have to constantly be pushing him forward. Anky made the statement that Canadians do not ride their horses forward enough. The horse must be ridden at all times into both reins even on circles. When challenged, she said she had never heard of inside leg to outside rein on circles, etc.

She wanted the horses to respond immediately to both upward and downward transitions – there should be no delay off the aid. In flying changes, the horse should be straight and moving into both reins and the only aid is the outside leg. She says that if you use the inside leg you push the hindquarters over making the change very difficult. She also said that the horse must be really forward and on the leg and then make sure the horse goes forward after the change.

Piaffe is trained out of walk and passage is out of trot.

One interesting exercise she did was to ask various riders for how they would ride and obtain certain movements. Example: one rider was asked to explain how to do shoulder-in. At the end of the explanation, Anky turned to the auditors and said whew "that is a lot of work"! She then went on to have the rider do very little to achieve the shoulder-in. Once again, we were exposed to the concept that less is more. The last time we heard the same advice was from Cindy Ishoy.

Anky's English is fairly good and she is quite the entertainer. She really helped the riders at the highest levels. However, the horses at the lowest levels spent their time really going forward and learning to go and whoa immediately off the aid. It would appear that there is a great divide between the Dutch and the German schools. Ultimately, the same goal is achieved but the method to get there is quite a bit different.

Did the riders get their monies worth? At almost \$500 per session – and yes, there were some perks thrown in – you do the math. On Sunday, one session of 3 riders went only 25 minutes. The longest any session went was less than 45 min. Sunday went from almost 10am and ended at 4pm with almost 2 hours for lunch.

Cathy and I came away with a couple of hints as to how we could get more from our horses by doing a whole lot less. However, Cindy Ishoy had said the same thing the weekend before but also gave us some excellent gymnastic exercises to help us get more from our horses but not have to micro manage to get the results.

P.S. Did you know that Anky acquired Salinero from Ashley Holzer? Check out Dressage Today – May 2013 page 17 article "Salinero Retires".



## Notes from the Anky van Grunsven clinic (from Cathy Gordon's notebook)

Use a resisting hand; horse must think forward, not backwards, the horse will give to a resisting hand. Steady contact. Horse always has to think forward.

Always use your seat for downward transitions, not your legs.  
Legs are for forward; resisting contact is to come back.

Changes – do not change the bend, only ask with the outside leg.  
Don't use inside leg; it makes them change in front and crooked.

Half pass; your shoulders parallel to the horse's, inside leg on girth, outside leg back. If more forward is required, ask with both legs.

Practice the walk pirouette with variety – faster, bigger, slower. Canter pirouette, start slow and small - forward and bigger. Keep hands to outside if the horse turns too fast.

Passage: always forward, bring back but don't ask for forward. Let him find the rhythm.

Walk, halt, go forward. If he won't go forward, you can't do piaffe.

Piaffe: from walk, almost halt and forward. Try to take leg off so he goes by himself, otherwise, horse will not understand leg to go forward.

Piaffe to passage is easier.

Downward transition: no leg, only seat and hands.

Canter aid: only the outside leg, not the inside leg.

DO NOT use legs and reins at the same time.

Goal is some contact on two reins; not always inside leg to outside rein.

Ride the horse forward but don't push forward; use your seat.

Walk for ten minutes, canter on loose rein for a few minutes; walk/trot transitions to start work.

Only give new aid when you want to change something.

If you take the rein, the horse must come back.

The most difficult challenge in riding is speed control. Only allowed to go forward if you give a leg aid; not allowed to grab the bit and run. If the horse starts to run, bring him back; do not hold him.
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Use resisting hands until the horse softens. Don't pull, but keep resisting contact until you get what you want, and then soften.

Shoulder-fore: after the corner, bring the horse to centre of arena as if riding across, bring inside leg back, do nothing with outside leg. Both hands in. Turn on outside rein. If horse bends in too much, bring reins to inside and turn away from the wall; turn or go straight across the diagonal.

Shoulder-in: both hands in.

Draw reins are hard to ride with. Rider may have them too tight.  
Side reins position the horse with no danger of the rider pulling.

The whip is to be used as an extra aid and only use it when the horse is not responsive to the leg, etc. Carry it but keep it in reserve.

