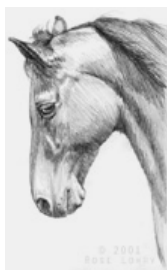


# August 2010



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Sharon Gorton 5964 6917

## COMPETITION SECRETARY

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## ADVERTISING RATES

### Businesses

Full page \$25 Half page \$15

Quarter page \$10

### Club Members

Small display ads for members selling saddles, horses etc are free of charge.

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## President's Report

Hi Riders,

Well I am well and truly over this COLD weather as I am sure all of you are but before we know it we will be complaining about something else!!

The inter team comp has been run for another year and our riders did a fantastic job in representing our club. The team consisted of Kylie Pedder and Anne Dunlop in the novice section, Monica Bird and Adam Benson in the Elementary and Karalyn McDonald and Liz Wright-Smith in the Medium. A huge thanks to these riders as it is an extra pressure when you are riding for your club not just as an individual. The team came 4th which was a great result for their effort. Travelling down to Werribee is big trip for some and we were blessed with a sunny day which was thankful from the riders. Anne and Craig Dunlop made a small holiday of it arriving on Thursday and staying in a nice bed and breakfast in Werribee for a couple of days so I hope it was a good experience for them. Congrats again to all the riders.

Our club day for August was fairly low key probably due to the freezing weather we have been having stopping a lot of people from being able to ride enough during the weeks previous. It ran smoothly however and the lunch was enjoyed by all that attended. Thanks Michelle Frey for the catering. Poor Meg Stafford was the last of the riders to go and got drenched in the outdoor arena. That's what I call dedication!

Our open comp at Werribee is coming around fast and we have had amazing response from people donating to the event. Running the event as a fundraiser for Breast Cancer has been very well received for the few times in the past we have run it and seemingly for this event also. We still are taking any donations on offer so please come forward if you can help. You will also be called on to help so remember 'many hands make light work'.

See you all at our September Club Day.

Michelle Oliver.

## Club Calendar 2010

### Friday 10<sup>th</sup> September 2010

Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> September 2010  
Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> October 2010  
Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> November 2010  
Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> January 2011  
Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> February 2011

### Entries close for Club Day competition

Club Day Competition at Glenbrae  
YVDC Open Comp at Werribee NEC – **Breast Cancer Fundraiser**  
Freshman's Competition at Glenbrae  
YVDC Official Open Competition at Werribee NEC  
Freshman's Competition at Glenbrae

## Club News

### 2010 Inter Club Challenge

Congratulations to our valiant members who represented the YVDC at Werribee on Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> August and came 4<sup>th</sup> out of 8 Dressage Club Teams.

Novice:	Kylie Pedder & Coldstream Sherman
Novice:	Anne Dunlop & Quiggley
Elementary:	Adam Benson & Brookwood Park Rome
Elementary:	Monica Bird & Quinlin
Medium:	Liz Wright-Smith & Yarra Valley Mountbatten
Medium:	Karalyn McDonald & Ruby Red

### Membership Reminder:

YVDC Memberships expired on 30<sup>th</sup> June 2010!

Please download the membership & liability waiver forms from the YVDC website: [www.yvdc.com.au](http://www.yvdc.com.au)

## Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> October - **National Breast Cancer Foundation**

### Fundraiser Competition at Werribee NEC - Have you put your entry in yet?

Thank you to all the members, friends, colleagues and companies who have come forward so far to sponsor classes for the dressage competition. Committee member Karen Webb "wins the prize for the most sponsors found" with a grand total of five – well done!

Please contact Sharon Gorton (AH: 5964 6917) if you are able to assist in any way.

A **Silent Auction** is also held on the day of the competition and is another great fund raiser for the cause. We are inviting members to donate new items (don't have to be equestrian related) which would be suitable for the auction. The items are to be brought down to Werribee on the day of the competition, unless other arrangements for delivery have been made. However we do need donors of items to contact the committee beforehand to notify what their donated item is so that the auction sheets can be prepared for the day. Please contact Michelle Oliver (9739 1753) to donate for the Silent Auction.

