



Photo above, L to R: Sharon Madere, Jos Sevriens, Karen Rohlf, Bruno Gonzalez & Tina Veder

BEGI TRAINER'S WORKSHOP REPORT

May 7 & 8, 2016 Ocala, Florida

In an effort to continue the education, sharing, and preservation of historic classical horsemanship and its importance for the horses and riders of today, the Baroque Equestrian Games & Institute sponsored and produced the first in a collaborative series of Trainer's Workshops entitled *The Paradigm of Balance*. It took place at Equilightenment, a beautiful facility recently built by Sharon Madere and located in Ocala, Florida.

The Workshop featured a select group of well-respected and admired trainers and teachers who lectured and demonstrated about their own philosophy of training, their techniques and the principles they use for attaining balance for both horses and riders.

Karen Rohlf of Dressage Naturally, Jos Sevriens, an international trainer, coach & judge, Bruno Gonzalez & Tina Cristiani Veder, co-creators/founders of Baroque Equestrian Games & Institute, Frank Barnett, experienced trainer, teacher, scholar & author who works with horses of all

disciplines, Sharon Madere, IAABC Certified Horse Behavior Consultant, and Carol Toner, ballet consultant, made up this outstanding lineup of presenters.

Saturday morning began with introductions of the primary speakers and their equestrian backgrounds. Karen Rohlf commenced the Workshop with a beautifully defined presentation entitled, *Balance, A Whole-Horse Prospective* which featured her training scale showing Happiness being at the core for both the horse and rider throughout their journey.



Karen Rohlf

Karen followed with a fantastic ground work demonstration with two very different type horses. She demonstrated the games & exercises that she uses to introduce focus & balance of mind and body while keeping her horse's emotions positive and grounded. Her demonstration showed the communication she employs which helps the horse feel a sense of accomplishment about each exercise performed during the training session. Everyone enjoyed and learned from this remarkable presentation.

Following Karen's presentation, Sharon Madere, talked about the Science behind Animal Behavior and the techniques used to train different species from dolphins to cats.



Sharon Madere

Sharon emphasized the importance in the timing of the sound marker used in modeling the behavior desired. After her Power Point lecture, Sharon illustrated this system by having two volunteers from the audience perform a "timing"

exercise with one acting as the trainer and the other acting as the animal. The "animal" was not told beforehand what task the trainer wanted her to perform. This demonstration revealed how critical the right timing is for a trainer to mark precisely when the animal has given the desired response.

After Sharon's presentation there was an interactive exchange of Q & A. The audience included a number of trainers and adult amateurs from states from as far away as Maryland & Virginia.

Next, a truly scrumptious lunch with a choice of two different pasta casseroles along with a selection of vegetarian & gluten free dishes, various salads & fixings and an array of luscious desserts was waiting for our hungry group. This marvelous lunch was prepared and presented by Gwenn Green. The lunches each day were outstanding!



Jos Sevriens

After lunch, Jos Sevriens presented a Power Point lecture and demonstration entitled, *Horsemanship for the Individual Horse*. He explained that in choosing a system it has to be logical, effective, knowledgeable, and designed with the bio-mechanics of the horse in mind. He talked about the criteria when choosing the right system for your individual horse, mentioning body type, temperament, gaits, and feeling. He spoke of contact and what it is supposed to be. He talked about the training scale with emphases on relaxation of the horse from the beginning.



At the end of Jos' Power Point he was joined by his lovely wife, Laura, and his daughter, Emma, riding two of their stunning FEI horses. As they rode, Jos explained the differences in the horses and how he approached the individual training of them by honoring their natures and differences. Hats off to Jos for bringing his beautiful family to demonstrate their talent and to show how solid classical principles produce exceptional horses and riders!

Last on Saturday's agenda Bruno & Tina, joined by Carol Toner, a ballet aficionado and consultant, presented their Power Point lecture and demonstration. It was entitled *Art in Motion*.



Candice Martin, Carol Toner, Bruno Gonzalez

This innovative presentation drew correlations between the history of classical ballet and artistic, classical horsemanship used in the Manèges of Europe during the Renaissance and Baroque periods. Both arts were birthed during the Renaissance in Italy. Carol talked about the balance and training required for a ballet dancer while Tina & Bruno spoke about the preparation and training of the artistic horse and rider for the Manège. Carol Toner brought an exquisite, young ballet dancer, Candice Martin, who gave

a lovely demonstration at the ballet barre of the exercises needed to develop effortless balance and perfect symmetry in the human dancer.



Candice Martin

Bruno and Tina used one of their elegant Andalusians to show the Initiate BEGI Ground Work exercises which introduce collection (balance) to the young horse to attain the posture, flexibility, and dexterity before the saddle work and as a precursor to all sessions with advanced horses. Tina also correlated the position and grace of the ballet dancer to the artistic rider and pointed out how ballet exercises can help create a more graceful and composed demeanor for the rider. Each presenter emphasized the importance of doing the ground work warm up and suppling exercises before every training session, no matter how advanced the equine "dancer" or human dancer is. Many in the audience were moved by the beauty and the higher awareness that art bestows to the co-creative rider and horse relationship.

Another Q & A was offered before the end of Saturday's program. Everyone was very excited about the information and the demonstrations presented that day and were enthusiastically waiting for a continuation of the Workshop on Sunday, as well as, the *Festival of Friends* party planned for that evening.



