

Palisadians Win Eventing Awards

Mill Creek Stable is Breeding Ground for Talented Riders

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Several Palisadians were big winners at the United States Eventing Association Area VI (California and Hawaii) awards ceremony February 9. Held at Ram Tap, an equestrian facility in Fresno, local riders from Mill Creek Equestrian Center in Topanga came away with a number of top awards for the 2002 show season, as well as the first three shows of 2003.

One of the award-winning Palisadians was Marisa Metzger, whose pony, Buster Brown, won

Area VI Reserve Pony Champion. Metzger recently turned 12 and attends Crossroads School in Santa Monica. She has been riding for only two years and Buster Brown was her first horse. For the 2003 show season, Marissa will be riding a new horse, Jakob. They rode in their first event together at the Ram Tap Combined Test, held the same weekend as the awards ceremony, and placed seventh in the Junior Beginner Novice division.

Three-Day Eventing is an Olympic sport which can be characterized as an "equestrian triathlon." The three basic phases include dressage, endurance/

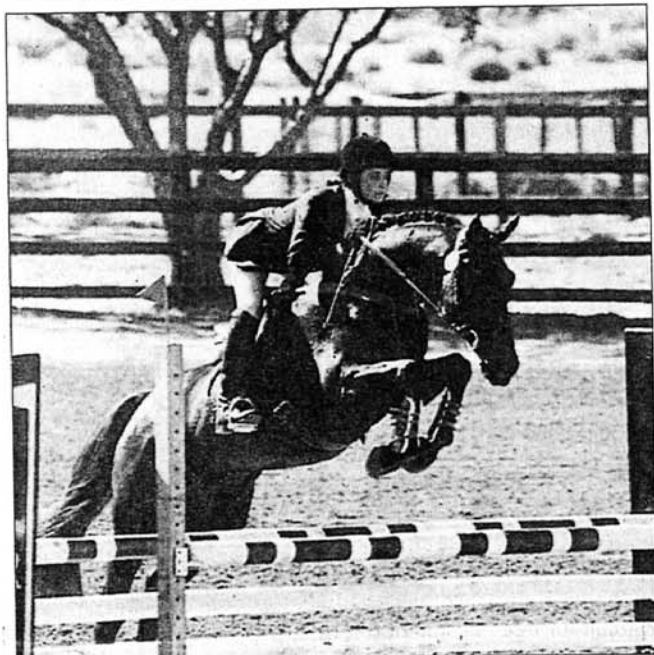
cross-country jumping and show jumping. Three-Day Eventing began centuries ago as a test of the "ideal military charger" and has evolved into an internationally popular sport. Day one of an Event is the dressage phase: a test of the horse's smoothness, suppleness and obedience to the rider, in which horse and rider are expected to execute a series of precise movements similar to those performed during the compulsory exercises in figure skating. The cross country phase on the second day involves galloping a series of very solid jumps out in the open, over a two- to four-mile course. Higher levels of eventing include the additional speed and endurance stages of "Roads and Tracks" and "Steeplechase," which can cover distances up to 20 miles, all within a set time. The show jumping segment on the final day is completed in an arena and includes a series of technically difficult obstacles that also test the horse's skill and conditioning after the two previous days of competition.

Mill Creek is one of the top eventing barns in California and 17-year-old Palisadian Micaela Rosenthal is one of Mill Creek's most accomplished riders. Her horse, Clifton Cat, was imported from New Zealand about a year and a half ago. Last year, they placed second in the Eventing Championships at Woodside Horse Park and seventh in the DeBroke Cup, which was the Western National Championship held at Copper Meadows in Ramona. Rosenthal also rode in the Federation Equestre Internationale "One Star" Event at Galway Downs in Temecula. F.E.I. Events are internationally sanc-



Marissa Metzger on her pony, Buster Brown, during the cross country phase of a Three-Day Event.

Photo courtesy of Steve Boyer



Micaela Rosenthal rides Clifton Cat during the FEI "One Star" Event last November at Galway Downs in Temecula.

Photo courtesy of Ed Lawrence Photography

tioned competitions. Rosenthal competed against adult riders and placed fifth in the Peters Cup, a subdivision of the One Star for the National Junior Championship. In their first show this year, the Ram Tap Combined Test, Micaela and "Marvin" placed third in the Open Intermediate division, the highest level of competition. Rosenthal is a senior at Brentwood School and will attend Vanderbilt University in the fall. She plans to continue her Three-Day Eventing career in Tennessee while pursuing her Bachelor's degree.

Another Palisadian, Beth Can-

non, began her eventing career last year when she started riding at Mill Creek and bought her new horse, Take Two (better known as "Stretch"). After an impressive 2002 show year, the team is off to a terrific start this season. They placed first and second in two different Senior Beginning Novice Divisions at the Ram Tap Combined Test. Beth realized she was ready to move up to the next level of competition for the Ram Tap Three-Day Event held three weeks later and won the Senior Novice division at that show.

Sarah Levin, age 15, who also

lives in the Palisades, rode her horse Christmas Spirit (also known as "Linus") in the Ram Tap Combined Test and placed fifth in the Preliminary division and third in Junior Training. At the Ram Tap Three-Day Event, they placed third in Junior Training. Levin, who attends Harvard-Westlake in North Hollywood, has been riding at Mill Creek for several years, but has owned Linus for only a year. Their successes at these recent shows, after a relatively short time together, prove that they are one of Mill Creek's up-and-coming teams.