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ABSJ

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May/June 2017



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2017 Omaha
World Cup Finals

The ABSJ Medal Returns

The 1.40m: 9 riders new to this
level share the experience



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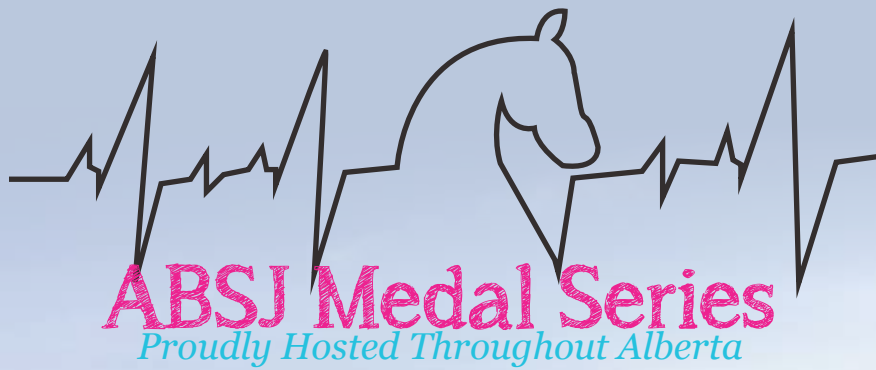
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Bannerman

Wow how times flies! ABSJ is well into the fourth year of print and Alberta's riders are well into their show season! ABSJ was awarded media accreditation at the Omaha FEI World Cup



Holly Grayton at the World Cup finals

Finals. We went to support and capture the debut of Alberta's Chris Surbey. We also talked to some extraordinary young up and coming riders, and did some research into riding styles. Check out our fantastic article line up this issue and as always we'd love to hear your feedback too. Stay up to date on results for Alberta riders by reading our magazine and checking our website and social media often! Thanks for being a loyal ABSJ reader. Good luck this show season, we can't wait to tell the world about your successes!

Please let us know what you would like to read about in upcoming issues by emailing us at info@albertashowjumpers.com
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Show Schedule

May

May 6-7 Spruce Meadows
May 7 Killerney Show - [Equi Cup Show](#)
May 12-14 Spruce Meadows
May 13-14 Willowdale Show - [Equi Cup Show](#)
May 11-14 RMSJ BVCII
May 18-21 RMSJ BVCII
May 19-22 Caledonia Classic
May 24-28 Tbird
May 25-28 Edmonton Classic
May 27-28 Westerner Park - [Equi Cup Show](#)
May 31-June 4 Tbird

June

June 2-4 Paramount Equestrian - [Equi Cup Show](#)
June 10 Country Hills Show - [Equi Cup Show](#)
June 10-11 Willowdale Show - [Equi Cup Show](#)
June 7-11 Spruce Meadows 'National'
June 14-18 Spruce Meadows 'Continental'
June 17-18 Tailwind Show - [Equi Cup Show](#)
June 18 Killerney Show - [Equi Cup Show](#)
June 21-25 RMSJ
June 27-July 2 Spruce Meadows 'Pan American'
June 28-July 2 Tbird
June 29-July 2 RMSJ

Go to ABSJ.ca for links to all the shows

Albertans on the FEI Ranking List

Alberta Ranking	Canada Ranking	World Ranking	Rider
1	4	122	Vanessa Mannix
2	6	164	Elizabeth Gingras
3	7	185	Christopher Surbey
4	9	252	Jaclyn Duff
5	10	254	Ben Asselin
6	15	329	Kara Chad
7	18	445	Lisa Carlsen
8	26	749	Kyle Timm
9	29	849	John Anderson
10	31	865	Tamie Phillips
11	34	911	Brenda Riddell
12	44	1180	Bretton Chad
13	46	1264	Jenn Serek
14	56	1680	Jenna Thompson
15	58	1781	Jasmine Wiggins

May/June 2017



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Please see our website – www.jumpalberta.ca – for volunteer opportunities and more information on the value of becoming/being a Jump Alberta member!

