

ROCKY
MOUNTAIN
DRESSAGE
SOCIETY

 **CENTAUR**
NEWSLETTER

June 2006

Nine Chapters in Colorado & Wyoming

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High Plains Derby Dressage

from Alex Curnutte & Terri Wallace

High Plains "Derby Dressage - Ride for the Roses" Schooling Show was a big success. The show was held on May 6th at Double "T" Stables just east of Parker. Various Thoroughbreds, Warmbloods, Arabians, and other breeds turned out for the event.

Jockeys (riders) were presented with a boutonniere of three baby roses with a sprig of baby's breath to pin on their silks. A long stemmed red rose was awarded with each blue ribbon. Any riders wanting a picture of themselves with their mount got to have it taken with a blanket of red roses draped over their horse's neck and ribbon in place. High Point Awards per division were generously donated by **Spirit Horse**, along with a bouquet of red roses. A special award was given to the best Derby Duo/Horse & Rider, an original 132nd Running of the Roses Drinking Glass with all the past winners listed on the glass, along with a bouquet of roses. Fun was had by all and the show was over just in time to watch the Kentucky Derby.

Jamee Stolar and Espresso won "Derby Duo, and Honorable Mention went to **Ashley Suarez on KL Talon**. High Points were:

Junior - Kelsee Foote on Baroness von Truffle

Open - Jenny Slade on Bengali

Amateur - Jennifer Little on Won't Waste Time.



Jamee Stolar and Espresso

This was the 2nd "Special Themed" Schooling Show that High Plains has hosted. Last year you may remember the "Valentine's Day Show". If you are not riding in these schooling shows you are truly missing out on a lot of fun. High Plains will continue to host shows like these.

All roses were donated by our High Plains President Alex Curnutte. Our judge was Beth Geier a new graduate of the "L" program. Scribes were Bridget Milnes & Terri Wallace, Show Manager was Kate Engel, Arena Stewards were Alex Curnutte & Becky Schmeitz. Scoring was handled by Jessica Sheppard and Kate Engel.

Susan Mikula of Western Courtier catered a traditional Derby Lunch. Cheval Tack & Clothing were on site for those shoppers. High Plains Chapter wishes to thank each and every volunteer for their time and work put in to make this show a success.

Those Wonderful Spanish Horses!

by Darlene Vaughn

What absolute fun!!! Our third trip to ride in Spain with our very good friends at Epona Equestrian Center near Seville! (The "our" includes my husband Dave and myself. This facility is "husband friendly", rider or not.) The Center revolves around Fernando, Jane, Kati, and Vivi Garcia and the finest horses I have had the privilege of riding. The experience in Spain immerses the participants in the Spanish culture, traditions and lifestyle. Everyone stays in the 16th century Hacienda that has been lovingly restored. The majority of the meals are served on site in typical Spanish home cooked style. Fernando is the host for the activities that take you away from the center during the week....trip to Jerez de la Frontera to see the exhibitions at the Royal Spanish School for Equestrian Art, a trail ride in a Spanish National Park, and flamenco in Seville. Kati is the head instructor at Epona supported by a group of talented working students. They can handle any level of rider from beginner to Grand Prix.

And then there are the horses!!!! Oh, the horses!!!! Beautiful grey, bay and black Andalusians along with a good mix of warmblood breeds and crossbreeds in every size for every rider. The horses are special individuals acquired with the safety, pleasure and schooling of guests always at the forefront. They are cared for like members of the family, some living under the olive trees, some in paddocks with shelters and some in box stalls with turnout. What a pleasure to ride the horse that best meets your needs, be it a leisurely hack in the Spanish countryside or training passage in the covered school.

I am a lower level dressage competitor who has worked diligently to learn the basics of this sport. I have had few opportunities to ride

highly trained horses, which makes my Epona experiences so special. The hours spent on these horses have given me a boost to my confidence that I actually may be doing it right! These lovely light schoolmasters help a rider learn movements that I have only seen but not felt ever before. They are the perfect partners to bring

tears to the eyes of the riders as each pair sets out to accomplish feats thought impossible before coming to Spain and Epona.

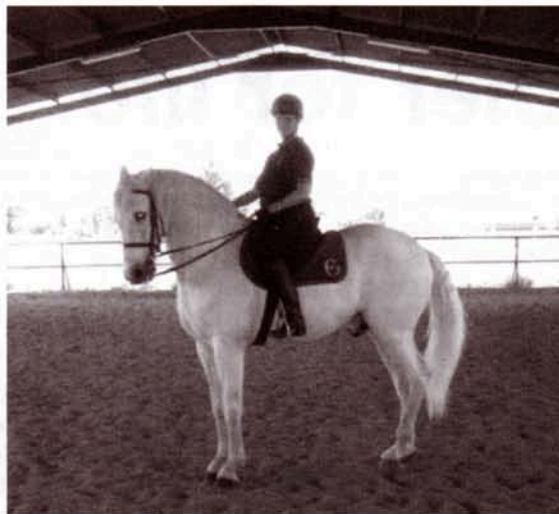
A "once in a lifetime" experience awaits a few riders during the winter of 2006-2007. Rafael Soto, one of the well known Spanish Olympic team members and medalist, will be the honored guest clinician at Epona for a limited number of sessions. Riders will have time to try different horses and decide the best fit before the series of

four sessions with this truly talented trainer. He speaks impeccable English as he works individually with each participant. I hope to be one of those riders as I continue with another excursion to Spain and the welcoming atmosphere at Epona!

I would be glad to visit with any of the RMDS members about my experiences. I am currently serving as president of Tri State Dressage Chapter and my contact information is in the membership list. You may also go to www.eponaspain.com, the Epona website to get a more comprehensive view of this fantastic facility and the horses and people who make it so unforgettable.



Darlene Vaughn, Tri State Chapter President, on Trahano



Here's Darlene on Seneca