To teach extended trot, start in slow trot, give aid and the horse must go. The moment the horse starts to run, bring him back. Bringing back must be as immediate as going forward, not a little at a time.

Don't let the horse run – must make a bigger stride. Must be aggressive with the aid if the horse does not go forward. Once, twice, gabang! Expect a response on the first aid.

Only leg makes the horse go, NOT THE SEAT.

Prepare well to reduce stress.

Forget about what other people will think. Ride for yourself.

Changes are always trained with outside leg and rein.

Changes: always think “forward” and change, not “back back back change”.

Piaffe: walk, almost halt, and piaffe. If too forward, the horse is not sitting and is not collected enough to come up. In piaffe, if you start from trot, the hind legs are left out behind too much.

Passage is developed from going forward and back in trot.

Keep the feeling of the forward trot when you bring him back, else there will be short choppy western jog instead of active collection.

Canter pirouette: most people make a small circle instead of bringing pirouette smaller. Both hands out; think of turning the middle of the horse in, not the shoulders.

Canter – when the horse is soft and round, then go more forward.

If the horse comes back too much, he gets too fast in the rhythm and is not thinking forward enough.

### **Additional notes**

- *As for the notes from the Cindy Ishoy clinic, these notes are reported as they were written, in context with a horse being ridden. Please use the comments that apply to you and your horse with caution. The written comments do not replace seeing the situation and seeing the response from, and improvement in, the horse.*
- *The two clinics were scheduled on back-to-back weekends, and our two OADG auditors noticed many similarities in the comments from the two clinicians. Classical dressage is... well... classical dressage!*


*“Thank you” to our corporate contributors for this issue!*



For more information on equine insurance, contact Kara Edwards at (613) 454 8285.

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## **Perspectives**

### ***The view from the judge's booth... Test riding tips***

When it comes to riding a dressage test, I have made all the mistakes you have and probably many you haven't. I drew up the following list of hints for a clinic I gave to pony clubbers many years ago. It helped me too, no matter how far beyond training level I managed to get.

1. **Position** Everything you do improves each time your position improves.
2. **Correct Impulsion** looks like the right amount of energy for the job at hand. If you have to pull or kick incessantly to keep the right amount of energy, your training needs a "reboot".
3. **Transitions** Keep your horse apprised of your travel plans. Let the horse know far enough in advance of the transition point that you are planning a change of pace.
4. **Corners, Straightness and Bend** All those legs have to be on the correct line(s). If you are struggling with riding balanced and steady corners/circles/straight lines, practice, practice, practice until you look at a corner as the gift it is in a test: a chance to really set up for the transition or lengthen or lateral work or centre line.
5. **Rules** On a cold or rainy day or when you simply cannot get to sleep, read the definitions of the paces and the tack rules.
6. **"On the Bit"** Think of this as "on the aids", no resistance, happy to oblige. Know what the correct outline is and seek really good help to get you and your horse's training to that point.

We cannot all have the likes of a Damon Hill to ride but we can all learn to ride much better than we do today. If we accept good instruction and learn good training techniques, every horse we ride will improve. I wish everyone a super season.

**Joanna Crilly, EC Judge**

### ***Check at the steward's tent...***

#### ***What attracted me to be a Steward?***

I started riding almost 20 years ago. The more I learned about horses, the more I wanted to learn about them and equestrian sport. I like being around horses, and I enjoy watching good riding with relaxed happy horses. The process of transforming high energy (...strung out) to calm(er) supple focussed movement is amazing! And show grounds provide lots of opportunity to watch this. When I wasn't riding and had some free time, I would go watch shows. I also figured it might help me be a better rider to see examples of competent riding. While watching the comings and goings on the show grounds however, I saw other things, like the amount of work involved in putting on a show, the need to have sport rules to keep the competitive aspect fair, and the need to keep riders, spectators and horses safe.

I like watching, but it's not really in my nature to sit on the sidelines when I could potentially be helping out. I could help out in many ways, but for several show `jobs` there isn't much opportunity to watch the riding. The Steward role offers the opportunity to do both, watch some riding, and, help out. The Steward keeps an eye on the warm up area (and gets to watch some riding), and works with the show organizers to help prevent unfair competitions or unsafe situations. The Steward intervenes if sport rules are not followed, if unsafe conditions or behaviour arises, or if abuse happens. Having to intervene can be somewhat awkward, but I've had 30 years of `intervening` practice in my day jobs in finance where there are lots of accounting rules, and I often have to tell important people: ``no, you can't do this...``.

