



Ottawa Area Dressage Group

www.ottawadressage.ca

Newsletter



OADG is a chapter of CADORA Inc.

OADG is a Dressage Canada affiliated riding club.

September / October / November 2013

Show season is over – congratulations to all the competitors. We hope you met your personal goals this year, whether you aimed at competing successfully at the Gold level or wanted to get yourself and your horse out to your first schooling show. Now comes the wrap-up, and planning for next year!

In this issue

Message from the OADG President

Article: A competitor's report from the ParaOntario Games

Article: Competitors' reports from the NAJYR Championships

Reports on two clinics: Stephen Clarke and Cara Whitham

Awards and Banquet

Sponsors

Annual General Meeting (AGM)

Perspectives

Message from the President

Another interesting dressage season is just about over with our Award banquet and our AGM as the only 2 events left for 2013. Considering all categories, a total of 19 shows, the CADORA Eastern Silver championship and major educational clinic (the clinic with Cindy Ishoy) were held during the season.

I would like to congratulate all participants in those events as well as express my special thanks to the ones that organized them including the many volunteers, the judges and scribes and the stewards, without all of whom shows would not be possible. I would also like to thank the parents of our young riders, their coaches the horse owners and the spectators who also play a very important role in the success of the shows.

Congratulations are also in order for those riders who won yearly OADG awards in the different categories and who will be honored at our coming banquet. Very special congratulations also to the riders that won championships at the CADORA Eastern Silver Championship and to those who may not have won but who participated in the event.

Since I reported to you the last time, the Board of Directors has met 6 times. Many on-going matters were dealt with but the main one has been the creation of a governance committee which has been asked by the Board to review the objectives and structure of the OADG for the coming years. In doing so, the committee will be contacting in one way or another the membership at large, including riders, parents, horse owners and other interested groups to obtain their views on how they see the OADG and its role in the area. This has already been started with a meeting in August with the show organizers which incidentally was well attended and received by them. It is felt that this avenue will allow all interested parties to voice their opinion and although I am sure that we will not be able to satisfy all, nevertheless, I can assure you that suggestions that are beneficial to the majority of members will be integrated in the OADG policies and procedures if at all possible.

I will conclude by saying that I hope that as many of you as possible will attend our banquet on Saturday November 23rd at the Hellenic Centre on Prince of Wales Drive to honor our riders and volunteer workers of 2013. Our Guest of Honor for this year, Dr. Yves Rossier, will provide you with a most informing video on many interesting intricacies that surround the Olympic Games in equestrian events.

I would also like to remind you that the 2013 OADG Annual General meeting will be held at 1 pm on Sunday, December 1st at Danby's Bar and Grill, 2858 Munster Road in Munster Hamlet. This is your opportunity to see what was done with your membership fee in the past year and to voice your comments on the OADG and on how it could improve its service to the members in the coming year(s).

I hope to see and meet many of you at those two events and I can assure you that your constructive opinions, positive or critical as riders, horse owners, parents, organizers and /or supporters of the OADG are always most welcomed and appreciated.

Pierre Paquette, OADG President



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2013 CADORA Ontario Eastern Silver Dressage Championships

(by Susan Otto, OADG Sponsorship Director)

The CADORA Ontario Eastern Silver Dressage Championships took place at Rainbow Ridge Ranch in beautiful sunny weather on Sept. 15. Due to our wonderful sponsors*, there were many prizes for Champions and Reserve Champions of the divisions, as well as High Point and Reserve High Point Champions, and Show Champion and Reserve Show Champion, Combined Scores. These scores were also matched against the scores from the “sister” show held in the Toronto area, and the results create the overall Champions and Reserve Champions of the CADORA Ontario Silver Dressage Championships.

Top honours at the Eastern show went to Sarah Gobey riding Bavicola and Stefanie Roffey on Aqua de Vida for the High Point Champion and Reserve, and Sarah Gobey riding Bavicola and Kerstin Blaeske on Cleo for the Overall Combined Score Show Champion and Reserve Show Champion.

