

Dressage Newsletter

January 2011

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Tribute to Liz Day



One of South Africa's leading judges and dressage ambassadors, Elizabeth Day, lost her valiant two-year battle with cancer on 26 November 2010.

Liz's courage and determination were always evident and she passed away a mere six weeks after achieving her dream of becoming a four-star FEI International dressage judge. She took her final exams in Denmark in October with Mariette Withages and Dieter Schuler, passing with flying colours. This is an exceptional achievement, not only in terms of demonstrating her judging expertise, but also indicative of her not allowing her condition to defeat her and travelling halfway around the world to achieve her goal.

Based in KwaZulu Natal, Liz was no stranger to Gauteng and prior to her diagnosis and the subsequent effects of chemotherapy, she was often seen competing on her magnificent Oldenburg stallion, Asterix.

Liz judged at multiple Gauteng dressage championships and ran many informative seminars. In addition to her dressage riding achievements, she was also an FEI International eventing judge and coach and a four-star FEI International Para Equestrian judge. For some years Liz judged all over the world and was invited back to judge in such continents as Europe, Asia and South America in 2011.

Always a person of extremely high ethics and professionalism, for Liz the welfare of the horse was paramount. She was someone who made it her mission to know the rules backwards! Liz was also always willing to give back to the sport and served on the SANEF Management Committee, was a member of the KZN Executive, chairman of dressage in KZN and as such a member of the National Dressage Committee. She also served on Para Equestrian Committees at national level and played a significant part in growing Para Dressage in South Africa, a discipline that was very close to her heart.



Liz will also be known and remembered by those who knew her for her dry and quick sense of humour. Our condolences go to her husband Frank, her sons Nick and Tim, her brother Ian in the United Kingdom, their families and her friends.

Hot contest!

The Georgiades family's superb Chez Charlene Equestrian Centre hosted the 2010 Gauteng North Dressage Championships on 13 November last year and despite it being very hot, the show was well supported with over 100 entries on the day.

All four arenas ran very smoothly and the arenas and surrounds were very professionally prepared by Carol-Ann Paterson.

Classes were judged by Clare Bailes, Erica de Groot, Cheryl Kempin, Justin O'Reilly, Lyn Sacks, Janine Viljoen, Heletha Burmeister and Eino Vuorinen. Show directors, Alet Herbst, Michelle Harding and Jane Morris-Abson supervised an excellent team of scribes, marshalls, bit checkers and runners.

Cecilia Michaletos is both the novice and elementary 2010 Gauteng North champion on Wolfram and Ilizwe Silken Ribbons respectively.

Says Eino Vuorinen: "We must thank all the riders and their friends and family members who support our shows. It is amazing. We have our regular competitors but at each show we also get new riders attending. Congratulations to all the new champions and placed riders.

"I would like to thank our generous sponsors, Bronberg Enviro Waste, Carin Gouws, Danielle Deetlefs, Farm Barn, Gauteng City Region Observatory, Johann Burmeister, Lorelock Stud, Maretha Lubbe, Von Deetlef Stud, Western Shoppe and Sheleph Burger for sponsoring the new Ilizwe Silken Ribbons floating trophy for the elementary championship class."

Eino also urges riders and trainers to study the dressage rules, available on the SANEF web site, to avoid embarrassing eliminations, particularly rule 33.3.1 which explains who can have a whip in hand when training and riding a horse at an event and rule 33.6.2, which explains how to exercise and warm up a horse at an event.



Cecilia Michaletos and Wolfram, 2010 Gauteng North novice champions.



Cecilia Michaletos and Ilizwe Silken Ribbons, the 2010 Gauteng North elementary dressage champions.

Farewell Highness STV

Nobody wanted to believe it when the sad news started to spread! Arina Petit's wonderful horse, Highness STV, passed away unexpectedly in early December. The career of Highness and Arina as a horse and rider combination spanned many years and led them to countless wins individually and as part of the Gauteng team. Indeed, competing at the highest levels, they were chosen five years in a row for the Gauteng interprovincial team.

Says Arina of losing Highness: "I have lost my soul-mate, best friend and teacher".

Highness enjoyed huge popularity with the many riders, judges and everybody else who knew him. At the pinnacle of his career at just over 20 years of age, Highness was officially retired at the Avis South African Derby in October in a lovely ceremony honouring his and Arina's achievements.

Highness STV will always be fondly remembered by the dressage community. Our thoughts are with Arina on her loss of this iconic horse.

A 'bubbly' Mini Novice Champs

The Mini Novice Championships at KEP in December saw the first time junior and pony rider classes included, which meant limited entries in these classes. However, this was made up for with good entries in the Adult classes.

With the pony riders and junior classes being a novelty this year, when word gets around that participating youngsters had a super time and were rewarded with plenty of great prizes including sashes, rosettes, day sheets and medals, we are confident that entries will significantly increase in the next event. Adults were certainly also not left out of the superb prizes handed out!

This was a thoroughly enjoyable show. The weather was also most cooperative. Visiting KwaZulu Natal judge, Anita Adendorff, was seen leaving the show grounds with a big smile on her face after the conclusion of the Freestyle classes on the Sunday afternoon and a happy judge should represent the best indication of a great event!

We have been fortunate for many years now at KEP to have the skilled and often complimented catering services of Diane and Charles Watson. Di and Charles have decided it is time to enjoy free weekends and have ventured into something new. At the end of the show, everybody still left at KEP gathered up to have a last toast and farewell drink with Di, who brought along some 'bubbly' for the occasion. Di and Charles, we are going to miss you both a great deal and it is a brave person stepping into your catering shoes. Good luck for your future ventures.

It is true that everything slows down at Christmas! Unfortunately we were unable to obtain the official Novice Mini Championship results from GHS before the submission deadline of articles for this newsletter. We would have liked to put all prize winners and placed rider and horse combinations in print and will hopefully do so in the next issue of Rider's Digest, space permitting.

Well done, Gauteng juniors!

The Gauteng junior team did very well at the recent SA Junior Champs in Port Elizabeth in December. The KwaZulu Natal team clinched team victory just ahead of the second-placed Gauteng team.

The final Gauteng team consisted of Shelby Kleynhans on Mambo N, Jennifer Gill on Paddington Bear, Anthea Michaletos on Olivia STV, Ingrid Masson on Brandenburg Spirit of the Dance and reserve Alexa Stais on Alzu Lamborghini. Well done to these horse and rider combinations for this great achievement and hats off to their chef d'Equipe, Susan Bass. We hope to have more feedback on the results in the next issue of Rider's Digest.

Prize winner

Dressage personality, Candice Hobday, was the winner of a stunning new saddle in December. The saddle was one of the prizes donated to the National Horse Trust (NHT) by Western Shoppe, for its annual raffle. The raffle is an essential fundraiser for the NHT, which is the national fundraising body that supports Highveld Horse Care, Eastern Cape and other equine welfare units. Anyone interested in getting involved with the NHT – whether in a large or small way, can contact Rebecca on 084-899-5643 or chevalier9@gmail.com.



Candice Hobday was the lucky winner of the Western Shoppe saddle, a prize in the National Horse Trust's annual fundraising raffle. Candice (left) is pictured here receiving it from Western Shoppe's marketing manager, Jane Kenyon.