Rodrigo and Bruna Cunha of Blueberry Farm

❁ “Festival of Friends” ❁

At 7:30 everyone reconvened in Sharon’s spacious classroom/seating area and under the large covered arena to enjoy an evening of fun and frivolity. The Festival was sponsored by Rodrigo and Bruna Cunha of Blueberry Farm, breeders of select PRE and Lusitano horses. Their farm is located in Williston, FL.

A delightful, light dinner accompanied with exceptional imported wine was generously provided by the Cunhas.



Tina Cristiani Veder & Valor da Cevera

After 8 pm the entertainment ensued. Tina, as mistress of ceremonies and dressed in Baroque attire, graciously welcomed everyone and then introduced Gomero III.



GOMERO III – Imported PRE Stallion

With great musical fanfare this impressive 17:1 hand bay, imported PRE stallion belonging to Rodrigo & Bruna Cunha came extravagantly trotting into the arena. Presented in hand by Bruno Gonzalez this powerful stallion drew awes and cheers from the audience. Gomero III is one of the flagship stallions at Blueberry Farm and he is standing at stud. His first foal crop is coming in 2017.



Pam Cohen riding her Lusitano, Quinones

The Stallion Presentation was followed by some special Musical Exhibitions. Pam Cohen riding her Lusitano, Quinones, to the music Dancing Queen and Terry Reth, riding her Andalusian, Lazaro, to a haunting Flamenco piece were a big hit and this was Terry’s very first exhibition!



Terry Reth & Lazaro, Andalusian gelding

Then Emma, Jos' talented daughter debuted her Young Rider's Musical Freestyle for us and it was ridden beautifully. Sharon Madere followed Emma and treated us to the Equilibre Musical Presentation she performed on Epic MC to win her a blue ribbon at last year's National BEGI Championship in VA.



Sharon Madere & Epic MC, Andalusian gelding

It was all fun and inspiring. A big thank you to all of these most elegant ladies for making the evening memorable.

As a finale, a special guest appearance featuring Pasha, the smallest- looking "Andalusian" in the world, accompanied by

his 3 yr. old rider/owner, Sophie Eyles, was presented by Tanya Herrmann Eyles, Sophie's mother.



Sophie Eyles & Pasha with Tanya Herrmann Eyles

Sophie rode her majestic, yet diminutive, horse into the arena and performed on the pedestal and then she dismounted and Tanya took Pasha and did an impressive, classical long-line presentation with this beautiful little horse.



Tanya Herrmann Eyles and Pasha

It was an adorable exhibition! We hope that they will appear at our VA Gala in Oct so more people can see this beautiful child and her amazing horse. They stole the show!

❧ Sunday's Agenda ❧



Frank Barnett & one of his many success stories

Frank Barnett kicked off the Sunday morning sessions with a superb in-hand lecture and demonstration using a lovely Lusitano he has trained from the beginning. This horse performs the high school movements beautifully uphill, willingly and with great artistry. Frank explained the balance that he looks for when he works with each individual horse and his lecture was very informative and also filled with humorous witticisms. Frank's demonstration and lecture was exceptional! Everyone totally enjoyed it.



Karen Rohlf and her Grand Prix WB gelding

Karen Rohlf's lecture and demo on Sunday followed and was entitled, *Balance in Partnership*. She brought in two of her other horses, a beautiful Warmblood pinto and a lovely Andalusian mare. Karen showed how to playfully achieve an athletic balance that both the horse and rider could enjoy. At one point, Terry Reth riding her Andalusian, Lazaro, joined

Karen and she showed Terry and the audience the importance of having a clear and positive communication with our horses to help them understand and feel good about what we are asking of them. It was a brilliant demonstration.

We broke for another delicious lunch by Gwenn and it gave everyone a chance to talk about what they had seen that morning.



Emma Sevriens on her FEI Warmblood gelding

Jos Sevriens came in after lunch with his daughter, Emma, riding her FEI competition horse, a horse that the family bred, raised and trained. It was wonderful to see how the combination of classical exercises that Jos employed helped improve the gaits and athletic ability of the horse. To watch a young rider being coached by her father on how to attain collection to produce an image of grace and beauty was an uplifting experience for all of us.



Emma riding Mercurio MC in the session "New Rider, New Horse"



Tina Cristiani Veder

In the last lecture/demo of the Workshop Bruno and Tina presented a PowerPoint entitled *Exploration of François Robichon de la Guérinière's Principles of Horsemanship*.

gorgeous imported Spanish horses, Delirio XXV, about how these exercises are the nucleus to help create collection and a pleasant riding horse.

Tina and Bruno lamented on how many of today's modern riders, due to a lack of understanding or knowledge, deprive themselves of the benefits of these essential exercises.

When Bruno and Delirio demonstrated a correct half-halt into the halt, the audience cheered with delight as it was a true "light bulb" moment to see this classical exercise so clearly and skillfully executed.



Before the Workshop ended, another Q & A was offered but the audience was so fervent about expressing how appreciative they were to the wonderful teachers who shared their knowledge that it became a testament to the enlightenment, enriching exchange and the inspirational support which seems to occur at every special BEGI event.

A big THANK YOU to all of the wonderful people who attended. Because of your questions, comments and involvement you helped make this weekend a ground breaking experience. We plan to have more Workshops following this format. Come join us for the next one!



Bruno Gonzales and Delirio XXV

Focusing on a few misinterpreted principles, such as the halt, half-halt, and rein back, Tina & Bruno explained and demonstrated in detail, with Bruno riding one of their