We also want to acknowledge and thank our judges Don Barnes and Ellen King, scribes Cathy Gordon and Lesley Cruickshank, stewards Christine Hickman and Natalie Proulx, and include as well all the volunteers. Thank you also to CADORA Ontario for providing cash prizes, and to Steve Curtis and Lynda Maltby for a great “volunteer prize draw” which took place over lunch.

Congratulations to Team Flying Changes, with members Kerstin Blaeske (Cleo), Stefanie Roffey (Aqua de Vida), and Isabelle Paquette (Don Noir) for taking away first prize in the Ontario Team Challenge, and to Team Bytown Dressage Divas, with members Caroline Peck (Snickers), Gail Armstrong (Jewel of the Nile) and Sandra St. Pierre (Lady Tweedsmuir) whose team won third place. In fact, our competitors did very well in the overall Championship scores – please look at the CADORA Ontario website for a full list!!

- The 2013 CADORA Ontario Silver Dressage Championship results are available at <http://www.cadora.ca/cadora-ontario/display.asp?pageid=51>
- The 2013 OADG awards are included as an addendum to this newsletter – see the attached file, 2013OADGAwardsResults.pdf

* Editor’s note: see page 2 of this newsletter, and below, for a full list of the sponsors.

Our sponsors... continued!

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Competitor's report from the 2013 Ontario ParaSport Games in Kingston

**By Catherine Bridges (ParaEquestrian competitor,
coached by OADG member Kerstin Blaeske)**

In May, I was proud to be one of more than 300 competitors in the 2013 Ontario ParaSport Games in Kingston. Para-equestrian (PE) was one of eight sports featured. The story of how I came to be there goes back 12 years.

In August 2001 I suffered a catastrophic car accident. When I was sufficiently recovered, I began hippotherapy, meaning treatment or therapy aided by a horse. I basically started with two side-walkers and someone leading the horse. Gradually, and with a lot of encouragement from my therapeutic riding instructor, Fiona Kearney at TROtt, dressage was introduced into my lessons. Fiona also encouraged me to begin competing.

We started with the Equine Canada Sea-to-Sea videos. This program allows para-competitors across Canada to ride tests on home ground. The tests are videotaped and the riders are then judged based on the videos.

As the next step, Fiona suggested going to Sarnia to compete at the Ontario ParaSport Games back in 2011. Sarnia would be my first live competition. I rode a great horse there named Homer. The ParaSport games was a nice introduction to the horse show world, offering a more relaxed environment than you often find in the 'real' horse show world. My husband was with me so I did not stay in the athletes' village but I did go to the opening ceremonies.

In 2012, I had the opportunity to lease Lori Garlough's horse Adonis and competed at Spiritwood and the Ottawa Dressage Festival. After that, I began taking lessons from Kerstin Blaeske.

This year, I have competed at several Silver and Gold dressage shows in the Ottawa area on Kerstin's mare Cleo, riding PE tests.

When I heard the ParaSport games would be in Kingston in this year, I thought "Great, closer to home, I know I can borrow a horse so I don't need to have a horse trailered there, I can get more show experience and see a lot more Para riders." This seems to be the only time I see other Para riders. Also, I knew firsthand from Sarnia that the ParaSport games are well run and organized. Luckily, Kerstin agreed to come and help me at Dream Catcher Farm.

Riding a borrowed horse is a challenging experience. At the ParaSport games, you have only one day to find a horse that is compatible with your needs. And then you have about an hour to practice and figure out how best to ride that particular horse. You learn something new each time you ride a different horse. This year, riding a thoroughbred, Justin, I had to learn to be really relaxed. I have tried to carry that over into my everyday riding.