If you are able to lend a hand on the day please contact Chris Sudul phone: 5968 9908



NATIONAL  
**BREAST CANCER FOUNDATION**  
FUNDING RESEARCH FOR PREVENTION AND CURE  
FUNDRAISING SUPPORTER

## FRESHMANS COMPETITION RESULTS SUNDAY 15th AUGUST 2010

### PRELIMINARY 1C OUTDOOR JUDGE: SUE CLARK

Tracey Gaspari	Ilkston	158	71.82%	1st
Kathy Minchin	Zara	150	68.18%	2nd
Fiona Schilg	Flowervale Ferrari	139	63.18%	3rd
Kathy Minchin	Ebony	138	62.73%	4th
Chris Sudul	Rosie	131	59.55%	5th
Deborah Hodgson	Belcam Shaniah	124	56.36%	6th

### NOVICE 2C OUTDOOR JUDGE: SUE CLARK

Birgitte Horn	Bob	223	69.69%	1st
Meg Stafford	Andy	217	67.81%	2nd
Michelle Frey	Apen Park Feiner Leigh	196	61.25%	3rd

### ELEMENTARY 3C INDOOR JUDGE: MONICA COOK

Meg Stafford	Apollo Prince	276	69.00%	1st
Birgitte Horn	Bob	253	63.25%	2nd
Mardi Trease	Woodleigh Rouletto	247	61.75%	3rd
Mary Newham	The Shu	222	55.50%	4th

### MEDIUM 4B INDOOR JUDGE: MONICA COOK

Adam Benson	Brookwood Park Rome	233	64.72%	1st=
Janice Herzig	Sienna Eyre	233	64.72%	1st=
Judy Thompson	The Poet	209	58.06%	3rd

### ADVANCED 5B INDOOR JUDGE: MONICA COOK

Liz Wright Smith	Yarra Valley Mountbatten	243	59.27%	1st
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### INTERMEDIATE II INDOOR JUDGE: MONICA COOK

Elaine Castellini	Northern Charmer	NA	NA	1st
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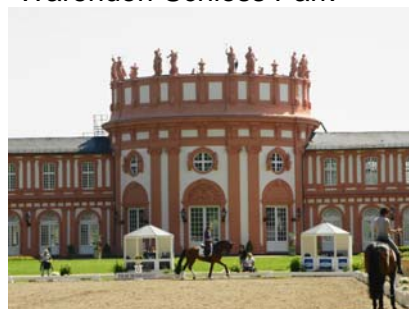
Warendorf Horse Show Germany



Monica Thorderscu in training



Warendorf Schloss Park



WELL BEHAVED HORSES



RARELY MAKE IT TO  
GRAND PRIX

*Tell A Gelding, Ask A Stallion,  
Discuss It With  
A Mare!*



**I TRAIN  
HORSES**  
*to eat carrots*

**TIME SPENT WITH  
HORSES  
IS NEVER WASTED**  
-Sigmund Freud



**I LIKE MY BRAINS  
WHERE THEY ARE**

# YVDC Leaderboard 2010 – 2011

## PRELIMINARY

Michelle Oliver	Charlie	6
Tracey Gaspari	Ilkeston	6
Meg Ferguson	Heatherton Park Chemistry	5
Kathy Minchin	Ebony	5
Kathy Minchin	Zara	5
Sandra Norster	Ronja	4
Fiona Schilg	Flowervale Ferrari	4
Kathy Minchin	Monty Walsh	3
Chris Sudul	Rosie	2
Meg Ferguson	Jetstar	1
Barb Geoffrey	Coldstream Shahlemar	1
Deborah Hodgson	Belcam Shaniah	1

## NOVICE

Brigette Horn	Bob	11
Meg Ferguson	ESB Irish Heart	6
Meg Stafford	Andy	5
Meg Ferguson	Heatherton Park Chemistry	4
Michelle Frey	Apen Park Feiner Leigh	4
Maureen Howe	Highness McOhl	3
Anne Dunlop	Quiggley	2
Meg Ferguson	Jetstar	2

## ELEMENTARY

Mardi Trease	Woodleigh Roulette	8
Brigette Horn	Bob	8
Meg Ferguson	ESB Irish Heart	6
Meg Stafford	Apollo Prince	6
Andrea Ramsay	Harry Who	5
Mary Newham	The Shu	4
Anne Dunlop	Quiggley	2

## MEDIUM

Janice Herzig	Sienna Eyre	12
Adam Benson	Brookwood Park Rome	6
Andrea Ramsay	Harry Who	5
Judy Thompson	The Poet	4

