

Ian Millar Named First CAVALOR 'Athlete of the Month'



photo: Cealy Tetley

Ian Millar of Perth, ON, got the year off to a great start by being named the CAVALOR 'Athlete of the Month' for the month of January.

Millar was the natural choice for January's CAVALOR 'Athlete of the Month' title after winning the first two Grand Prix events during the prestigious Winter Equestrian Festival in Wellington, FL. In the first week of the seven-week long series, the WEF/PBIEC Inaugural held January 24-28 at the Palm Beach Polo Equestrian Club, Millar captured two major wins with two different mounts.

Riding his 2006 World Equestrian Games mount In Style, a 12-year-old Dutch Warmblood gelding owned by Susan Grange of Lothlorien Farm, Millar's first win came in Thursday's \$25,000 WEF Challenge Series where he bested a nine-horse jump-off.

Three days later, paired with Redefin, a nine-year-old Dutch Warmblood gelding also owned by Susan Grange and Lothlorien Farm, Millar posted another double clear performance to edge out Olympic Champion Rodrigo Pessoa of Brazil and claim Sunday's \$35,000 WEF/PBIEC Inaugural Cup Grand Prix.

"Both horses were absolutely sensational," praised Millar, who has been named the 'Athlete of the Month' five times since the program began in 2003. "This was In Style's first major competition of the year, and he feels like he's picking up right where we left off. Redefin is young, but he is really becoming a sophisticated horse. I couldn't be more pleased with them."

Frankie Chesler-Ortiz Awarded ProChaps 'Athlete of the Month' for December

Frankie Chesler-Ortiz of Orangeville, ON, has been awarded the final ProChaps 'Athlete of the Month' title of 2006 after her strong finish in the Rolex/USEF National Show Jumping Championship at the CSI-W National Horse Show held November 29 to December 3 in Wellington, Florida.

Partnered with Sher-Al Farm's 10-year-old Dutch Warmblood mare Picolien Zeldenrust, Chesler-Ortiz earned seventh place in the \$50,000 initial phase of the two-part championship after producing an eight-fault jump-off round. Returning for the \$50,000 final phase, Chesler-Ortiz put in a solid first round performance over the difficult course, finishing with four faults for sixth place. Her two strong performances ranked her third overall in the Rolex/USEF National Show Jumping Championship, which attracted a strong field of 32 riders including 2006 World Equestrian Games Team Silver Medalists, Margie Engle, Laura Kraut and McLain Ward.

"I thought my horse was amazing," commented Chesler-Ortiz. It was a great



photo: Cealy Tetley

night, and a fantastic show, and I feel that I am riding well, thanks to my father and my horses."

"I love being chosen as Athlete of the Month," said an enthusiastic Chesler-Ortiz, who is currently preparing for the Winter Equestrian Festival beginning January 24 in Wellington, FL. "This is my second time being chosen and I am so pleased."

Jump Canada Distributes 2006 Levy Funds to Provincial Associations

Jump Canada is pleased to announce that over \$87,000 in Jump Canada Levy funds were distributed to provincial hunter/jumper associations for the year-end of 2006.

In 1999, Jump Canada established a program that saw a levy fee applied per horse to entries in hunter/jumper competitions at Equine Canada National class 1A to 7 rated horse shows. The year-end levy distribution, now in its eighth year, has increased considerably from the original allocation of \$47,818 in 1999.

The Jump Canada Levy, which is currently \$10 per horse, is used to support a number of regional and national programs designed to foster the activities of hunter/jumper riders, owners and the industry at large. The levy is distributed as follows:

- 60% to Hunter, Young Rider & Domestic programs
- 35% to National & International Teams
- 5% to Administration, including Public-

ity & Public Relations

Seventy-five per cent of the funds allocated to domestic programs are returned to the province from which they were collected. Each provincial hunter/jumper committee applies the funds to specific programs they have developed; the philosophy behind this program is that the local associations know best what works in their province.

"The Jump Canada levy is helping hunter/jumper associations across Canada fund the programs that their members want," noted Jump Canada Chair Elizabeth Bordeaux. "In 2007, the smaller provinces will be able to bid on a \$5,000 pool, which will be allocated to the program or programs deemed most worthy."

The next distribution of levy funds to the provinces will take place in July of 2007. For further details on Jump Canada programs and applications, please visit www.jumpcanada.ca.