One reason I like the ParaSport games is that you get to be around a lot of accomplished athletes participating in other sports. In 2013, I stayed in the athletes' village at St. Lawrence College, eating meals with the other athletes. All the athletes are extremely focused but excited. You can feel the excitement in the air. Especially at the opening ceremonies where the pleasure of socializing with other participants is mixed with anticipation of the competition next day. For me personally, the ParaSport games are an experience I would not miss for anything.

Steward's report from the 2013 Ontario ParaSport Games in Kingston – by Jane Hunt, EC Senior Dressage Steward

I was privileged to be an official at the 2013 Ontario ParaSport Games. As a steward, I ensure the competitors are using legal tack and adhering to all rules of the sport – the ParaEquestrian rules are quite detailed to ensure that all athletes are competing under fair and equal conditions, with specific accommodations for their individual challenges. The determination, grit, and athleticism shown by the competitors was amazing. Watching a blind competitor do a walk / trot / canter test (using "living letters") was incredibly inspiring – especially since the competitor was riding an unfamiliar horse! I attended the opening ceremonies, presided over by the Honourable David D. Onley, Lieutenant Governor of Ontario, and enjoyed seeing the camaraderie and joie-de-vivre shown by all of the competitors from a wide range of sports – ParaAthletics, Boccia, Wheelchair Basketball, Goalball, Wheelchair Rugby, Sledge Hockey and ParaEquestrian.

North American Junior Young Rider Championships, July 16-21, 2013

Three OADG members participated in the 2013 Adequan/FEI North American Junior & Young Rider Championships, held in Lexington, Kentucky from July 16-21, 2013. Here are their stories:

Moira de Ste Croix-Laframboise, riding Blue Ben

The North American Junior Young Rider Championships down in Kentucky was an amazing experience and I was thrilled to get the experience. My partner, Blue Ben, was amazing through and through even though neither of us were quite sure what to expect of the whole thing.

Ben is a 16'1" Westphalian thoroughbred. He is mostly very calm and it is lots of work in dressage to keep him going but he also loves to run cross country. It was an extremely hot and humid week but he handled everything very well and we performed a great dressage test, which I believe we were both very proud of, putting us in fourth place going into the next phase.

We rode the 2009 FEI eventing dressage test – CCI/CIC one star (*) (B) which includes leg-yields, 10 meter circles, rein back, medium trot, medium canter, counter canter and extended walk. Overall, the test was very nice – canter work, leg-yields, and walk were particularly good. Our medium trot diagonal, which is usually very strong, had a bit of a wobble and that is the one part that really sticks out to me that I wish I could have fixed. Other than that I was quite happy.

Having this great dressage was a good start to the competition. Following dressage, we had a phenomenal cross country with only a few time faults. On the third and final day we had two very unfortunate rails in the show jumping but still finished in 13th. I got to share all of this with my cousin, Haley Armstrong-Laframboise and her mom (my aunt) Momo Laframboise along with my other aunt Lorraine Laframboise, her student and friend of mine, Rae Becke, who did a phenomenal job and last but not least my mom and coach Teddie Laframboise.

It was an amazing week and I hope to return in the future!

Alison Brebner, Shadow Chef d'Équipe for Ontario dressage competitors

Read about Alison's (Aliy's) experience as Shadow Chef d'Équipe for the Ontario dressage competitors in your copy of Whoa!, the newsletter from the Ontario Equestrian Federation (Fall 2013 edition). Aliy's article is available on-line here:

<http://horse.on.ca/wp-content/newsletters/2013-fall/#/14/>

Rae Becke, riding Tyne Be Merry

Having a good dressage test is the absolute crucial aspect of doing well at Eventing. Despite having a double clear cross-country and stadium, it still won't usually be enough to get you in those top three spots if one has a bad dressage test. It is because of this that I have really focused my efforts on dressage, taking clinics and working with John Macpherson, Momo Laframboise, Cindy Ishoy, and of course my incredible coach Lorraine Laframboise.

