

GLOBAL DRESSAGE FORUM 2003

Clinic of Ulla Salzgeber

European champion Ulla Salzgeber of Germany opened the third Global Dressage Forum, which was held on October 6 and 7 at the Academy in Hooze Mierde, Holland. During an interview with international dressage rider Richard Davison Ulla opened her heart and explained about the backgrounds of her recent European Championships. It was not easy to get herself together after the medication problems with her horse Rusty, she told the audience. Rusty had been tested positive in a dope test during the World Cup final in Gothenburg in April 2003, due to a treatment of a minor skin disease of Rusty by Ulla's veterinarian.

Although it had been a difficult decision, she decided in the spring to start at the European Championships in Hickstead while the doping case was still running. Although she had to compete under big pressure, she managed to win the title with a close to perfect performance. During her clinic at the Forum Ulla Salzgeber rode her horse Wall Street and explained the details of her preparation for a big international dressage class. The audience of over 250 trainers, judges, riders from 20 countries all around the world, was very much impressed by her impeccable seat and impressive riding abilities.

IDTC project on Olympic Judging

The rest of the Monday was about judging. Mister Hans van Zetten, an expert in gymnastics, gave a lecture on the practice of judging other Olympic sports. Mister van Zetten explained the necessity to have an extensive handbook, or so called 'code of points', where the details of every movement and the possible mistakes have to be explained into detail. After an interesting discussion with the audience, it was the current Olympic champion Anky van Grunsven, who concluded 'that we must think about the things we can learn from the experiences in other artistic sports. We should have an open mind and see what we can improve'.

Evaluation of European Championships Hickstead (GB)

On Monday evening the evaluation of Hickstead took place, an interesting confrontation of judges and trainers. The audience was very impressed with the openness, shown by the judges, especially by Mrs. Mariette Withages, the chairman of the dressage committee of the FEI. It became clear, during this evening, that the Hickstead judging had been quite correct. The news came from Mrs Withages. She told that the FEI is preparing a handbook for judging. A draft will be presented to riders and trainers next year.

Clinic of Arthur Kottas

Ex Spanish Riding School Chief Rider Arthur Kottas gave an impressive demonstration of work 'from the ground' (hand work) on Tuesday morning. He first showed a video and brought the theory into practice with the stallion of his daughter, who had been successful at the European Championships for young riders. Kottas trained the horse in hand, demonstrating the skill and kindness that is essential to get a relaxed horse which is working through its whole body. Afterwards the horse was ridden by Ms Kottas, her father explaining the way he is training and preparing his daughter for

competitions. Arthur Kottas came back during the second clinic of the day, which was presented by Mister Richard Weis from Australia.

Clinic of Richard Weis (Aus)

The second clinic of the day was presented by Mister Richard Weis from Australia. He is an Alexander therapist and specialized in the correct sit of the rider. He then explained his work as a therapist and trainer, and managed to get the whole 250 capacity audience moving and jumping to do some exercises.

The quality of collection

The afternoon session was for the German National Federation (FN). Veterinarian dr. Gerd Heuschman gave a lecture on the anatomy of the horse. Christoph Hess from the FN and Holger Schmezer, who is the national trainer of Germany, presented 4 horses and riders from top national young rider level to Grand Prix. An explanation was given of the German 'Piaf Förder Preis', which is a successful competition for young riders who are on their way to Grand Prix level.

The Global Dressage Forum came to an end with IDTC President David Hunt announcing on Tuesday evening during the 'Trainers Buffet' the IDTC award for Wiltrud Duceck, who has been running the trainers club with her late husband Hermann for many years.