Reining has long been dominated by the big boned, muscled and posterior-endowed Quarter Horse since its origins as a test of the ranch-style horse in the confines of an arena. The required power of the hindquarters is apparent in the speed transitions, sliding stops and run-downs of the reining pattern, and Quarter Horses are the most popular breed.

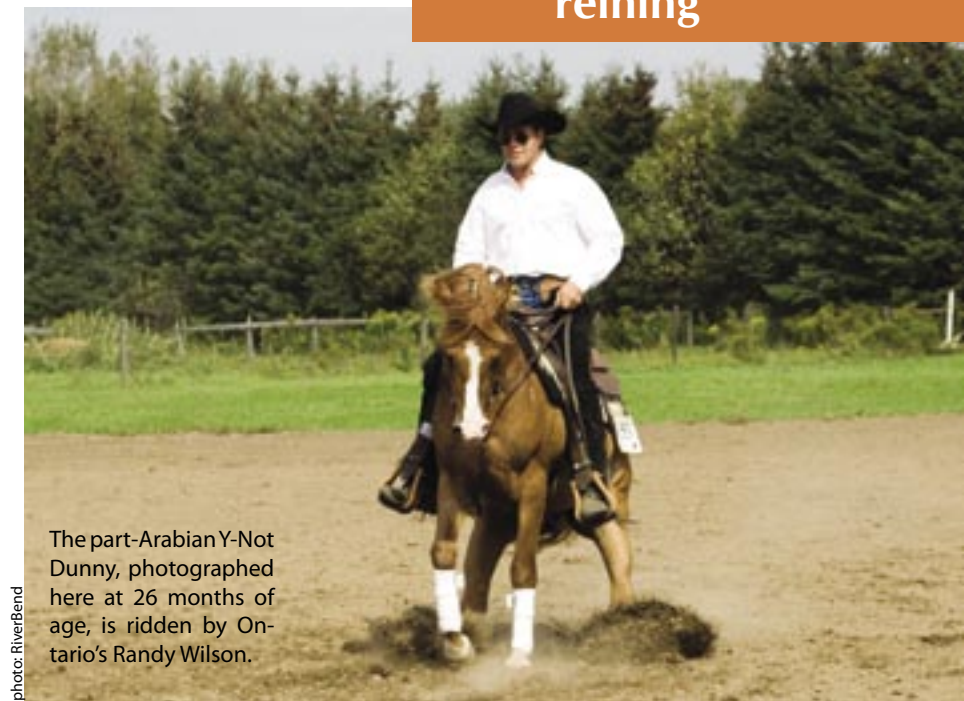


photo: RiverBend

The part-Arabian Y-Not Dunny, photographed here at 26 months of age, is ridden by Ontario's Randy Wilson.

Spotlight on Arabians and Half-Arabians in Reining

Over the years, other breeds have slipped in. American Paint Horses and Appaloosas have spotted and coloured the competitions and established themselves as contenders in terms of body type and ability with the added bonus of colour. At the 2006 World Equestrian Games, one of the only American Paint Horses at the Games was a member of Canada's Silver Medal winning team. Snow Gun, ridden by Francois Gauthier stood out, a stark white horse amongst bays and sorrels.

But from out in left field comes the rogue of the reining pen. Arabians and Half-Arabians are gaining a foothold in reining competitions across North America and along the way, they are confronting some long-held prejudices and finding enthusiasts and fans in unlikely areas.

The Suitability Factor

It isn't just the sand in the arena that makes the Arabian horse well suited for reining competitions. While they don't have the heavy muscled hindquarters and the naturally low topline normally associated with reining horses, what they do have, they capitalize on. Agility, athleticism and endurance have always been hallmarks of the Arabian horse since their beginnings as endurance horses.

Arabian horses have a few less vertebrae than a Quarter Horse and this becomes a benefit during the sliding stop when the horse is required to bend his back, 'breaking' at the withers and pushing his feet underneath himself. With less vertebrae to bend, the job requires less effort.

The original Quarter Horse, bulky and muscled, would not be competitive in today's reining industry. Today's competitive reining horses are bred to be agile and athletic to effectively perform maneuvers such as the spin and rollback. Arabians come by these traits naturally.



One of the stumbling blocks that Arabians and Half-Arabians encounter is the late maturation of the Arabian

horse's frame. While Quarter Horses are attending futurities at the age of three, many full-blood Arabians are just considered green-broke at this age, their body not developed enough for the intense training required.

