

Jeneen DesChamps

What age did you start riding and why?

I started riding late in comparison to many riders! I was in my mid-thirties when a friend asked me to come along for some lessons. That was my first time on a horse and after some initial fear I started enjoying all that horses can offer us. That was nearly 8 years ago, since then I have gone from someone who had no aspirations for showing to someone who competes in Dressage, as well becoming an Equine Canada Instructor of Beginners so I can share that love of riding.

Horse Stats

Since ending a 4-year lease on a horse named Red October in 2008 I have been absent from competing in Dressage. After my time with Red ended, I rode various horses and ponies in search of that next partner. In the fall of 2009 I entered a lease arrangement on Stanley, a 2001 Belgian/Thoroughbred cross who is owned by my coach and her husband. Stanley has been described as a big teddy bear! He has a kind eye and had a laid back demeanor. He has strong willingness to please and we have been getting to know each other and are well on our way to becoming a strong partnership.



Training Regime

I ride Stanley 3-4 times a week. We are focusing on the basics of Dressage and getting him back in shape after an extended period time being out to pasture and not working. Each ride is about 1 hour, plus the extra time for grooming, doing his stretches, and cooling him out or bathing after the ride. To improve my riding, I go to the gym 3 times a week and ride other horses 1-2 times a week. Working full time outside of the "horse world" makes it difficult at times to find the time to ride or to attend clinics and competitions. The true love of the sport and the horses makes it worthwhile to give up that free time.

Achievements

My introduction to competing in Dressage was with Red October in 2006. He was a seasoned veteran in the Hunter ring, but he was new to Dressage. While we only completed in a small number of shows we did come out with two high point Training Level awards. It was a joy being able to bring him to the shows and he always seemed to come alive when he came off the trailer at the show. My achievements now with Stanley are the small things, like seeing his fitness level increase or being able to maintain a balanced canter! One step at a time! Outside of the competition ring, my biggest achievement is obtaining my Equine Canada Instructors of Beginners certification in 2007.

Aspirations

As I am working with a horse that is new to Dressage and who has not been to any competitions, my goal is to bring Stanley to his first Dressage show in 2010. I want to ensure he is successful and happy in his transition into competition so I plan to take a slow and steady progression with him. Long term, I would like to compete with him in First Level. As an Instructor, I have the goal of introducing my young students to Dressage and to someday have them experience the camaraderie and joy of competing.

