

STRONG PARA DRESSAGE TEAM

for World Equestrian Games



Rebecca Hart
and Schroeter's Romani

Susan Treabess and Kamiakin



The 2014 USEF Para-Equestrian Dressage National Championship, held at the USET Foundation Headquarters in Gladstone, NJ, showcased the increasing depth and quality of contenders for the U.S. Para-Equestrian Dressage Team. The top athletes in the country turned out to vie for a chance to compete at the 2014 Alltech FEI World Equestrian Games in Normandy, France.

"The caliber of riding has gone through the roof," Judge Kristi Wysocki said of the 2014 National Championship field. "It was very exciting to judge because our riders are so good."

At the selection trial, riders competed in the Individual Championship Test, Team Test, and Musical Freestyle, in their respective grades. Their scores in each test were used to determine an overall score, with the Individual and Team Tests each counting as 40 percent and the Freestyle counting as 20 percent. Riders were then ranked by their overall scores.

The first three positions on the Short List for WEG were automatically filled by the athletes and horses ranked first through third in the selection trial provided they met selection criteria. USEF Para-Equestrian Dressage Selectors had the option of making a discretionary choice to fill the fourth position on the Short List. The U.S. squad for WEG includes four rider/horse combinations as well as an additional combination to compete as an individual entry.

Leading the way at the selection trial was Rebecca Hart. She and Schroeter's Romani earned outstanding marks in each of the three tests to take the National Championship title with an overall score of 74.642 and earn a spot on the team for WEG.

"To see the growth (in the sport in the U.S.) from where it was when I first started is amazing," Hart commented.

Hart is backed by a group that came together to purchase Schroeter's Romani for her to compete. The mare is owned by Hart in conjunction with Margaret H. Duprey, Cherry Knoll Farm, Sycamore Station Equine Division, Barbara Summer, The Ruffolos, and Will and Sandy Kimmel.

Second place at the selection trial went to Margaret McIntosh and her own Rio Rio with an overall score of 71.628. McIntosh, who rode as a Grade Ia at the Trial pending the FEI's confirmed classification of her grade, was classified as a Grade Ib by the FEI and was, therefore, ineligible for selection to the team.

Roxanne Trunnell and Nice Touch collected third place at the selection trial and joined the line-up for WEG. Sydney Collier, the youngest athlete at 16 years old, and NTEC Cuplee, owned by Patricia Mendenhall, were fourth. Collier will ride her other mount, Victoria Dugan's Willi Wesley, on the WEG team.

Susan Treabess and Kathryn Hill's Kamiakin were fifth at the Trial and rounded out the WEG team. Angela Peavy finished sixth at the Selection Trial on Lancelot Warrior, was named as the individual entry for WEG, and later made a horse switch to Ozzy Cooper. All five riders named to the squad – Hart, Trunnell, Collier, Treabess and Peavy – demonstrated they have the talent, ability and drive to successfully represent the U.S. at the highest levels of their sport. – *Mary Adelaide Brakenridge*

Roxanne Trunnell and Nice Touch



Sydney Collier and Willi Wesley



THE JONATHAN WENTZ MEMORIAL CHALLENGE

Increases Funding for Para Dressage Athletes

When Margaret Duprey suggested to para dressage rider Rebecca Hart, a member of the U.S. Para Dressage Team for the World Equestrian Games, that she ask the USEF for funding to travel to Europe to compete this past spring, Hart told her she had, but there was no funding available.

Therefore, Margaret Duprey decided she would change that and, thanks to her generosity and initiative along with that of The Barnfield Foundation, The Jonathan Wentz Memorial Challenge for High Performance Para Dressage was then established through the USET Foundation.

The Jonathan Wentz Memorial Challenge for High Performance Para Dressage



dream was to not only be a world-class equestrian, but to also help develop a world-class United States Para Dressage team. This, as you know, not only takes dedication, sacrifice, training and skill of the athletes, but also the funds to compete nationally and internationally. My hope is that The Jonathan Wentz Memorial Challenge will raise awareness and the funds needed to carry on his dream of developing a world-class team!"

The financial need for Para Dressage athletes at the High Performance international level can be significant. Unlike in most countries, the United States Equestrian Teams do not receive any government subsidies. Their main source of funds for the athletes to participate in international competition comes through the USET Foundation. Not only must they transport and ship the horses and supplies, and make sure support staff such as vets and farriers are in place, the riders often need additional support staff so that they can function at the highest level both physically and emotionally when they are competing.

While traveling, especially overseas, wheelchair accessibility can be limited, a rider may need help mounting a horse or a physical therapist may be necessary to help the athletes remain in peak physical condition.

During the Para-Equestrian Dressage National Championship, the USET Foundation hosted the Jonathan Wentz Memorial Challenge Reception, generously sponsored by Mission Control, at their Hamilton Farm headquarters. The initial response has been encouraging and generous. Parents, trainers and philanthropists have all come forward and pledged their support to help these athletes in their quest to represent the United States on the world stage, raising \$600,000 towards the \$800,000 goal.

Please call Bonnie B. Jenkins, Executive Director or Sara Ike, Major Gifts Officer at (908) 234-1251 for more information about The Jonathan Wentz Memorial Challenge for High Performance Para Dressage. – Sue Weakley 



Rebecca Hart and Schroeters Romani

Duprey and The Barnfield Foundation have each pledged up to \$200,000, and they will each match, dollar for dollar, every gift commitment of \$4,000 and above made by April 1, 2015. The goal of the initiative is to raise \$800,000 for High Performance Para Dressage.

"I called [USET Foundation Executive Director] Bonnie Jenkins at the Foundation and said, 'What can we do to help the para riders?'" Duprey said. "And from there we developed the plan for the Challenge to increase funding for these high-performance athletes to get the experience they need to excel internationally." Duprey also supports other high-performance disciplines including show jumping and dressage.

"I just wanted to be the kick start," she said. "I knew I needed to help these athletes who look at every day as a gift. Thanks to The Barnfield Foundation joining me, we were able to really make a significant impact."

The fund is named for Jonathan Wentz, a Paralympic athlete who successfully competed for the U.S. at the London Paralympics but who died in 2012 at the age of 21.

"Our family is so excited and honored that Jonathan is being recognized in this way," Tina Wentz, Jonathan's mother, said. "His



Sydney Collier and Willi Wesley