Thanks to the OADG I was able to take a wonderful two-day clinic with Cindy Ishoy in April, who I think brought my abilities in dressage to a whole new level. My horse, Merry and I use her techniques and exercises in every one of my dressage rides now. I can't possibly imagine warming him up without them now. The one thing I used the most from her clinics would be the 10m circles, they are incredible really, so



Rae Becke, riding Tyne Be Merry (continued)

simple and obvious and yet one doesn't realize how helpful they really are. They set him back, get him to respond off my leg, help get the proper bend, and prepare him for every movement!

At Young Riders I rode the FEI CCI & CIC One Star (1*) – Test B. This consists of movement like leg yielding from K to X, a halt and rein back (4-5 steps) at D, and counter canter movements from F half circle right 10m returning to the track at B followed by a half 20m circle from R to S.

I ride a twelve-year-old Irish Sport Horse called Tyne Be Merry. He measures around 16.3 hands, and is the equivalent of a football player in terms of muscle mass. He has an incredibly long galloping stride, which is amazing for cross-country, but makes him quite difficult to have a decisive, strong, collected canter in dressage. While our canters were actually quite good in our test at NAJYRC I would have to say they are definitely our most difficult movements, more specifically having the medium canter, and then trying to bring him back into a nice collected canter. I am so lucky in that my horse has a really incredible trot, and looks pretty darn impressive strutting down that centerline if I do say so myself. I would say our easiest movements have to be our halt, and rein backs. It is something we have worked very hard at, and are extremely proud of!

It was necessary but sad when the riders were all informed that we would be banned from wearing tails or top hats on dressage day, due to the searing heat that was upon us in Kentucky. Kentucky in July is not somewhere I would recommend for a vacation to anyone, ever.

While our dressage test went very well, we had quite a difference of scoring within the judges, and came out with a 57.5 (we score with penalties), putting us in 21st but only 10 points behind the leader! The scores were tight, and anything was possible.

After a euphoric cross-country, where we not only rode our best, but also went double clear we moved up to 13th place! Not only was it was a tough course out there with a tough time to make, but the heat was unimaginable. Coming to the third last fence, I remember having a second to think that I quite literally was unable to breathe because the humidity was so suffocating.

Thanks to a great fitness regime Merry came off the cross country in incredible shape and health, and was in fact voted the fittest horse by the FEI vets, and ground jury. This was a great testament to the time and hard work that was put into this competition.

On the final morning, Merry passed the jog inspection with flying colors, and while a little tired was ready for the show jumping phase. To prepare for this phase we had attended many show jumping competitions over the past year, successfully competing in two 1.25m classes. It was a gut wrenching 90 seconds, but our hard work paid off and we went double clear and finished in 8th place! It was an incredible experience and created memories to last a lifetime.

It is my hope that I will be returning to NAYRC next year in the CCI** to once again represent the Ottawa area, and Canada! Just last weekend Merry and I completed our first CIC** at Richland park, our first qualifier for NAYRC. We will both be having a break until Christmas while I complete my first semester at university, and Merry enjoys some well deserved time off to frolic in the field with his friends and eat more grass than he could possibly need.

Thank you to everyone who believed in us, and supported us for the past year! None of this could have been possible without you.

Notes from the Stephen Clarke clinic (from Cathy Gordon)

The Stephen Clarke “Build a Better Dressage Horse” clinic, presented by CADORA Inc., was held at South Lane Farm in Vankleek Hill, ON, Sept. 28-29, 2013. The facility was a beautiful venue for the clinic and we enjoyed very reasonable sunny fall weather. The horses ranged from training level to PSG.

Some of the **keys points** emphasized by Stephen are listed below:

- Horse must be forward, i.e. “in front of the leg”; then you can add suppling and lateral work and half halts.
- The horse must have full respect off the leg. You should have higher expectations of reactions to your aides, without compromising your body position: clear and consequent aides. Train the horse to go by itself: no nagging leg.
- There must be absolutely nothing backward in the rider’s hand: do not carry the horse’s head.
- Mistakes don’t matter: it’s how we deal with them that counts.
- If you approach a training issue in the right way and you do not accomplish the goal in an acceptable time frame, back off and resume the training the next day.