The 1.40m 9 Riders New To This Level

By Lynn

ABSJ magazine hopes to help foster a sense of community for learning and to bring support for Alberta's competitors. With this in mind, ABSJ invited 9 newly minted 1.40m competitors to share their experiences and motivating influences while they are still fresh and just lived. Their candid answers show how these riders crossed this threshold, and we hope their willingness to share will benefit many.

done to develop your skills."

So what makes a person want to jump at this level? When Robyn Walker was younger she watched the Grand Prix's and thought it would be incredible to compete in one and after reaching some of her goals she and Benjamin set their sights on the 1.40m level. Shoshana Weiss said once she started to feel competitive in the 1.20m she began thinking the 1.40m could be in the future for her and Mercedes.



Rylee Carron



Emma Edwardson



Sasha Fiorino

The 1.40m is captivating, the air changes, the course changes, the size of the crowd changes, in fact the number of competitors changes. Telling signs that you're about to watch a different test. You can see the consequences even when the ring is empty, the jumps are bigger, the turns sharper, the overall scene is more foreboding until you witness the first clear round or a rider's superior navigation or startling inside turn – you see someone make it look easy and you're in awe! At this level you can't just be fast or just be brave, you need a skill set to execute. I heard a clinician say once as she took her riders over the 4' threshold, "now we'll see your flaws, where you've cut corners, or rushed your training... and that's a good thing, that's how we'll see what needs to be



Paige McDougall



Shoshana Weiss



.40m: Level Share the Experience

the Burns

For Holly Grayton the 1.30m was her long time goal but her horse Baron Ginus gave her a lot of confidence and made it so fun they tried for more.

From their comments there's no question these riders have experienced 'critical moments' where the learning was intense, they obviously value that and are working constantly to create quality. Consider though what's not being said, I'm sure they've all had bad warm ups, been confused by something a

trainer said that threw them at the in-gate, or the course presents a new fear.

That brings us to the question that brought the most fascinating responses. It's one thing to ask a professional about managing nerves but hear these young competitors' responses to the age old question, how did you do it!

•Paige McDougall told herself, "You can always try



Jade Fowler



Holly Grayton



Tayah Sobie



Emma Edwardson



Robyn Walker

again if it goes badly."

•Rylee Carron said once she was over the first jump all her nerves were gone.

•Emma Edwardson's father's words "Take a deep breath" came to her during the course walk and in the ring to help calm her.

•Natasha Fiorino also reminds herself to take a deep breath, she visualizes and stays focused on her plan and what her track is.

•Tayah Sobie said, "The biggest thing was to stick to the plan we made in the course walk. Almost every time I deviate from the plan it doesn't work out in my favour!"

•Jade Fowler said, "That was the first time I

continued on page 20



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Is stretching the right thing to do?

Sandra Sokoloski BScPT, FCAMPT, CGIMS



The answer is yes and no. The effectiveness of stretching is debated in the research literature. There are many schools of thought, but the clear message is that a muscle cannot be 'pulled' (i.e. stretched) into submission. Muscles that are protecting vulnerable structures such as nerves, ligaments and joints will not give up and nor should they. Most people stretch muscles that are painful. However, muscles that are chronically painful have trigger points and trigger points react negatively to stretching. Trigger points are a symptom of muscle fatigue and the muscle is usually too long already. Stretching may feel good in the short term but will aggravate the problem in the long term. Muscles such as 'upper traps', 'piriformis' and 'IT band' are the most common victims of this cyclical problem.

If a muscle is truly tight, teaching it to 'let go' is the better option. Muscles will be truly tight if the brain has the memory of protecting an injured tissue. The brain loses the ability to direct the muscle in its normal contract-relax function despite the injury being healed. If stretching is performed slowly, gently, with awareness of the muscle and with relaxed breathing, it can be very effective. Maximally contracting the muscle and then focusing on 'letting go' (no stretching involved) is often even more effective.