But, this is where Half-Arabians have gained ground.

The Best of Both Worlds

Ron Lubinski of Y Not Farms and Equestrian Centre in Meaford, ON is one of the most vocal proponents of Half-Arabians in reining. He stands the Quarter Horse stallion, Dun It You Won It, who has made a name for himself in the Canadian reining industry with multiple trophies and championship titles.

"I looked at 'Dunit' and saw that he had superb conformation and a superb mind," said Lubinski. "And he's damn good looking, a real athlete. My preference for a reiner is a sport horse with shorter pasterns and cannon bones. I took Dunit's strong top end, and I bred him to an Arab mare to add the quickness and style. There's nothing as quick as an Arab, and they float while you ride them. The Arab lightens up the Quarter Horse's body and gives them a smoothness that's a pleasure to ride."

The result was Y Not Dunny who is now a three year old colt, just getting ready to enter his first futurity this July and compete against three-year-old Quarter Horses. "This is the first time that a Half-Arab will compete against full Quarter Horses at the futurity

Continued. See Arabians on page 45

Reining Canada 2006 Year in Review

Looking back on 2006, the word 'change' is foremost in the reining community's collective mind. Change, while necessary, good and constant, is not always easy. Increased membership feed and procedural changes aside, the year ended on a high note with the Canadian Reining Team being recognized at the Equine Canada Annual General Meeting for their competition successes.

Following the 2005 AGM, Reining Canada established goals and objectives at a strategic planning session in Okotoks, AB. Many of these goals were met in 2006:

- Reining Canada achieved a mile stone of over 1,000 members.
- Reining Canada Affiliates and Show Committees hosted 97 approved reining events across the county.

- Reining Canada together with Equine Canada facilitated the participation of a Canadian Reining Team at WEG in Aachen, Germany and brought home the Team Silver Medal and an Individual Gold Medal.

- Reining Canada, together with the Regional Affiliates, formed the Reining Canada Affiliate Committee and developed the Reining Canada Spin (Sport Incentive) Program to help affiliates fund programs at the grassroots level.

- Reining Canada, together with its volunteers on the Reining Canada Show Committee, resurrected the Reining Canada Beginner Rider Program and the Reining Canada Young Rider Program.

- Reining Canada's communication improved tenfold with close to 30 electronic news bulletins sent to over 3000 reining enthusiasts.

'The Steward program is our single major weakness for reining throughout the world as we do not have enough of these types of officials.'

-Bob Thomson

- Reining Canada focused on its Governance and Accountability with a draft Governance Policy to assist in day-to-day operations.

- Reining Canada retained an Independent Board Consultant to improve its Governance.

- Reining Canada, in conjunction with an independent Board Consultant and

Legal Counsel, developed a Resolution to amend its current Bylaws with a new set of comprehensive improved Bylaws.

- Reining Canada developed a draft Stewards Program.

- Reining Canada hired a new Administrative Coordinator and worked diligently to improve its turnarounds on member requests and office processes.

FEI Reining Committee Update

In the FEI stable of disciplines, reiners are most definitely the rookies of the barn. But what rookies they are! With gold and silver medals from the 2006 FEI World Equestrian Games (WEG) in Aachen, GER to go with their silver and bronze medals in 2002, the Canadian team has secured their status as contenders on the international scene.

The FEI Reining Committee met on October 21 during the 2006 FEI World Reining Masters Finals in Denver, CO to discuss coming plans.

The successful WEG were noted and the Committee discussed ways to ensure that Reining will continue to grow in view of the Alltech FEI World Equestrian Games 2010 in Kentucky. Canada's Bob Thompson is now the chair of the Major Competitions committee with the FEI. "I will be working in conjunction with the National Reining Horse Association (NRHA), the American Quarter Horse Association (AQHA) and the FEI. The committee is responsible for the assistance to the show committees as well as raising sponsorship dollars to support the committees," said Thompson.

Courses for Judges and Stewards were approved and the proposed Reining Rule changes/clarifications for 2007 including Rules for Young Riders, Juniors and Children, tiebreakers for Championships and new breed-specific CRIs, were discussed

following some comments from National Federations. For reining, the stewards program is of utmost importance as the existing mandate calls for 259 CRIs by 2010, of which Canada's share is about 20. Without enough officials we will never be able to attain the numbers.