Rider position tips:

- The sole of the boot should be in a natural position, as if walking: heels not driven down.
- Sit up straight and do not collapse the shoulders, otherwise you cannot ride with your hands in front and you cannot engage the hind legs with your seat.
- Contact: still, secure and elastic so there is something comfortable for the horse to move into.
- Use your horse’s walk rest periods as an opportunity to work on rider position problems.

Transitions:

The reaction you get in your transitions to canter will be the same as the horse’s reactions later to your aides for the flying changes: so make the transitions from walk to canter, trot to canter clear and confirmed before training flying changes.

Transition from trot to halt: immediately release the contact.

Aim to have your transitions so that when you think of it, the horse does it. Use lots of transitions to confirm the reaction off the leg.

When training your horse to be reactive from behind, make sure you do not block in front. For example, when you think canter, do not take the hand back which contradicts the legs.

Canter-trot transitions: wait for the horse to trot and immediately drive forward in trot for a more expressive trot.

When the transition is good, expect a more uphill carriage and make it more brilliant.

Go immediately forward from the walk into a forward engaged trot: don’t build up to it. Get the impulsion at the outset.

Square halts come from straightness, engagement and reaction to the aides.

A good half halt is invisible. Engage, release.

The horse should either be round and down or up and engaged to the bridle, not in between. If the horse is unsteady in down and round, it’s because he is behind your leg. Keep the contact with the bit. Ride the horse forward into your hand.

In young horse training, the forward and back response off the leg is more important than focusing on the rhythm.

Lengthening’s, Medium trot:

Work towards developing the medium trot. Only lengthen as much as the horse will stay up and in the bridle, i.e. he is underneath behind. Never allow the horse to go down on the forehand.

If the horse offers canter when asking for a lengthening, gallop the horse.

Canter lengthening’s: make it dramatic – ask for more!



Bending:

Submission in the bend always begins with the inside leg.

After establishing forward off the leg, practise spiraling in and out on the circle. Ask for suppling with the inside rein until the horse gives, then give to the horse. Keep outside rein contact at all times.

Shoulder-in:

Collect by riding forward in shoulder-in: ride the hind legs forward into the bridle. Picture a contained horse with a bigger trot. Imagine hands pushing the bit away from you (with engaged hind legs): short reins; hands in front.

Do gear changes in shoulder-in: forward a bit and then back. Riding forward brings the inside hind leg underneath the body; collection weights the hind end (strengthens).

Ride into the corner and do a few steps of shoulder-in; straighten and go full bore into medium trot; shoulder-in at the next corner. Use every corner to make the horse more active in collection, so it comes out of the corner more engaged.

To get the horse off a tight inside rein, use shoulder-in to outside rein and release the inside rein when the horse moves off your inside leg into the outside rein. There is no need to “fight” with the tight inside rein as you are moving forward into the outside rein.

Half Pass:

To improve the half pass you need more submission to the bend and more uphill power in the trot.

Exercise: ride the diagonal, first part in travers, then medium trot straight, and finish in travers.

Canter Pirouettes:

The horse must be able to “sit down” without losing energy. To canter on the spot, touch the horse with the whip, if necessary, to ensure the jump is maintained.

You need the inside bend or else the hindquarters will swing out. Submission to the inside leg is important.

Ride forward as you bring the shoulders around. Think of travers in the turn, if the horse is not falling in with the shoulders. Otherwise think of shoulder-in if the horse does fall in with the shoulders.

Exercise: 3 equal-loops serpentine; at the centre line, ½ pirouette back to the wall.

A really good pirouette is 4-beat, not 3-beat. The hind foot of the diagonal pair touches before the forefoot because the horse’s croup is lowered. A 4-beat canter is the result of a horse that is on the forehand so the front foot of the diagonal pair lands before the hind foot.