Riders most frequently have difficulty 'letting go' of certain muscles and training them to do so is

the first step, especially if other muscles need to be strengthened. It is often the only step that is actually required to ride better!

This is the basis of a body of exercise called 'Somatics.' For more information on this topic please contact sandra@summitrehab.ca 



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Connection:

How to be quiet, calm and smooth

By Alexander Grayton



At any given horse show, onlookers can normally tell from watching the warm-up or show ring which riders are the professionals and which riders are more green or less experienced. How can we tell?

It's not the tack or equipment, or sometimes even the horse that is the clear marker. Professional riders carry themselves differently; they appear quieter in the saddle and smoother with their hands; they appear calmer.

So how does a rider learn to be this way and elevate their skills not just in moments, but all of the time, on all horses? Should the rider 'be quiet' in the saddle and hold their hands down low and still? That would give the appearance of quiet, calm and smooth but only for a moment... until the horse moves, lifts his head, speeds up, slows down, or nearly anything else.

It is not enough to say the method to appearing quiet, calm and smooth is to just 'be' quiet, calm and smooth. Rather, the goal is to

A great example of a universally recognized quiet rider in the world is Germany's Marcus Ehning. People come from far and wide just to watch the 'Master' in the warm-up ring. He always looks so still and so quiet. He is connected to his horse, following his horse, and has a sense of stillness.

He always keeps his leg underneath him supporting his weight; his hands are always creating a straight line from elbow to mouth; his upper body is always slightly forward, varying with the horse's motion, speed and balance; he sits deep in the saddle on the way to the first jump on course, then uses a light or half seat the rest of the course including a full gallop position in the jump-off.



Marcus Ehning at the World Cup finals 2017

be 'connected' with the appearance of being quiet, calm and smooth.

This method or system of riding allows for the variations inherent in show jumping from careful verticals to scopey oxers—even tight turns.

A good training system will inform riders what to do in a vast array of situations, without having to know countless specific reactions for specific situations. This means rather than saying the rider should lift their hands when the horse lifts his head, the correct phrasing should be ‘the rider’s hands must follow the horse’s mouth’ – this automatically affirms the previous statement, but also allows the rider’s hands to be low when the horse’s head is low, and all points in between in just one sentence.

This ties in with connection. If the rider’s position is directly related to the horse, even in its description, then the rider must pay more attention to their horse



Marcus Ehning at Aachen 2016

in order to monitor the position. This is the ‘connection’ we see with the professionals: they are in balance with their horse’s movement and posture from the weight in their foot up through their hands.

If the answer is to be quiet and smooth in the saddle, then the equation must encompass all possible scenarios and a solution in your position to react while keeping this balanced look and feel. Rethink the approach to training. It isn’t sufficient to say ‘be quiet’, ‘be calm’, or ‘be smooth’, when that nothingness could actually be the very reason your connection to your horse is broken and you no longer look quiet, calm and smooth. 



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ABSJ is proud to bring the ABSJ Medal for a second year. The ABSJ Medal is open to all ages of junior and amateur riders. This medal will be held at several competitions throughout the show season, with the year-end final at Royal West 2017.



Jade Fowler RMSJ 2016

Amberlea Jump for Hope Show, and Royal West.

Points will accumulate throughout the year, with the top 12 riders qualifying for the ABSJ Medal Final at Royal West.

The ABSJ Medal is not your average medal class: it is a jumper medal with true emphasis on developing jumper riders for higher-level competition. ABSJ will provide fantastic prizes and swag for participants throughout the season.

Judging:

The class will be judged under the current rules and standards of the EC equitation division modified as follows: this class is judged on the rider's equitation style, technical merit, judgment, and the execution of an efficient, time saving pace and track with the horse in a frame to minimize knockdowns.

Judges are asked to walk the course when possible and where there are striding options the judges are asked not to penalize any option that might be used to achieve the best result appropriate to the individual horse/rider combination. The open numerical scoring system will be used, with a score announced after each round.