I have had the privilege to learn about being a Steward from (the great!) Christine Hickman. She has a wealth of knowledge which she has very generously shared. It has been a pleasure to learn from Christine, help at local shows, and meet show organizers, judges, competitors and volunteers who share a common interest (or passion) in fair and safe sport. I hope to continue doing this and meet the Equine Canada requirements to move up from a 'Steward Learner' to a certified Steward.

#### ***Do you have any advice for competitors?***

If you're a competitor, I encourage you to please read and follow the rules; you'll be more relaxed and successful because you will know what is expected!

Have a great summer. See you at the shows!

**Jacqueline (Jacquie) Ouellette, EC Learner Dressage Steward**

## Perspectives, continued

### *A Rider's Perspective*

I have been showing Dressage since I was 9 and every year the first show still gets me nervous! There is always so much to remember about riding in the “big ring” and no one ever wants to have a bad ride or make silly mistakes because of some nerves or a brain fart.

When I began showing my mom always told me to pick 3 goals for my ride. Those goals could be anything from making it around the ring without spooking to making sure I remembered to ride my corners or wanting to get a certain movement we had been struggling with at home. These goals allowed me to focus my nervous energy on something more attainable than just getting through the test (trust me I know how long some of those test are!) These goals helped me realize that where you placed in the class, and sometimes even the mark you got really doesn't matter, as long as you were able to meet the goals you set for that test, you succeeded!

When I started out my goals were small, like making sure my pony didn't jump out of the ring or leave at A.... this happened more frequently than I would have liked it to! Now as I have grown as a rider and competitor my goals are much more detailed. This year I am competing at the FEI Young Rider level for the first time, and as excited as I am, its also very nerve wracking. I get to ride the tests I have watched my coaches and people I have looked up to ride for years, so going into my first Prix St. George I made myself a few goals.

Get my 4's and 3's

Get my changes in the canter half pass

Keep the forward movement in the canter pirouettes  
When I was riding my test I kept those goals in mind and even though I made A LOT of mistakes during my trot work I achieved my 3 goals and could not have been happier with my ride! The next day when riding my individual test my goals changed dramatically to things more along the lines of getting my trot half passes and keeping her calm and focused through the trot work and while achieving those goals and keeping the goals I had from the previous day in my mind I managed to ride a great test, and finished with a 63%. I was thrilled with Pandora K and the mark really was just the icing on the cake, we made it around the ring calmly, focused and did exactly what I knew she was capable of doing.

### *The view from the rail...*

#### *...The all-important bucket!*

Having been the Dressage Mom for 10 years now of a Junior Rider, I have had a steep learning curve- which continues with every year and every new level she rides. I was always looking for that elusive Guide to Dressage for the Newbie...but have yet to find it in stores or on-line. While I have had many good teachers along the way from coaches to stewards to other parents- there is nothing like learning from experience.

In the early days, I always wondered why people carried buckets to the ringside, when they were watching their Riders in the Ring. What could that bucket really be for? Surely there wasn't grain as a reward in there!

Well...the “Bucket” is the keeper of many important things:

1. The all important test book for the Reader! Most Riders already know their tests and just feel the need for that extra support at the ring side- half the time they can't hear the Reader anyway, with the wind whistling in their ears, as they leg yield away from you...but you are there for them- that's what matters...besides the Rider may just want to review the test before going into the ring to avoid the dreaded “Off Course” demerits.
2. The Towel: Not for you to wipe your brow as you sweat in the hot sun, barely breathing as you watch your Rider do their first test of the year, or tries a new level...and certainly not for wiping off the spit from the mouth of the horse! Yes it looks gross to the uneducated eye, but Dressage Riders aspire for their horses to be on the bit and drool like crazy- this is good! No- the towel is for dusting off the boots of the rider before touring the ring for the Judges, and for wiping that fantastic spit off the chest and legs of the horse so they look their best.
3. The Polos or Work Boots: Your Rider is very conscientious and warms up in white polos or working boots to protect those lovely legs of their equine athlete. These boots or polos are not allowed in the Show Ring, and must be removed by the Groom- the bucket is the perfect repository so you are not stuck holding the sweaty boots or rolling the fly away white polos - distracting other riders...stuff them in the bucket!