"A reining steward has to go through first a certification process under the FEI Chief Steward Eric Strauss and the Chief Steward Sandra Wilcox from Canada at present," said Thompson who acknowledges that many reiners have no experience with the stewards program and are unaware of their importance. "We are planning this year for several clinics in Canada. The stewards then have to work under Sandra Wilcox at FEI events then they can be certified by Equine Canada, and nominated to the FEI. The Steward program is our single major weakness for reining throughout the world



Photo: Cealy Tietley

as we do not have enough of these types of officials. There will be a major push in this area over the next couple of years."

A working group will be chaired by Bob Thompson (CAN) to establish marketing and promotional opportunities for FEI Reining Championships.

A fifth and new member for the Committee was discussed and will be presented to the FEI Bureau and General Assembly for approval from the nominations received from National Federations. The individual's name has not been released.

by Heather Cook

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level in NRHA competitions in Canada," said Lubinski.

Strange Bedfellows

Reining and Arabian horses have made some strange bedfellows. Y Not Farms will be hosting a Futurity and Derby on July 21st in concurrence with the Arabian Horse Association's Region 18 Reining Championship. This show follows on the heels of several days of Endurance competitions called the Spirit of Excellence Provincial Long Distance Championships.

Sanctioned by a multitude of organizations, the Endurance event will play host to some international visitors. Well-known Captain of the United Arab Emirates' Womans' Equestrian Team, and top Endurance athlete, Shaikha Madiya will be visiting Meaford, ON for the Endurance event, but has taken an interest in reining.

"We have traveled to Dubai and the Emirates are keenly interested in reining as a cross training technique for their endurance horses," said Lubinski. "Shaikha Madiya would be undertaking some reining training while she is here and we hope to travel there to bring reining to their endurance team."

Future Considerations

The Arabian Reining Horse Association (ARHA), which started several years ago at an Oregon coast Arabian barn, has driven much of the development of Arabian and Half-Arabian reining in North America. Their goals include holding classes specifically for Arabians and Half-Arabians at major NRHA events such as the NRHA Derby in May and the NRHA Futurity in November. Because very few Arabians and Half-Arabians are able to compete against Quarter Horses their same age, the ARHA is looking to develop concurrently run classes that will see the horses compete against other Arabians or Half-Arabians, but at the same event as the high level Quarter Horses.

Each February at the Scottsdale Arabian Horse Show in Scottsdale, AZ, you will find the largest gathering of Arabian and Half-Arabian reining horses, competing for the \$50,000 Arabian Reining Futurity and the \$80,000 Half-Arabian Futurity, both sponsored by the ARHA. The horses competing in these futurities are four and five-year-olds.

The landscape of reining Arabians in Canada remains wide open, with many possibilities for competitions. Now that reining has broken through to the international scene reserved for horses over the age of six, perhaps the late-blooming Arabian horse will find the playing field leveled substantially.

Owner Profile: Gaynia Revenberg

Newcomers on the reining scene in Canada have made a splash, and in a big way. Gus and Gaynia Revenberg purchased the high selling horse at the NRHA Futurity Prospect Sale in December 2006 while at the NRHA Futurity with trainer Jason Grimshaw.

The Revenbergs hail from Oldcastle, ON where they have worked hand in hand managing a string of vehicle dealerships. Previously, Gus played for the Ottawa Rough Riders and BC Lions.

The record breaking bid of \$195,000.00 was made on a two year old palomino stallion, Hesa Smokin Shiner (Shining Spark x Smoking Sana) consigned by Ron Thompson. The stallion is now in training with Grimshaw, who is a former Team Canada member and was instrumental in leading the team to their 2001 Gold Medal win at the Nation's Cup in Gladstone, NJ.

Q: How did you get started in reining?

A: Gus and I have been married 21 years this year. I had been involved with horses as a child and when we first got married we got back into the horses. A friend of ours got us started. Shortly after that we started riding Western Pleasure horses. After several years I realized that it wasn't much fun any more. I didn't enjoy watching the classes and I didn't think my horses were happy, there was no romance left in it for me. Gus and I were at home watching the NRHA Futurity on RFD TV on satellite in 2002 and I saw Shawn Florida win the Futurity on Wimpys Little Step. He looked so happy to be doing his job, I thought it was the most beautiful thing I'd ever seen, like poetry in motion. I looked at Gus and said 'that's it, we're selling the pleasure horses.'

Q: What was your first reining horse?