## ADVANCED

Liz Wright Smith	Yarra Valley Mountbatten	6
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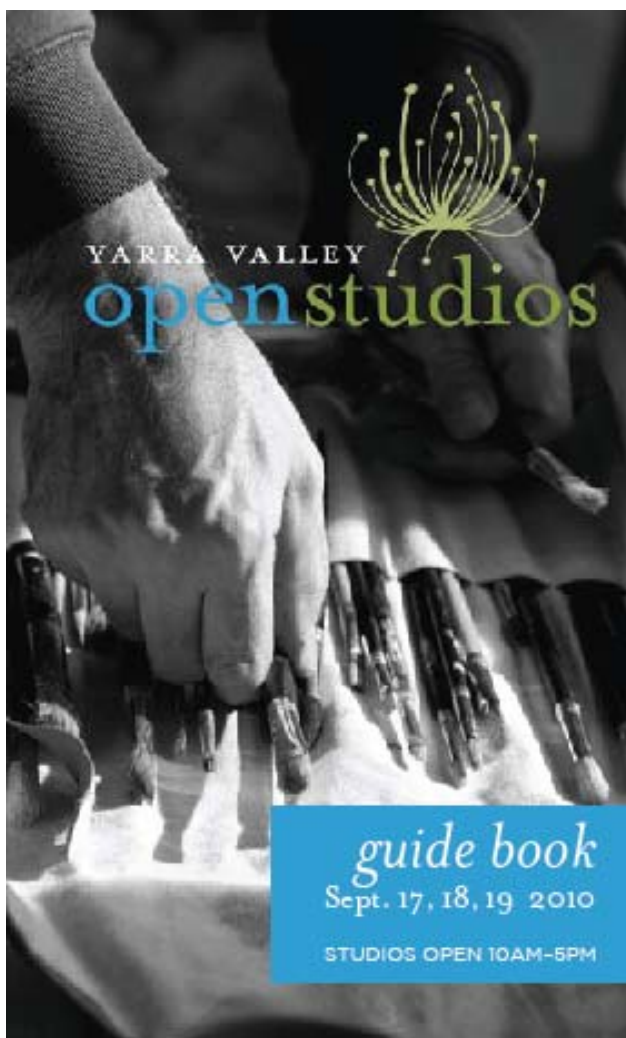
## PRIX ST GEORGE

Judy Gronn	Belcam Carob	6
Kylie Pedder	Brierely Menna	6
Lauren Bailey-Smith	Avoca On the Move	4

## INTERMEDIATE II

Elaine Castellini	Northern Charmer	6
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**Mary Newham**  
PAINTER/PASTELS

With landscape I am particularly inspired by the effects of weather and time of day; and the subsequent light, colours and atmosphere. Sky, reflections, surface textures and shadows are often a particular focus.

Working predominantly in oils, although watercolours are of great use when travelling, I prefer to paint on site, trying to record and share my visual awareness of places of beauty and interest within the Yarra Valley and beyond.

Another aspect of my work involves equestrian pastel sketches from direct observation where I try to immediately and quickly capture a sense of the movement, power and grace of individual dressage horses and riders.

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Melways Ref: 119KB



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YARRA VALLEY **open studios** 2010



## **Invitation and thank you**

I would like to invite all Yarra Valley Dressage Club members to visit my studio, and those of other selected artists who are part of this year's Yarra Valley Open Studios event to be held on Sep. 17, 18 and 19. I have copied above the cover and my page from the guide book, but information/location about all artists can be found on the link [http://yvopenstudios.net.au/wp-content/uploads/yvos\\_book\\_web.pdf](http://yvopenstudios.net.au/wp-content/uploads/yvos_book_web.pdf). Last year's Open Studio's event was extremely successful with thousands of people visiting the very diverse Yarra Valley artists in their studios. You can also view more of my work at [www.marynewham.com](http://www.marynewham.com)

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank all the riders who have been so encouraging and supportive of my sketching of them and their horses. It is a challenging and enjoyable part of my artwork...thank you! Mary Newham

# International News

## World Equestrian Games

LEXINGTON, Kentucky, Aug. 18 - Fifty-eight nations have nominated entries for the Alltech FEI World Equestrian Games in Kentucky next month, slightly fewer than the 61 nations represented at the previous world championships in Aachen, Germany four years ago.

The nominated entries include more than 900 athletes and more than 1,300 horses, but that will decrease significantly when definite entries for each discipline are submitted to the World Games 2010 Foundation beginning in mid-September. For example, the U.S. has nominated eight horse and rider combinations for dressage but only four will compete with one reserve.

Australia, Canada, Germany and the United States are the only four nations with nominated entries in all eight disciplines—dressage, driving, endurance, eventing, jumping, reining and vaulting plus para-equestrian. Another 19 nations have submitted teams or individual competitors in five or more disciplines.

## Painted Black Sold



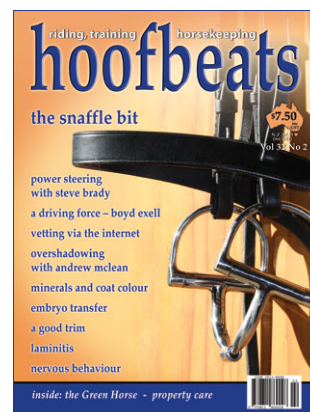
AUGUST 16 - Anky van Grunsven announced, on her website, that the 13-year old breeding stallion I.P.S Painted Black has been sold to Spanish dressage rider Morgan Barbançon (18 years old). Painted Black has been one of Anky's top horses for years and competed at Grand Prix level.