An ABSJ Medal class can be found at all RMSJ tournaments, Caledonia Classic, Edmonton Classic,

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If you missed your opportunity to take part in the big medals when you were younger, or if you are a developing jumper rider, this is the class for you!

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Alex Grayton and George Morris World Cup Finals 2017

The World Cup Finals for show jumping is held annually, and is unofficially known as the 'indoor World Championship' for the sport. This past April the Finals were held in Omaha, Nebraska, for the first time, and Team Spruce Meadows' rider Christopher Surbey was one of only two Canadians who qualified and made the trip the other being Kean White.

ABSJ was on the scene in Omaha covering Chris, his horse Chalacorada, and their first trip to the World Cup Finals.



Chris Surbey World Cup Finals 2017



The Ring

The Century Link Center in downtown Omaha is a relatively new facility that has hosted some top level international competitions over the past few years in preparation for the 2017, World Cup Finals coming to town. When all was said and done, the dimensions of the ring measured approximately 105' x 238', with a seating capacity of roughly 17,000 people.



Chris Surbey World Cup Finals 2017

With big jumps, long courses (up to 14 numbered obstacles) and plenty of decorative fill, the spacious arena was busy. Chris explained, "It didn't feel like a small ring. They used the space well, a few jumps right into the corner and right out of the corner, but with the way the course designer (Alan Wade) set the jumps it was quite nice."

The Horse

Chris' World Cup horse is a 15 year old bay Holstein mare named Chalacorada. Her pedigree is indicative of her abilities, as her sire Chalan and damsire Corrado I are both producers of top level show jumpers. Chalacorada – or 'Chocolate' as she is affectionately known – is no stranger to top-level competition.



World Cup Finals: Dance er Grayton



World Cup Finals 2017

Chris' colleague at Spruce Meadows, Kelly Koss-Brix, rode Chocolate for several years including a Nations Cup appearance for Team Canada in Brazil some three years ago. The partnership between Chris and Chocolate is new, however, as the pair only came together

in September, 2016, when Chris took the reins for a 1.30m competition at the Masters at Spruce Meadows. Their relationship blossomed from there, including important World Cup Qualifying events in Las Vegas as well as Wellington, Florida, in order to secure their ticket to Omaha.

In order to prepare for the Finals, Chris sent most of his other horses home from Florida early in order to take Chocolate and upcoming talent Cavarola to Europe for a few weeks to practice at top shows indoors. After a 5th place finish in a national Grand Prix in Holland, Chris and Chocolate featured in the CSI 5* Grand Prix of s'Hertogenbosch where they had just one rail down to finish in the top 12.

After settling in the big stalls in Omaha, Chris exercised Chocolate in the warm up and show rings prior to the first evening of competition. He explained that Chocolate is "relaxed in the warm up



Jill Henselwood and Andre Lussier (groom) ring, but her blood comes up a bit in the ring. Hopefully she will settle as the week goes on."

His Coach - Jill Henselwood's Take

In addition to a large contingent from Team Spruce Meadows, Chris' entourage at the World Cup Finals included his mother, of course, and his long-time coach and mentor Jill Henselwood. For several years Chris worked and rode at Jill's Juniper Farms just outside of Ottawa, while he completed his University education. Jill has plenty of experience at championship level, including the World Cup Finals, so her sage advice and steady hand were sought to guide Chris in his first of what will surely

continued on page 18

Chris Surbey and Andre Lussier World Cup Finals 2017



be many championships. Jill had plenty of positive feedback and advice for Chris over the four-day event. "Every day here Chris has been so impressive for a young man just starting to rise in the sport. He's got nerves of steel and ice in his veins."

Jill was keen on Chocolate as well. "For a horse with such a big galloping stride, not so well suited for indoors, she has been so catty and clever."