... continued...



Keeping the goals of your ride help to not only keep you more focused in the ring but also help keep your mind off the judges, people and any other little mistake you might make. Try out the 3 goals system at your next show or even your next lesson and hopefully it will help you as much as it helps me!

**Kerry Houlahan**

*(Marsha and Kerry Houlahan are a mother-and-daughter team, not only at the shows but also in contributing these "perspectives" articles!)*

4. **Liquid Refreshment!** For the Rider- this is in the form of a water bottle- store bought or re-usable there are no rules to be found on this point. Hydration is key to not passing out from fear, heat or exhaustion in the ring- so make sure it is there. For the Groom...well there are no rules on that either so it is left to your discretion! ;D

Some buckets hold Good Luck charms - others hold snacks - some hold extra leathers in case of breakage- and some hold the video camera...whatever the contents- the "Bucket" is a key piece of your Dressage Show accoutrement- not to be forgotten when you pack for the show!

**Marsha Houlahan**

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## *The medical corner*

### The Basics on Equine Supplements

By Dr. Jennafer A. Jarosz

Strategic Strides

Equine Chiropractic for Optimum Performance

Supplementation for horses is always a big topic. Horse owners are always looking for the best product at the best price. When dealing with joint problems, you need to be able to read and understand the product labels. The three main ingredients to look for in a supplement are Glucosamine, Chondroitin, and MSN. Both Glucosamine (HCL) and Chondroitin work together (yes, together, not independently of one another) to lubricate joints and reduce the irritation and degradation of the joint. MSN is an important all natural anti-inflammatory. With the majority of Osteoarthritis and Arthritis type conditions diagnosed in horses, inflammation is present. I often tell my clients, think of the MSN as the precursor; MSN will enter a joint space and clean up all the harmful chemicals tearing away at a joint and reduce the irritation to allow the glucosamine and chondroitin to enter the joint space and properly protect and lubricate the joint. Additional ingredients that can be advantageous in a joint supplement is hyaluronic acid which is useful for joints and synovial fluid, both Vitamin C, Vitamin E and magnesium are wonderful for inflammation and reducing spasms in muscles. Pain reducing ingredients can also be added to supplements such as yucca and devils claw. However, if you're planning on showing, be sure to avoid these in your supplements as they are both forbidden substances that are testable in Ontario.

Whether you are trying to help symptoms such as stiffness, flexibility, or pain, you should notice a difference in your horse within two weeks of using the product (consistency is key to feeding your supplement). My advice to clients, if no changes are noticed, chances are you need to try a new brand!

For additional questions on supplements, other banned substances or recommendations, please contact Strategic Strides ([www.strategicstrides.com](http://www.strategicstrides.com)).

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If you have a story, comment, perspective, or viewpoint, please feel free to submit it for the next newsletter! Contact us through [communications@ottawadressage.com](mailto:communications@ottawadressage.com). Your contribution will be much appreciated!



## A Note from the Awards Director

By the time you read this, the competition season will be well underway. I hope that your winter's work is paying off in some successes for you. Perhaps you are thinking that things are going so well that you may be in the running for a year-end award? If you haven't done so already, please access the website to review the Awards Criteria and the list of possible awards to be won.

The awards tracking team automatically tracks results from local shows and calculates qualification status for each OADG member. By the end of June or early July, the interim qualifying scores will be published to the website for your inspection and feedback. We also plan a second issue around mid-August. You will receive a notice when they are ready. Remember...it is the competitor's responsibility to ensure that the results we use are correct and to notify us if there are errors or omissions!

Please contact me if you have questions. Good luck for the rest of the season.

Catherine Maguire  
 OADG Awards Director  
[awards@ottawadressage.ca](mailto:awards@ottawadressage.ca)

## Marketplace

Got stuff to sell? Need to buy stuff? Need services, or offering services? Check the classified section on the OADG website ([www.ottawadressage.ca](http://www.ottawadressage.ca)). OADG members can advertise for free – please send your item description, any photos, email address, phone number, and any website link to the OADG webmaster ([webmaster@ottawadressage.ca](mailto:webmaster@ottawadressage.ca)).

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