A: We bought a few after that, but we hadn't intended to get into it big time. I just wanted a horse to ride. I had a picture of Shining Spark on my fridge and I followed his career. Then I checked into Nu Chex To Cash (sire of Wimpys Little Step) and those two stallions became my dream bloodlines. I talked to Charlie Hutton, owner of Nu Chex To Cash and bought my first horse from him: a daughter of his Nu Chex To Cash. Later on we also bought a Shining Spark baby.

Q: What was it like to buy Hesa Smokin Shiner?

A: We had just bought a stallion named Nu Chex Twister, so we weren't really in the market for a new horse. But we went to look at some of the prospects at the NRHA Prospects sale. They hold a preview of the two year olds, where you can see them being ridden. We saw 'Sparky' and I thought he was the most beautiful animal I'd ever seen. But I told Gus not to buy him, I told him it would cost him a fortune! We watched him come into the ring and the bidding was fast. We found out later that there were 52 live bidders on the horse. When it got up to \$100,000 and we hadn't even bid yet, I didn't think Gus was going to put up his hand, so I went to the back of the arena to relax and have a margarita and cigar. When I saw that he'd gone for \$195,000 I thought 'who the hell paid that much for that horse?' Then I saw Gus and Jason come running down out of the stands and I realized - we had! It took us months to come down from that high.

Q: Can you tell us about memorable moments?

A: Buying 'Sparky' was definitely a memorable moment. But I have to say the most exciting day to that point was when we purchased the Shining Spark baby from Hilldale Farms. It was really the beginning of the fever for us. She had the perfect bloodlines. When we bought her, we just wanted to have that breeding. We wanted something that was well-bred and pretty, something to have fun with. When we started going to shows and meeting all the people, we got very excited about owning something that could actually compete.

Q: What are your future plans?

A: This is more of a hobby than a business for us. We have the two studs - Hesa Smokin Shiner and Nu Chex Twister. Hesa Smokin Shiner is now a three year old, so he'll be headed to the futurities and Nu Chex Twister is headed to the derbies. We're working on plans with our trainer, Jason. We hope mainly to show and win! We have horses here at our farm and the rest are at Jason's in Texas. We will raise a few at home so we have a new horse to start each year and stick with the bloodlines we like. It's fun to raise our own and have a few mares and babies around the place.

Athlete Profile: Shawna Sapergia

by Heather Cook

A familiar face to any reining horse enthusiast in Canada is that of Shawna Sapergia. If you can't pick out the lanky, dark-haired beauty in the warm-up pen at a horse show, you can almost always find her in the winners circle.

She comes from a truly Canadian reining family. Her father, Vern, was a well-known trainer in Canada before heading to Europe in 1987 to establish himself as one of Europe's top reining trainers, currently living in Austria. Her siblings, Terry-Lee and Cody have also had stellar show careers of their own.

Currently Shawna trains just outside Airdrie, AB. She is married to Mike Scott, a prominent veterinary surgeon.

Top Accomplishments:

- Intermediate Open Champion at the 2006 NRHA Futurity
- 2006 Canada Cup with BL Whiz Kid, following up with a Bronze Medal at the 2006 FEI World Reining Masters on the same horse in Denver, CO.
- 2002 World Equestrian Games, Spain 2002. Won the Team Silver and the Individual Bronze.
- 2002 Nation's Cup in Gladstone, NJ. Won the Team Gold
- 2001 Canada Cup Champion, Blainville, QC.

First reining class: I started showing when I was six. I can't remember my first reining class as I showed in many different classes as a youth.

First reining horse: "Mr. T", he was the first colt out of my old youth horse, Pretty Queen Eagle. I went on to show all of this mare's babies in reining.

Most Memorable Horse: There are several horses that I could call most memorable.

Pretty Much Eagle: He gave me a kick-

start when I went and started training on my own. I bred and raised him. I was pretty young and wanted to breed my horse to Solanos Peppy San. I got the ok from dad to do that but I had to come up with the money and approach the stallion owner (Jake Braun) myself. So I did. The Braun family treated me really well. As a two year old I just got him going, but because he was a horse we owned, we didn't start showing him until he was 4 because he wasn't broke, we just didn't have time to work with him. Even while he was a young horse I was thinking that I wanted to take him as far as I could. This one time in particular I went out into his pen and had a conversation with him, telling him he was going to make us famous some day. I showed him as a four, five and six year old. We had started in working cow horse and I won the Calgary Stampede Working Cow Horse class on his third time showing in that sport. But we decided to get ready to qualify for the World Equestrian Games in Spain, so we stopped showing in cow horse. After WEG a European riding with my dad bought him sight unseen.