During such an important week, the role of mentor and trainer takes on a new form with both horse and rider arriving prepared already. Jill's input was valuable and not overwhelming. She understood Chris and Chocolate were on top of their job, and she reminded Chris to continue to "be aware of the horse's take on things, if she's still thinking the whole thing is fun. Chris has a good spidey sense of what to do to prepare for the next battle." Chris echoed Jill's view, saying "It was great to have Jill here, she knows me really well. Not the horse so

Chris Surbey World Cup Finals 2017



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J2 Longines FEI World Cup™ Jumping Final II			
Int. jumping competition (1.50 - 1.60 m)			
CURRENT COMPETITION			
Rank	Name	Penalties	Time
1	De Luca, Lorenzo	1 penalty	74.57 sec
1	White, Kieran	1 penalty	75.22 sec
1	Lynch, Denis	1 penalty	75.44 sec
4	Naveil, Eric	4 penalties	70.14 sec
8	Surbey, Christopher	4 penalties	71.74 sec
6	Mirallas, Todd	4 penalties	72.98 sec
7	Pill, Rein	12 penalties	69.96 sec
8	Beerbaum, Ludger	12 penalties	70.93 sec
8	Szabó Jr., Gabor	12 penalties	70.93 sec
8	Brinkmann, Markus	12 penalties	71.53 sec
LAST			
356	Szabó Jr., Gabor	12 penalties	70.93 sec
CURRENT			
17. Competitor	Van der Vleuten, Maikel		
NEXT			
335	Ehning, Marcus		
TOTAL			
16/33	ALLOWED	73s	ca. FINISH
			20:41

well, but definitely me. It was super having her here, she has a lot more experience at this level and just her being here was great. She reminded me, "Don't change what you're doing, because that's what got you here."

Reflections

At the end of it all, Chris and Chocolate finished 18th in their first World Cup Finals: a terrific result by any standard, and certainly for this fairly new partnership.

Chris came into the week with a goal in his mind, and he came through with flying colors. "My goal was to jump four rounds this week and qualify for the top 20 of round 2 on the last day. We did that, and were close really. I don't have a lot of experience with the format, so it was a good opportunity to learn about the horse – how fit she is, how much to do."

We are all looking forward to much more from one of Alberta's stars! 🏇





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1.40m Riders

continued from page 9

experienced such aggressive nerves – the adrenaline helped me to stay that much sharper, I kept focus, cutting everything else out, I visualized going through the course and how it would feel and what I needed to stay on top of. I tried to create the same feeling in the warm up ring making sure all the aids I would use on course were sharp.”

•Holly Grayton kept telling herself, “There’s no better horse in the world for you to do this on, he will never quit.”

•Robyn Walker held these reminders in her head, “I work to control my mind, reassure myself, I make sure my horse is in front of my leg and work to make every jump a quality jump.”

•Shoshana Weiss said, “I trust my horse and my trainers’ decisions.” She tries to stay in the zone rather than thinking about what could/could not happen. She continued, “If you understand how your stress manifests it’s much easier to recognize and redirect your thoughts into a productive and positive mindset.”

Each one finds trust in their horse and their training and each one spoke of the support and encouragement that’s been inherent in this progression too. They explained how grateful they are for their trainers, friends and family who may not know how much of an impact their presence or words have made. Rest assured, they take you with them to the horse show and they take you with them in their thoughts for the moments when they’re alone in competition.

How did these horses come into their lives? In as many ways as you can imagine; gift, purchase, luck, passed down from someone else – whatever the circumstance these horses found their way into their lives, they don’t waste time doubting or explaining,

validating or brushing off why, they make the most of their circumstances.

Congratulations to everyone getting to this level , it’s an achievement of skill, bravery and dedication. Particular recognition to Jade Folwer and Julie who won their first time in the 1.40m division, and Tayah Sobie on Brise CR who won the Grand Prix of their first week in the 1.40m division!! Well done ladies.

First time 1.40m competitors and contributors: Shoshana Weiss and Mercedes; Tayah Sobie and Brise CR; Paige McDougall and Larimo van de Berghoeve; Emma Edwardson and Apart; Natasha Fiorino and Liscalgot; Jade Fowler and Julie; Holly Grayton and Baron Ginus; Rylee Carron and CSE Caletto Z; Robyn Walker and Benjamin. 