High lights in his career are victories at the World Dressage Masters show in Wellington (USA, 2009) and the World cup qualifier at Jumping Amsterdam in The Netherlands (2009). He also came second in the Grand prix and third in the Freestyle at the World cup final in 2009. Recently Painted Black won at the international show in Dortmund (Germany) and at the World Dressage Masters show in Falsterbo (Sweden). Painted Black is approved for the Dutch studbook KWPN and AES and he has got one approved son, Bon Bravour.

Painted Black was owned by I.P.S, Mr. Joop van Uytert and Equestrian International BV and is sixth at the FEI world ranking list at the moment. Anky: 'I will miss this top horse but I am glad that he stays at my barn and that I'll coach Morgan to get to know Painted. We agreed that Painted Black will be available as the reserve horse for the Dutch WEG team for Kentucky and that I can compete him at a few more shows.'

The following article is reproduced with the kind permission of Hoofbeats magazine - Hoofbeats is a life-style magazine for anyone with an interest in horses - with articles on riding, training the horse, training the rider, show preparation and tips, veterinary and herbal treatments, stable designs, horse management and life-style. The magazine also includes The Green Horse, an eight page section covering property development and maintenance, pasture establishment, environmental issues, fencing information, water management, as well as practical hands-on suggestions from readers that cover a range of issues related to caring for a horse property.

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## What Use is Dressage Schooling For Me? Steffen Peters at Equitana

by Jennifer Chisholm- Høibråten

When the announcement was made that Steffen Peters would be the master clinician at the 2010 Equine Expo extravaganza, Equitana, which will be held in Melbourne on November 18–21, it was greeted with mixed reactions from horse enthusiasts across Australia. Steffen will present a specialist dressage clinic on how to train dressage horses from Preliminary to Grand Prix level, as well as deliver other dressage training sessions and presentations during the event.



Those who were aware of the horsemanship skills of this German born dressage trainer and competitor, who now competes for the United States, were extremely enthusiastic at the opportunity to attend a clinic where they could gain an insight into how this man produces some of the world's best performance horses, and what skills and techniques they can take home to add to their own training or riding regime.

Outside the dressage discipline however, the main questions being asked were, "What would someone who wears a top hat and tails know about cutting cattle or training a show hack?" "What can a clinic with an international dressage rider do for recreational riders? My horse leans on the bit and can hardly balance under a rider, so getting him collected is not going to happen!" and universally the question has arisen, "Who is Steffen Peters and what use can his dressage schooling do for me?"

### WHO IS STEFFEN PETERS?



Steffen trained in Germany and is steeped in the classical principles, having benefited from instruction at the hands of such luminaries as Harry Boldt, Jo Hinnemann and Klaus Balkenhol, before emigrating to America. He has represented the United States in dressage at the Olympics twice and has won several major victories in international dressage competition, of which the most recent include the 2009 Rolex FEI World Cup in Las Vegas and the 2009 CDIO at Aachen where he beat the world's best riders. He is also a much sought out instructor. In addition to running a busy dressage training and sales barn in California, he travels all over the United States and Canada to teach and give clinics, and is noted by students as a trainer who can help in many situations and who will take a rider on no matter what kind of horse they are riding... whether it be a Quarter Horse or a Shire cross!

If riders from disciplines other than dressage are asking about what competition tips they will get from Steffen Peters, then the answer is probably not much! Modern dressage competition takes the schooling of horse and rider to nuances and heights beyond what most utility and recreational horsemen have use for. It has become a highly specialized and stylized sport that requires horses of very specific type, conformation and gaits that are especially bred for the purpose if one is realistically to be competitive.

Dressage is a high profile sport but it does not always receive the best publicity and the rollkur/hyperflexion debate over the last few years with respect to the questionable training practices of competition dressage horses should not prejudice riders against the discipline, causing them to dismiss the whole idea of basic dressage training and miss out on its benefits.

Remove the trappings of the top hat and tails, and Steffen Peters could be considered as a purveyor of classical principles of riding and training that will improve the rideability and suppleness of any horse in any discipline; he has much to give. If the concept of competition dressage with all its controversies and discord

is laid aside for a moment, and riders return to the original meaning of the word 'dressage', which is merely 'training', they will soon find that regardless of their chosen discipline, they are on the same page, for all riders will be using the same tools and techniques in developing the basic foundation in their horses before they move on to specialise in the various sports or disciplines.