More recently, **BL Whiz Kid** has been an important horse to my career. He was shown by my brother, Cody, and was retired after a successful career. The owners, Gib and Rhonda Thompson pulled him out of retirement three weeks before the show so I could show in the Canada Cup with him to qualify for the 2006 Team Canada. We got a spot on the team, but chose not to go to WEG in Aachen for a variety of reasons. So he went back out to pasture. But then there were rumours that he was sore, so we decided to silence the rumours and we pulled him off the field to be my competition horse for the FEI World Reining Masters. We won the Bronze. For the Cana-



da Cup and the Masters I'd only had about three weeks to get him ready to show, he came out of retirement twice for me. There aren't many ten year old studs that can perform on command like that.

This Chics On Top is going to be a mare to remember. I won the Intermediate Open on her at the 2006 NRHA Futurity in Oklahoma City and it was only the third time she'd been shown.

Future Plans: We could write a book about this, I have two year olds and three year olds that I'm really excited about. Since I'm no longer eligible for Intermediate Open competition, it's all or nothing in the show pen this year – I'm showing against the big guns at all the reining shows. I'm getting some derby horses ready to be shown in Canada and the US, trying to get good show records on them.

Mike and I have lots of plans to make improvements on our place and to get our it more developed, so I want spend more time and energy there. I'd also like to spend more time outside of the horses, doing the things we like to do: traveling, sightseeing.

World Cup 2006
Canada Brings Home the Bronze!

Despite a bitterly cold winter evening Team Canada enthusiastically boarded the plane for Johannesburg to compete in the 2006 World Cup of Saddle Seat Equitation. Delighted to find the weather more favourable, the group spent a few nights in Johannesburg. They were able to take in a few of the sights in and around the city; including a tour of Soweto, downtown Johannesburg and a lion preserve where they were able to get hands on experience with lion cubs.

The team made their way to the Khaya Ihbubesi Resort in Parys, the competition home base for the next week. The next two days saw the team decorating their Zulu Huts with Canadian flags and banners, getting to know each other and meeting up with the other teams and competitors.

The first official function was an organizational session with all riders, coaches, managers, and supporters present to discuss events, transportation and competition details. That afternoon, numbers were issued, practice sessions were drawn, and rail work and orders of go were established.

Day two saw the group off to the show grounds to meet their prospective mounts. Teams were fortunate to have the trainers available to provide advice on the horses that were drawn. The quality of the horses was outstanding and Team Canada was thrilled to have some of the best horses in the competition.

Team USA arranged a braai (South African term for barbecue) for all the teams on Tuesday night.

Wednesday's practice session saw Team Canada off to a challenging start with an injured horse and limited practice time. Substitute horses were brought in and suitable matches were made. That night the teams attended a Gala banquet. Dinner was served and after introductions the group heard welcome speeches and a surprise fundraising event: bottles of wine with each team's picture and autographs on them were auctioned. A dance wrapped up the evening's festivities.

Opening ceremonies were held on Thursday afternoon with the start of the competition on Friday morning.

The team members were composed and elegant as they rode with the talent, heart and determination that had got them all this far. Even with a pair of jodhpurs split from knee to thigh!

Preliminary results saw some very large point spreads for single riders. With only the pattern work scores announced, it was anyone's guess what the final placings would be right up to the last minutes of the closing ceremonies.

Team Canada was thrilled to be the recipients of the Bronze medal in the 3-gaited competition. The US won gold and South Africa took silver in both the 3 and 5 gaited events. Both Canada and Namibia were competing for the first time in the 5-gaited event. The Namibians took the bronze: a momentous win for the team to receive their first medal in 10 years.

The 2006 World Cup was a highlight in the riding careers of all the members of Team Canada. The team members will never forget the wonderful hospitality shown by the South African hosts, the beautiful and talented horses, the fabulous riding facility and the outstanding job done by the organizing committee.



Above: Leanne Tomanek of Fort Saskatchewan riding Coppedune in the 3 Gaited class.
Top photo: Jill Tomanek, Manager, Raylene McWade, Samantha McWade, Leanne Tomanek, Andrea Ward, Angela Padgham, Tasha Kalke, Archie Hurst

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