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World Cup Finals as a Stepping Stone

by Holly Grayton

There are two Canadians holding the metaphorical flag for our nation at the 2017 World Cup Jumping Finals, held in Omaha, Nebraska. They are unequivocally doing their country proud, as Christopher Surbey and Kean White turned in two terrific rounds over the first two nights of the Finals.

Surbey and the 15 year old mare Chalacorada (Chalan x Corrado I) finished the opening speed round with one rail down to add 4 penalty seconds to their running time, finishing in 23rd place for the evening. White had a good time aboard For Freedom Z (For Pleasure x Baloubet du Rouet) but two rails added 8 seconds to their time, and they ended the day in 27th.

The second round of competition was a Grand Prix style course, with a jumpoff to break the ties for the evening's winner. White ignited the crowd as he delivered the first rail-free round of the night, picking up just 1 time fault for exceeding the very snug time allowed. Surbey returned just a few horses later and had one unlucky rail (but made the time allowed). The two Canadians finished in the top half of round 2, with White in 9th and Surbey in 16th.



Holly, Chris and Jill World Cup Finals 2017

The last day of the Finals sees the top 30 riders after two rounds come back to jump two separate courses to determine the overall winner. Both Canadians easily qualified in 20th and 21st.

The World Cup Finals is known as the indoor show jumping championship. There is nothing else like it in the world for this reason, but also it is the only major championship whose riders qualify solely on their results. There is no team competition and no subjective selection process. Every rider that competes at the Finals has earned their spot by having results good enough to secure a spot in their respective qualifying league.

This is what makes the event such an important one for athlete development and for top sport – especially in Canada.

It is no secret that Team Canada competes in fewer Nations Cups of all levels than our neighbors to the South, and many fewer than top-flight European teams. There are many good reasons for this (funding, geography, horse power and ownership, number of top riders, etc) but it does affect the development stream for upcoming athletes.

Team Canada has the same important goals as all of the other federations around the world – Olympic Games, World Equestrian Games, our regional games (Pan American Games), and the Nations Cup league final – but with a limited number of team events on the Canadian list each year, there is considerable pressure for each team to perform. This means, more or less, each team that Canada sends out needs to be the best team possible.

Especially over the last few years, Canada has made efforts to send teams on development tours to Europe and South America, because these upcoming riders need experience at this level to move up the ranks into the top teams and vie for spots on the Olympic level teams.

World Cup Finals as a stepping stone

Continued from page 21

This development level is crucial for the sport in Canada. It is the athletes' pathway that needs to be part of every serious rider's planning, and must be part of the national federation's long-term strategies.

The World Cup Finals fills a void in this pathway. It is a simple way for developing riders to test their mettle against the best in the world, without getting supplanted by the country's more proven athletes. It should be therefore, cultivated, supported, and promoted by the national federation.

Canadian Olympic veteran Jill Henselwood knows this struggle. Henselwood is passionate about the building blocks toward top sport in Canada.

"I always did the World Cup Finals to improve. There's no appreciation for the fact that you're in the abyss until you're actually on the team, no matter what age – even young riders. There's an event here and available, once a year – why isn't this considered a building block?" Henselwood is in Omaha for the Finals, playing a supporting role for the Canadian riders, specifically for Surbey who brought her in for technical assistance for the week.

Surbey and White have brought their own support teams to the Final – just like a normal show. In contrast other countries represented at the Finals have more structure and financial support, for example a team vet, a chef d'equipe, technical advisors, etc. Surbey and White

are "on an island, trying to get to the mainland," as Henselwood poetically said. There are no Team Canada curtains on the stalls, no Team Canada backpacks for the grooms, no Team Canada t-shirts, stickers, or flags for the riders and their support group – other than what they brought themselves. Not to mention the self-funding to prepare for and travel to the Finals.