### **COMMON SENSE TRAINING**

There are many components to the basic dressage foundation of the competition dressage horse that are pure common sense and are shared by the western horse, the show jumper, the hunter-jumper, the endurance horse, the camp drafter, the off the track racehorse, the driving horse and the children's pony. As the late Director of the Spanish Riding School Alois Podhajsky said, the cornerstone of training is about riding the horse forward and riding him straight. Everything else is built upon that. Sometimes the terms used differ but the other basic building blocks include acceptance of the bit, rhythm and cadence in the gaits, the connection of front and back ends through the horse's back so that the two parts move as a harmonious whole rather than in two pieces ('being through in the back'). Holes in the early training will come back to haunt a rider, as Steffen Peters himself verifies. "When the movements get harder, you have to focus even more on really sticking to the principles," he says.

So, if riders return to thinking of dressage as 'training' rather than 'sport' or 'competition', and consult the great classical writings on the subject such as Alois Podhajsky's Complete Training of Horse and Rider, they will soon discover that basic dressage training according to the classical principles is simply a sound and sensible roadmap to putting a sound and proper foundation on a riding horse. They will learn from dressage that a rider of a leaning and lugging Standardbred can re-educate the mouth of the horse. If they study C.O. Williamson's Training the Stock Horse, or Al Dunning's book on Reining, they will discover that many of those same basic principles also apply to training the western horse – especially the reiner. The same wisdom crops up again when works devoted to the training of the hunter or the show-jumper, from George Morris to Sylve Söderstrand are examined.

As American dressage rider and author Jane Savoie so elegantly puts it. "Dressage is the basic language – words, sentences and paragraphs that the rider uses to encourage his horses to become physically stronger, lighter in self carriage, supple, obedient, and more beautiful and pleasurable to ride."

### **The Show Horse and Show Jumper**

Done slowly, systematically and methodically without taking short-cuts, basic dressage builds the foundation in the riding horse for a long useful service life, making the horse fit, improving balance and helping to keep it limber and sound. It does not fix poor conformation in the show horse, but can enhance the good points that are already there and improve the horse's top line, thereby making it more beautiful in its physique. Part of skillful showmanship is conditioning and muscling a horse so masterfully that its weak points are not so quickly noticed. Dressage training is part of that. To a certain degree, it can also improve



the quality of a horse's gaits. Dressage riders will often work halt-walk transitions to get a clear 4-beat rhythm in a horse with a poor walk – but that same remedy will also work for the show hunter. What judge of show hunters isn't going to notice the obedient, lightly moving animal that has a beautiful round top line and displays its gaits with elasticity, spring and ease? Or the show-jumper whose lithe, supple equine athlete comes instantly back into hand after a long run between fences and jumps right off its hocks to clear a big vertical? It is long hours of dressage schooling on the flat that accomplishes these things.

*An obedient, lightly moving show horse or hack that has a beautiful top line and elastic gaits thanks to dressage schooling is going to draw the judges eye in the ring.*

### **Working Horses Benefit**

Basic dressage schooling also pays dividends in the stock horse: it can't teach a horse cow sense or how to work cattle, but what campdrafter or cutting horse rider wouldn't benefit from a horse that is instantly responsive to the leg as the horse is taught to follow the movements of a cow, or stay in balance and change leads quickly when working the beast through the turns and gates? That suppleness and agility can be trained through basic dressage work such as schooling for straightness and responsiveness to the rider's aids and teaching the horse to collect and self carry so that it can work better off its hocks. Imagine

the seconds saved and the efficiency of the horse that is so supple and strong and schooled that it can gather itself quickly, collect itself over its haunches and elevate its front end to perform a rapid haunch turn or rollback! The western horse's movements are more utility-oriented than the dressage horse, as for example the rollback/haunch turn versus the canter pirouette, but the foundation upon which they are built is the same.



*Steffen has a 'whole-horse' approach of training the horse's mind as well as its body and tailors the exercises to suit each horse's unique personality, conformation and abilities. Photo by Tracey Bavinton*

### **The Endurance Factor**

Similarly to the stock horse, balance, suppleness and agility are also vital in the endurance horse, as cardiovascular fitness alone is not enough to counteract the effects of fatigue when riding long distance. As the majority of the distance of most endurance rides is ridden in trot - over varying terrain at varying speeds - an active, balanced working trot is the pace to aim for with the power coming from the horse's hindquarters. Basic dressage exercises encourage the horse to become supple and build muscle strength, allowing self carriage and better use of those hindquarters – avoiding too much extension or falling onto the forehand, which in itself can cause lameness. How much more pleasurable would it be to ride many kilometres if both horse and rider were able to do so with the least expenditure of energy? The horse that can perform with the minimum of effort can delay the onset of fatigue, thereby vastly reducing the risk of strain to muscles, tendons and ligaments, and ensure the best chance of success over a longer competitive career - a goal achievable by incorporating suppling and balancing exercises into the training of the endurance horse.

