



"I do not agree with what you have to say, but I'll defend to the death your right to say it." - Voltaire

February Horse of the Month

Commentary by Kaylin Young

Bruce Lee

15.2 Hand Bay Connemara Thoroughbred



Bruce Lee being tacked up. Picture courtesy of Kaylin Young.

Bruce Lee came to St. Andrews last year from a family with a 10 year-old daughter. While Bruce Lee was a little strong for a younger child, he has served St. Andrews as a hunt seat horse within the lesson

program, and as a show horse for the intercollegiate teams. Although Bruce Lee was a little feisty when he first came, he has improved tremendously. Since arriving at St. Andrews, Bruce Lee has been a favorite among riders and has helped students improve their skills by riding assertively. Bruce Lee worked at a riding camp last summer and the children there loved him as well. Bruce Lee participates in IHSA shows and substitutes for Dressage shows. On the weekends, Bruce Lee can be found relaxing or working in the community lesson program.

Why Riding Is A Sport

Caroline Mitchell

If you go to St. Andrews, you definitely know that there are plenty of people that ride horses around here. Often, in dinner conversations or in classes the topic comes up of whether or not riding is considered a sport. Other athletes claim that riders do not do any physical activity, claiming that we just sit up on our horses and look pretty and the horses are the real athletes. However, from personal experience, I know how much sweat, blood, and tears goes into every rider, the ups and downs of the sport, and the athleticism it takes to be able to control these horses while still smiling and looking pretty.

The horses are real athletes. They have strong muscles that are built from their daily exercises; some jump fences higher than some people, and some do dressage moves that most humans could not execute. Horses are amazing animals; they are strong, loving, and for the most part, obedient. They work hard for their owners and riders, but they do not simply cart their riders around.

Riders not only build strong bonds with the animals they ride, but they also build muscles and learn to execute courses and other maneuvers that can get quite tricky. Horses do not simply know where to go and what to do, their riders must tell them, through their legs, hands, and seat. These directions must be almost invisible to judges in order for a pair to win in the best of company. Instructors teach students the correct way to ask their horse for the movements they desire, explaining what each hand and leg must do in order to get the correct results.

The riders must practice almost daily to achieve some top

levels of riding and must really learn to be able to communicate their desires to their horses. Once skills have been mastered, some riders choose to take their horses to competitions, which are found around the country. Each one of them is trying to be the best of their division, and to improve on their skills so that they can move up to the next level. Top level riding takes years to accomplish, and many may never acquire this status.

Have you ever heard the saying; "What goes up, must come down?" Most riders know this well. Falls are a natural occurrence in this sport, and are to be expected. Horses are unpredictable, and the rider must know the best way to convince the

horse to cooperate, because they are much bigger than we are. Even after some of the most horrendous falls, I have seen riders still climb back into the saddle, and try again to get the horse to do what it is supposed to do.

Equestrian sports are also an Olympic competition. All of the events in this group of competitions are sports, as they require the best of the best to come and show their skills. How can anyone claim that someone who rides in the Olympics is not a true athlete, but something more like a princess? We ride from sun up to sun down on some days, in the pouring rain on others, and in some of the most extreme temperatures, and we still manage to smile and look pretty while doing it!

Western vs. English

Alicia Toke

I first started riding horses when I came to this school almost three years ago. My first time on a horse there was only English style of riding which was taught to all beginners. English, more specifically hunt



English Riding. Picture courtesy of Communications.



Western Riding. Picture courtesy of Rooney Coffman.

seat, has the rider sitting forward on the saddle and not being in the saddle, as much as Western. For the first two years I was here I rode English. English taught me a lot about being comfortable in the saddle and being able to balance myself, plus having a certain amount of control over the horse.

This year I started riding horses in the Western style. In this style of riding you sit more on the pockets of your jeans and sit all the gaits of the horse. Gaits of a horse are the speeds that he goes. Slowest to fastest, the gaits are a walk, jog, trot, lope, canter, and gallop. A western rider sits all of those gaits and uses his/her body weight and legs to tell the horse what the rider wants it to do.

Going from English to Western was not too hard of a transition, except learning to sit everything. I feel more comfortable riding Western than I did when riding English. Western saddles are more comfortable than English, partly because with the Western saddle there is a horn you can hold on to, whereas in English there is not a horn to hold on to. Western to me is better because it is more relaxed than English. English is used mostly for sport, while Western is more towards pleasure rides.

English and Western styles of riding teach you to trust the horse and yourself. There really is no better style, it is all in the

Editor's Note

Dear Readers,

While St. Andrews Equestrian program is making tremendous strides to enhance opportunities for Equestrians, the recognition of accomplishments of Equestrians is crucial. Therefore, *The Lance* will be sponsoring an Equestrian of the Month. If anyone has any recommendations of Equestrians that goes the distance to help the St. Andrews Equestrian program, please send an email to Heiderda@sapc.edu explaining why that individual deserves to be Equestrian of the Month.

Sincerely,
Danielle Heider

February Equestrian of the Month



Gwen Titus performing at a Western Show. Picture courtesy of Rooney Coffman.

Rider Profile

Name: Gwen Titus
Age: 21
Birthday: June 20, 1985
Hometown: Littleton, CO
Graduation Year: 2007
Major: Equine Business/ minor in Sports Management

Discipline: English and Western
Years Riding: 9 years
Recent Achievement: High Point Rider Both days at the SAPC Western Show

What I have:

Learned? My diagnols
Loved? My friends
Loathed? Being thrown in the Lake

My worst habit is:

- Eating junk food, especially _____
- Swearing
- Gossiping
- Being late
- Other _____

If I'm not at the barn I'm:

- Hanging out with my fabulous friends
- Sleeping
- Shopping Horray for shoes!
- Doing homework
- Other tanning

I won't leave my dorm room without:

- My cell phone
- My iPod
- Half chaps > Never wear them at school
- Other Coffee

My favorite horse is:

- Woody
- Leggs
- Vern
- Other Jazz

Favorite food in Saga:

- Chicken nuggets
- Pizza
- Salad
- Water You can never go wrong

Most fond SAPC memory: Being attacked by the squirrel...All those parties

When I graduate I hope to: Make millions

Other extracurricular activities:

- Working out
- Shopping
- Watching my CO Buffs play
- tanning
- Eating Chicken Nuggets and Dr. Pepper
- Being a Goof ball

preference of the person riding the horse and what they feel comfortable doing. I feel more comfortable riding Western, but that was after trying to ride English. Before anyone decides to say one style is better than the other I strongly suggest you ride both to see which one feels more comfortable.