Qualifying from the North American league means that it is possible to qualify for the indoor show jumping championship jumping only outdoors. There are some indoor events on the list of qualifying shows, but far from all of them. In order to prepare for the Finals, Surbey and his supportive owners from Team Spruce Meadows, traveled to Europe just a month before the Finals in order

to compete at 5* level indoor shows. This preparation has so far proven to be invaluable, and it was entirely self-funded. After the first two rounds of the Finals, it was noted 18 of the top 20 riders had been practicing a l m o s t exclusively indoors leading up to the Final s– this is not a coincidence.

To qualify

for and jump in the World Cup Finals is an admirable and impressive feat. It is not 'mission impossible', but it is a big task. There is expertise from across the country that riders can draw from to help with their Finals experience – from grooming, veterinarians, physiotherapy, technical assistance, coaching, logistics, and much more.

Surbey and White are making such a big effort to do something here in Omaha. Their drive and focus is what has brought them here, and it is what will continue their careers to the top of the sport. Team Canada should take notice of their efforts and learn from the experience to be able to build riders for the future and take them from the island to the mainland. 



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Who Should We Emulate

by Holly Grayton

When I was a young girl my mom and I had a discussion once about body types. As a typical young girl I envied celebrities including

Cameron Diaz, Julia Roberts, Jennifer Aniston etc. and my mom pointed out I should look more towards women with the

same body type as me. I was never going to be tall, lean and long legged but rather more athletic and muscular and wearing high heels!

Beezie Madden Aachen 2016



So I started looking more towards athletes, such as soccer players and even Britney Spears, always people with more muscle and a shorter stature to decide what style of clothes looked best on me.

Ok fast forward to now... my husband, as many of you know is tall...very tall and lean and another major difference obviously is he's a man. So when I think about who to emulate when I ride, although I respect and admire his riding a lot, it can't be him that I look to play copy cat with.

The idea seems obvious, but when I watch a lot of show jumping I start to think, "I want to ride like Amy Millar or Mandy Porter or Susie Hutchison." But in reality I'm not built like them and although I can take away many lessons from watching and listening to them when they ride and teach, when I watch my video the picture will never be the same.

Not to say that you shouldn't watch as many riders as you can, but I think when you are doing your visualizing it helps to picture

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Who should we emulate?

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someone of similar stature and the style of riding you wish to obtain.

For me right now it's Beezie Madden. She has a similar shorter leg and longer upper body. She often rides big horses and so the videos and photos of her are very helpful. I have printed a few photos and put them on my desk so I'm inspired constantly—her leg position stands out the most! I watch all that YouTube has to offer in the Beezie department. Not only does she have a similar body style to me



Beezie Madden Aachen 2016

but she also rides in a style I would like to emulate (we all want to ride like her but you know what I mean). Her style includes a lighter seat but strong and secure, forward galloping with guiding hands and a leg that doesn't move. So I think it's not only important to find someone who is built like you but also rides the way you want to ride.

Who are you built like?

What style of riding are you aiming for? 



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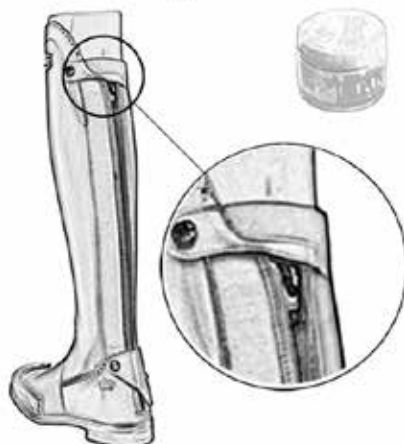
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www.YoungHorseTrainingSeries.com

June 21 - July 30 2017

Registration Open April 1st

The premise of having a horse started with a trusting and solid foundation cannot be stressed enough. The “industry expressed” need for more young trainers that can adeptly start young horses initiated the effort of Ulterra Equestrian to organize the Young Horse Training Series. Jose Alejos, a master horseman specializing in starting and training the young horse, is the lead mentor.