All these different needs can be prepared for and fine-tuned through the myriad different suppling, gymnasticising and strengthening exercises of simple basic dressage training.

### **UNIVERSAL TRAINING**



With this in mind, riders should open their minds to the very real possibility that a dressage rider such as Steffen Peters, who is steeped in the classical principles, might nevertheless be able to offer some helpful tips or new angles and insights from his world to help them improve their horses and themselves as riders in their own sport or discipline. Moreover, here is an international dressage rider who has stuck to his principles and shunned the gimmicks and the short-cuts and applied the timeless classical principles in the riding and training of his horses to get where he is today.

So let's examine Steffen Peters' approach to training and see what tools from his tool chest when training his dressage horses might transfer universally and will readily profit horses engaged in other disciplines.

For a start there is his way of thinking. Steffen has a holistic, 'whole-horse' approach of training the horse's mind as well as its body, that incorporates critical study of each animal as an individual and tailors the training and exercises to fit each particular horse's unique conformation and temperament, and its own particular abilities and weaknesses. Perhaps because of the openness to new ideas of the society in which he lives, Steffen himself is receptive to ideas and approaches that might help him better communicate with his horse, including experimenting with clicker training on some. Because his clientele requires him to work with horses of many breeds and conformation types, he is less hidebound and bombastic in his approach to solving training challenges than another trainer might be who had straitjacketed themselves to the precepts of one school and whose experience in horses was limited to the training and schooling of Northern European Warmbloods only.

### **BUILDING UP A HORSE TO LAST**

Steffen is more committed to the wellbeing of the horse than he is slave to the clock or kowtowing to the personal ambitions of riders. For him it is a matter of building up the horse to last, as opposed to the 'use and discard' concept of getting a horse to the competition ring as fast as possible. His thinking comes through loud and clear on his web page: "I've spent most of my riding career bringing four and five year-old

young horses through the levels to Grand Prix. To me there is no greater reward than spending six or seven years with a horse until they're confirmed at the highest level and can go out and 'strut their stuff' with the best of them."

Unlike so many modern dressage horses that go unsound as training progresses, Steffen can boast of strong, supple and robust competition horses that go on to live long useful lives. Take for example the Westfalian gelding Floriano, who was 17 when selected to be the alternative for the US Olympic Team in 2004, and who Steffen went on with to win the CDIO Grand Prix at Aachen, Germany in 2005 and impress again in the same city at the World Equestrian Games a year later. The slow road is - in the end - the fastest road. That's a point to ponder in anyone's book.

Furthermore, Steffen Peters believes that training a horse is as much about training the horse's mind as it is about gymnasticising its body – if not more so. As Steffen sees it, the equilibrium of the horse's mind and body are linked. Tension in the mind can be caused by very physical matters in its body that can arise over the course of training and riding. Soreness of the muscles in the horse that has not been schooled to be supple will transfer into anxiety of mind when the horse associates schooling with discomfort, and tenses up. If it is a highly-strung type, it might worry and be anxious when asked to perform a new movement and become tense because of that. It would then require a few steps back to the horse's comfort zone, working quietly at the trot or exercises it has already mastered, until it has relaxed and settled and can take the new lesson on board. Steffen understands that it is very important to be clear at all times and never confuse the horse and when it does something right, he should be very clear that it was right. It is the rider's job to be clear in their aids so he has experimented a little with clicker training to help the horse make a clear connection when it has done something right. "When I train, 75% of what I'm doing is really training the horse mentally. The other 25% – getting the horse fit and developing the muscles, really isn't that complicated," Steffen told Holistic Horse Magazine.

### **SUPPLE HORSE**

Steffen lays great weight on suppling as a major tool for preventing sore muscles in the horse, resulting from it not having been warmed up properly or cooled down long enough after working. Soreness can also occur if the horse has the wrong conformation for the job it is being asked to do, and it will inevitably occur if it is not continually kept limber and suppled in preparation for this work. Hence, warming the horse up until it is calm and relaxed, followed by suppling exercises, plays a major role in the elimination of anxiety and tension. The horse needs that warm up time at the walk to warm muscles, tendons and ligaments to produce the joint fluid that will 'oil its joints' and allow them to be more elastic and move more easily in movements of greater effort. It also needs this time to settle its mind in readiness for the work to come.

A tense horse is a stiff horse and one that cannot benefit from training. If it is stiff in the body, that will make it tense in the mind; likewise, if anxious and unsettled in the head, that will lead to stiffness and tension in the body. Movement does not relax some horses, in particular horses coming off the track that can be immensely tense and stiff when they first enter re-schooling, so need the assistance of an equine therapist or chiropractor to loosen up possible blockages. A stiff, tense horse is also more prone to hurting itself in other ways.