Flying changes:

If the canter is active and off the ground (i.e., sufficient “jump”), the changes will be easier.

If the horse runs away in flying changes, work on canter/walk transitions until they become confirmed.

The horse needs to go into the bridle, so it can be balanced. He needs to be lighter in the shoulder, not the reins (i.e. sufficient jump in the canter). You need a friendly, elastic connection with the bit.

To improve changes from the right rein to the left, canter, shoulder-fore left, change, 10 m circle left, hold the whip on the right side.

Tempi’s require collection and forward.

To make it easy to know where you are in 3 tempi’s for example, count the strides as **1,2,3; 2,2,3; 3,2,3; 4,2,3, 5, 2, 3**, etc.

Exercises for a horse that is heavy on the hand:

Use shoulder-fore and small circles to get him to carry himself in canter. Then the horse is more on the rider’s seat and can be ridden upwards and forwards.

Half pass: start in shoulder-fore, half pass, shoulder-fore.

Many thanks to Stephen Clarke, CADORA Inc., South Lane Farm and all the riders and horses for providing such a wonderful learning opportunity for all levels of riders and horses.



Notes from the Cara Whitham clinic (from Cathy Gordon)

The Cara Whitham clinic was held at Stone Haven Farm Dressage, Oxford Mills, ON, Nov. 2-3, 2013.

Cara's very perceptive eye missed nothing. Most horses' problems are caused by the riders on their backs. The following is a summary of points raised at the clinic on Sat., Nov. 2.

Warm-up: Get the blood flowing. Walk/trot/canter on both reins. It doesn't matter if the horse is on the bit.

Rider tips:

- Hands together or else the arms become stiff.
- Elbows in, thumbs up, **FINGERS CLOSED**. Open fingers break the circle of connection to the horse's mouth.
- Long reins cause a backward hand. You must ride the horse forward and up into the hand.
- The minute you look down you lose control of your feel.
- The horse needs to have on/off aids, not "on" all the time. When you knock on a door, you do not leave your knuckles on the door. If the horse responds to your aids, leave him alone.
- In trot, let the pelvis swing into the up-beat; allow gravity to swing you down. You don't need to "sit down into" the horse. Give legs aids while in the swing down beat: squeeze the barrel of the horse (e.g., the ball of air) and allow the ball to fill (inflate) on the up-beat.
- In canter, as the rider's seat comes forward, give the canter aid, if necessary.

When the horse's back comes up, the neck goes down. The back comes up when the horse's hind legs are engaged into the contact.

At training level we focus on Rhythm, Suppleness, and Contact.

Ride the younger horse with confidence as if it is an older horse.

In North America, we baby our horses too much; we take too long to progress. The horse's body develops in certain ways so if you don't start training early enough you'll have more difficulties later, e.g. flying changes. Flying changes can be started on a 3 year old in a field, if and only if it is jumping forward in canter. Play with the coordination of a young horse, e.g. leg yielding, lateral work.

Transitions:

Don't try to force the head round into an upward transition. The horse must go forward and find the hand. Bring the hands forward and the hind legs into the contact. When the horse is rude with the contact, remind him with the legs to go forward, not with a hand aid.

Canter/walk transition: do not block with the seat as it will block the horse. Continue in canter seat until the walk starts: do not stop the canter seat before the walk starts.

Shoulder-in:

The outside aids are critical; do not use excessive inside leg and rein which results in "neck-in".

The horse's shoulders are not connected to the spine: they are held in place by muscles. Do not press the inside knee and thigh into the horse's shoulder, as it restricts the horse's movement.

Keep the neck in the middle of the horse's shoulders.

Level 4:

By level 4, test 3, the horse must already be showing the capability of doing PSG. At 4th level, the horse and rider must be able to do clear and balanced tempi's. Otherwise stay at level 3. At the 4th level, the horse must have achieved all 6 levels of training: Rhythm, Suppleness, Contact, Impulsion, Straightness and Collection.