The series will focus on the education and development of both the professional and aspiring young horse trainers while starting and developing young horses. Jose Alejos has been starting and riding young horses since he was 10 years old on his family ranch in Guatemala, which traces its tradition of horsemanship to Jacinto Alejos a Spanish Calvary Horseman in the mid-1700s. Jose calls his method “rational horsemanship, because it is based on the natural interactions that occur among horses in a herd. It takes advantage of a horse’s natural reaction to pressure and, even more importantly, its reaction to the precise timing of the release of pressure.” His method trains the horse to become increasingly responsive to the rider’s aids and produces balanced, and happy young horses that can continue on to their specific discipline with a professional or good amateur. Through the series, participants will be mentored by Jose as he starts the young horses and then passes the reins on to a young or experienced trainer. He instructs and guides them daily as they progress with the young horses. The goal is to develop a confident and direct leader, the use of pressure and the timing of the release, and the confidence to continue on the training.

This event will be held at Ulterra Equestrian Ltd., North of Calgary.

- 10 day training sessions for young horses
- Individual training sessions for problem horses
- Coaching sessions available for trainers and riders
- Linda Allen tentatively booked for one week in July.

We welcome financial aid, strategic partners and sponsorship from interested groups, clubs, breeders and associations. This event qualifies for bursaries/scholarships.

Inquiries/bookings:

Gavin Pearson – Assistant/Manager
younghorsetrainingseries@gmail.com

Links:

www.JoseAlejos.com

Get to know: Jordana Bannerman

How old were you when you started riding?

I started riding when I was 5. My gym teacher at school had a little school horse program and we would ride on the side of the road, bareback in a halter. It was really safe.

Where did you ride growing up?

I started riding out of Merit Stables in Cochrane, but when I started showing competitively in the pony hunters I trained with Lynne Stephenson and I had the best pony in the world, Wonder. I also trained with Gail Greenough when I was beginning to do the jumpers and show at big venues like Spruce Meadows. I currently train with Gareth Graves in Edmonton. I have been extremely fortunate to train with some of the most knowledgeable people in our sport.

When did you start showing? I did some shows at Greenbriar when I was very young and competed in the walk/trot classes but I was around 10 years old when I started showing my pony on the A circuit.

Do you get nervous? I get very nervous for big classes or when I move up!

What do you do to help with your nerves? Still working on that... But I try to visualize jumping around the course and focus on the parts that may be tough for me and what I can do to help my horse in those parts. I also have a lot of faith in my horse and I know if I ride him somewhat properly he will do everything he can to jump around well for me!



Jordana and Vieba Tbird

When did you buy your first horse?

I got my first pony, Fritz when I was 8, he was 4 years old and the devil and loved to buck me off.

What horses do you have now?

I currently have Vieba, aka Vegas, and got him from Holland in 2012 through Alex Grayton. He is Phin Phin x Goodtimes

but I'm pretty sure there is some unicorn in there somewhere as well.

Do you have any advice for young riders? First would be that you can always learn something from anyone and to always be open minded to opportunities that may arise. Second, to work hard but don't take yourself too seriously. This sport is supposed to be fun and we are all really lucky to have the opportunity to do this.

What is your most embarrassing horse show moment? There are many, but the first one that comes to mind is my first time in the jumpers at Spruce Meadows, I was so nervous for my round that I started before the buzzer and was eliminated right away.

Name 3 things most people don't know about you:

-I have an English Bulldog named Phoebe

-I am currently working towards my BSc with Specialization in Development and Physiology at University of Alberta

-I have an irrational fear of moths. They have absolutely no direction when they fly around. 🦋



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The background of the entire advertisement is a photograph of an equestrian event. On the left, the head and neck of a brown horse are visible in profile, wearing a bridle. In the background, there is an outdoor arena with several show jumping obstacles, a rider on a dark horse, and a line of tall evergreen trees under a sky with scattered white clouds.

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