### **Rider Error**

Errors or deficiencies in the abilities of the rider can also cause physical and mental tension in the horse. So when training, Steffen keeps a constant analytical eye on how each training session progresses, whether it is himself or a student. When giving clinics, he sharply analyses those working before him, studying the individual rider and analysing their way of working with that particular horse, watching closely for rider error which, left undetected and uncorrected, inevitably translates to errors and sometimes problems in the horse.

As dressage master Egon von Neindorff reminds us, "because the horse is a living creature, it is possible for it to engage various muscle contractions and move different parts of its body separately or together in a disharmonious fashion. Clumsy or unintentional movements on the part of the rider without consideration for the balance of the horse, undermine the desired effectiveness of the muscle groups to the detriment of the horse's ligaments and joints. All these errors afford the horse the opportunity to make mistakes, and with many variations, to evade any of the rider's other annoying demands."



Is there subtle anxiety or nervousness in the riders, causing them to work their extravagantly moving horses too deep in a subconscious effort to maintain control? Are the rider's hands too low or too heavy, causing the horse to fuss or evade contact with the bit? Is the rider's seat undeveloped and unstable, thereby unintentionally shifting in balance and causing the horse to deviate from a straight line?

A classic dressage tip from another dressage master, Wilhelm Müsseler's, may help the rider ride straight: "The rider who wishes to constantly remain in full harmony with his horse while maintaining a continuous light feeling between reins and legs will find it necessary to keep his hips always parallel to the hips of the horse and his shoulders parallel to the shoulders of the horse with an angle that correlates to the longitudinal flexion of the horse's body."

One of the reasons Steffen has become so very popular as a teacher and a clinician is his uncanny ability to think a few steps ahead and anticipate the error as it is in the process of forming, and issue instructions to correct it, all the while keeping the rider apprised of what is happening so that it falls into place and makes sense. And he keeps everyone's self confidence high by changing the mistakes and negatives into a positive training experience. His consoling words to the rider that has just blown an exercise has now become a classic Steffen Peters line: *"Don't worry about it – every mistake is a training opportunity."*

Steffen's refusal to allow himself to be pressured into producing results or to push and hurry a horse before the animal is ready is another example riders in all disciplines and sports would do well to emulate. For example, if he takes a young horse to a show, and the horse is all blown up with excitement, he won't show him, using the opportunity instead for 'milieu training' to accustom the horse to the sights and sounds of the showground. This pays dividends later on with a well-adjusted equine athlete that is robust in mind and settled in emotions when it is finally ready to show. There are not displays of fireworks or bad manners in the show ring from a Steffen Peters trained horse! Likewise, though a young horse might display fabulous natural talent and present eye-stopping quality of gait, which would tempt many lesser riders to show their horse before it is fully ready, Steffen has not the slightest qualm in sacrificing the expression of those gaits and deliberately delaying their further development until he first has the horse's acceptance of the bit and softness in his hands.

"The horse must accept the rider's aids. And he must accept the bit," he said at the 2009 Global Dressage Forum. "First we want respect for the bit – expression can come later." Delaying fancy movement and expression until the horse is properly responsive, fully supple, and sensitive and responsive to the rider's aids, preserves the horse's longevity and develops that expression of gait so that it will be even stronger and more beautiful than before.

Nor is Steffen a practitioner of 'kilometric dressage' as former Cadre Noir man Philippe Karl disparagingly calls it, with 'drilling' upon endless 'drilling'. No matter how much a horse might need the schooling, especially before a competition, 'drilling' always ends up with an animal that loses its brilliance or goes sour. Countless examples of dressage horses can be seen that are technically good but somehow seem like mechanical automatons – the spark is gone, the life and vivacity of the horse stifled. To keep a horse working willingly and happily entails keeping things interesting and continually varying the training.

The Steffen trained horses are generally not asked to do hard workouts more than two days in a row, and giving the horse multiple breaks for walking and stretching is a vital part of every training session. He might work on a difficult movement or ask the horse to exert itself for five minutes, then reward it with a free walk for two minutes. He considers the routine of a short period of intensive work followed by a few minutes of break to be one of the best recipes for letting the lesson sink in and for maintaining soundness. "Injuries are more likely to occur when the horse is feeling fatigued," says Steffen. "I believe those breaks are essential for the horse's mental and physical health."

Furthermore, he tries to vary training, not only inside the schooling ring, but with other activities to keep his horses happy, alert and interested. In addition to their normal training, Steffen's horses are walked out in hand, and are taken out for a relaxing hack on a trail that he has running over his property.