Half Pass: do not push the horse into canter half pass; allow her to go there. Move the hands in the direction of the half pass.



Counter-canter: think of keeping both sides of the horse the same length. You must be able to flex the poll either left or right without the horse changing leads.

Canter collection: relax the back muscles; do not become rigid in the back.

Tempi's: do not look down; look where you want to go.

Walk pirouette: bring the horse around with your legs, not the hand. Sit to the inside, step into inside stirrup and use the outside leg to bring the outside hind around.

General training considerations:

If the rhythm is negatively affected, discontinue what you are doing.

When you have a problem at the faster gait, go back to a slower gait where you have control.

Perspectives

Check at the steward's tent...

Did you know that, when calling tests, it is possible that the caller could get the rider eliminated? There are rules about calling a test – see article E9.1 of the rule book!

- The caller's dress code is "smart casual". Jeans, slacks and mid length shorts are permitted. Tank tops are not allowed. Inappropriately dressed callers may not be allowed to call a test. And note, the judge and steward will have no sympathy about "it's too hot to wear a shirt with sleeves", because our dress code is more severe! ☺ If you're asked to call a test on short notice, try to borrow a sweater or light jacket (preferably not a ratty-looking "barn hoodie"). The dress code indicates respect for the judge and the rider. It's possible that the judge will overlook a sloppy outfit at a smaller show but please don't count on it, especially at the larger shows!
- Calling the test is limited to reading the movement a maximum of twice* without adding anything else which might assist the athlete. In other words, the caller must read exactly what is listed in the omnibus (test book), and may repeat it only once. Failure to comply with this ruling will involve elimination of the competitor! [*Note that the American rules are different – in the U.S., a caller may read the movement only once. Keep this difference in mind if the horse and rider compete "across the border"!]]
- Callers may not wear personal electronic devices, e.g., Bluetooth, headphones, etc. while calling tests. Exception: athletes with documented hearing impairment may use headsets only if the competition organizer is able to provide a supervisor to stand with the caller. In this case, medical documentation of the athlete's hearing impairment must be submitted with the competition entry and the steward and judge must be advised.

Also, please note that you should carry only the omnibus (test book) and perhaps a water bottle. Do not go to the side of the ring with a dressage whip (in case you absent-mindedly tap it rhythmically against your leg, because the judge could interpret that as "outside assistance"), your grooming kit, a bucket of polo wraps, or a wriggling baby who may start crying in the middle of the test. Your goal is to support the rider without distracting them or the judge, or causing a safety-related situation (such as a small child wandering close to the ring). You can leave everything except the omnibus and water bottle with the steward or your ground crew.

Jane Hunt, EC Senior Dressage Steward

Perspectives (continued)

The view from the rail... reading a test

So...you have been asked to be a reader for a dressage test. "No problem", you say. "Love to help out." How hard can it really be?

If you are already a seasoned dressage rider, then the reading of the test pattern is like reading a pattern for a dressmaker- the short forms and the pattern indications make sense. But for the newbie Dressage Mom or friend, who has never ridden in a dressage ring- it's a whole new ball game.

First of all, there are rules about what you can wear at the ringside. No shorts and no shoulders peeking out from under tank tops. This is a respectable profession- The Reader- and just like in church, keep those shoulders covered, and dressing professionally is key. No distracting horse, rider or judge with any risqué apparel!

Second, you may only read what is on the test page – You cannot say "At C, stretchy 20m circle in trot" or "Give'er down the long wall" for extended canter. No encouragements or hints during the movements of the test...and no exclamations of pride when a movement that has been difficult is mastered in front of you. You may repeat the sequence you have hollered once, prior to the beginning of that movement, in case you feel the rider has that panicked look of " Oh crap- Where do I go next? ...written all over their face. But that's it- stick to the text as written.

Third- You may stand at B or E to read the tests...hot tip- on a wet or rainy day, stand back from the ring...behind the flowers if there are any, to stay out of the splash zone. You just put on your beige pants, white shirt and fancy horse show hat to head ringside to read, and they will look terrible with mud splatters.