So sure, Steffen Peters may wear a top hat and tails, and you and I wear jodhpurs or jeans. But the common sense fundamental principles of training horses run like a red thread uniting all equestrian disciplines. *Seek ye wisdom where it may be found.*

So, thinking horsemen and women will go and sound Steffen Peters out when he



comes to Melbourne in November. Ask him for his ideas and tips on how dressage can apply also to the problems and issues of riders outside the dressage ring.

Who knows? Maybe the next we will hear is that he has consulted a western rider on how to achieve more snap and verve.



*The most successful dressage rider of 2009, Steffen Peters will be presenting a specialist clinic on how he trains dressage horses from Preliminary to Grand Prix level on the 20th Nov and other presentations over the four days of **Equitana Melbourne**, from the 18th to the 21st November 2010, at the Melbourne Showgrounds. [www.equitana.com.au](http://www.equitana.com.au)*

## Classifieds

### Employment



**Groom wanted:** This is a temporary position to cover while regular groom is away jet-setting - (from September to mid November). Tasks include grooming, rugging, feeding, hand grazing, cleaning out stables, yards etc - ie: general care for two competition warmbloods plus some of their older, retired companions.

**Contact: Amanda on 0409 253 419** if you, or someone you know, is interested to discuss further.

### Arena Rake



"Greystone Arena Rake" - it has only been used a couple of times so is as new. They cost over \$1000 dollars new, we will sell this one for \$800 they do an excellent job, but the one I use now is lighter and easier for an old lady.

**Price: \$800**

**Contact: Liz on 5967 3337 or 0427 368 443**

### Horse for Sale



Rising 4 year old Quarter Horse mare.

Registered, by Bosanoble 14.3 1/2 hands, broken in, quiet but green, unblemished, sound, nice confirmation and no vices.

**Price: \$4,500**

**Contact: Elaine Castellini on 9736 3060**

## Tack for Sale



### **Ammo Saddle** (synthetic)

Designed by Steve Jefferys this 'Centred Seat' saddle is suitable for all types of general riding where good balance, comfort and security is required. The Ammo saddle positions the rider more directly over the stirrups, similar to a good dressage saddle. Very lightly used. Great for using with freshly broken in young horses!

**Price: \$500 ONO**

**Contact: Judy Gronn on 9751 2140 or 0409 351 149**



### **Peter Horobin Amazone Dressage Saddle**

17 1/2 inch with flair. Good condition. Black.

**Price: \$1800**

**Contact: Rae Ansell on 0438 824 377**

## Rachael Brennen Dressage Clinic



Rachael Brennen is coming from Perth to give a dressage clinic on 5th & 6th October. The Clinic is held at Biddlesden Park, 802 Warburton Highway Seville. Lessons are for 45 minutes. Rachel travels to Germany regularly to train and work with Martina Hannover-Sternberg.

**Price: \$100 per lesson**

**Contact: Monica Bird 0401 577 504**



Yes he's cute, but he's not for sale!!

# Club Day Competition - Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> September 2010

Tests are ridden once under EFA rules. Ribbons are awarded to 6<sup>th</sup> place.



## Entry Form

RIDER \_\_\_\_\_

HORSE \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_

1<sup>st</sup> TEST ENTERED \_\_\_\_\_ 2<sup>nd</sup> TEST \_\_\_\_\_

ENTRY FEE  
ENCLOSED \_\_\_\_\_

### I will assist with:

RING SET UP  RING PULL DOWN

PENCIL  SCORE  SHEET COLLECTION

OTHER

Neither the Yarra Valley Dressage Club Incorporated, it's agents not the owners of any property used by the YVDC Inc. accept any liability for any accident, damage, injury loss or illness to horse, riders, spectators or grounds or any person or property whatsoever.

## Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> September 2010 GLENBRAE EQUESTRIAN CENTRE, VICTORIA ROAD WANDIN

Tests – 1D, 2D, 3D, 4C, 5C, Prix St George, Inter1, Inter 11, Grand Prix

Entries Close – Friday 10<sup>th</sup> September 2010

Fees – Club Members - \$20 per test

Event Secretary – Jan Herzig  
P.O Box 297 Wandin North Vic 3139

Scratchings on the day 0412 170 566

- ◆ **All competitors are required to assist before, during or after competition. Please indicate your preferred job.**
- ◆ Points awarded to club trophies
- ◆ Ribbons to 6<sup>th</sup> place
- ◆ Each test is ridden twice
- ◆ EFA Rules apply
- ◆ 2nd test may be entered if sufficient time
- ◆ Clean and neat attire
- ◆ Open to current YVDC members only
- ◆ NO DOGS ALLOWED
- ◆ **Yummy free lunch!**