Fourth: Read clearly at a moderate tempo - and loudly...there is a lot going on in the ring- the thundering of horse's hooves, the soft music being played out of loud speakers to reduce the chance of unexpected sounds startling nervous horses; the judges are giving their scores out loud to their scribes, the rider is reviewing in their head what to do in this current movement, and how to set up the next movement and where the heck do I make that transition anyway...the wind is whistling and the tractor may be dragging the warm-up ring beside you. So to be heard you need to be loud. Try to be one movement ahead of the rider, so that as they are in the middle of Movement A, you are clearly giving the directions for Movement B.

Finally: Wait until the rider makes their final halt and salutes before leaving your post, clapping or cheering. Walking away is both distracting and not allowed. No one should be moving along the ringside during the riding of a test.

That's it in a nut shell...like all things equestrian, practice at home before you come to the show so you can be a Reader Extraordinaire!

Marsha Houlahan

OADG Annual General Meeting (AGM)

The 2013 OADG Annual General meeting will be held at 1 pm on Sunday, December 1st, at Danby's Bar and Grill, 2858 Munster Road in Munster Hamlet. This is your opportunity to see what was done with your membership fee in the past year and to voice your comments on the OADG and on how it could improve its service to the members in the coming year(s). We hope to see you there!

News from CADORA Ontario

The annual 2013 CADORA awards results have now been posted on their website. OADG riders have done very well once again in the **yearly results** and we are very proud of the results that they achieved, in particular:

Dominique Brosseau : Champion in Junior 2nd Level

Isabelle Paquette: Champion in FEI-Advanced- Prix St. George

In the CADORA Silver Championship, the following persons were Champions:

Erin Groot-Lipman in Junior, 1st Level.

Mireille Bilodeau in Open, 1st Level.

Kiki Baggerman- Webster in Free Style, 1st Level.

Dominique Brosseau in Junior, 2nd Level.

Kerstin Blaeske in Open, 2nd Level.

Rhonda Burke in Amateur, 3rd Level.

“Flying Changes” (K. Blaeske, I. Paquette and S.Roffey) in the team competition.

And the following persons were Reserve Champions:

Michelle Pyper in Junior, Training Level.

Sarah Gobey in Open, Training Level.

Nathalie Batycki, Amateur, 2nd Level.

Isabelle Paquette, Open, 4th Level.

Following a discussion with show organizers in the OADG area, CADORA Ontario was advised that Bronze shows would not be held in this area and that OEF Schooling shows would continue in 2014.

The CADORA Ontario AGM will take place in Guelph, Ontario on November 24th, at the Mohawk Inn.

Finally, the 2014 CADORA Ontario Eastern Silver Championship will be held on the 2nd Sunday of September 2014. The site has yet to be determined.

Pierre M. Paquette, OADG CADORA Representative

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). 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).

Contact us

Your OADG Board of Directors

President and CADORA Rep.	Pierre Paquette	613-821-6206	president@ottawadressage.ca
Show Ambassador	Anne Galt	613-489-3262	shows@ottawadressage.ca
Membership			membership@ottawadressage.ca
Awards	Catherine Maguire	613-294-9810	awards@ottawadressage.ca
Banquet	Sarah Gobey		banquet@ottawadressage.ca
Communications	Jane Hunt	613-258-6074	communications@ottawadressage.ca
Promotions	Jane Garbutt	613-283-7610	promotions@ottawadressage.ca
Education and Youth Development	Peggy McQuaid	613-831-2692	education@ottawadressage.ca
Sponsorship	Susan Otto		sponsorship@ottawadressage.ca
Library	Dorothea Larsen	613-489-2171	library@ottawadressage.ca
Secretary/Treasurer	Laura-Lee Brennehan	613-293-8470	
Webmaster	Cathy Gordon	613-257-5145	webmaster@ottawadressage.ca