

The Horse's Mouth

JANUARY 2016

MI-SHO Announcements

MI-SHO ANNUAL BANQUET

January 24th, 1:00-4:00 pm at the Regency Convention Center in O'Fallon, Illinois

The annual MI-SHO awards banquet is a casual afternoon affair. Come join us for delicious hors d'oeuvres and fellowship. We also have some fantastic items up for auction.

The MISHO silent auction is our most important fund raiser for the year. We get donations from all our local tack shops, feed stores, on line vendors and lots more. There will be things even your husbands or dads will want to bid on! If you have something you could donate please contact a board member. Our Grand and Reserve Champion prizes are beautiful and we award ribbons to 6th place.

Members admission is free. Non-members are \$10.

We will be holding a short business meeting to welcome our new board members, elect officers, and vote on 2016 Rule Changes. Please RSVP to midilsporthorseorg@gmail.com

SEE YOU AT THE BANQUET!



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Trot or canter Poles



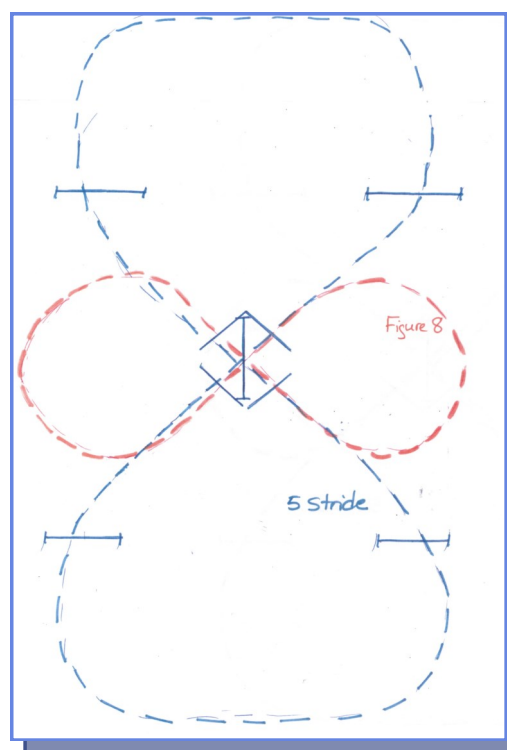
Meghan O'Donoghue Clinic

Mi-SHO hosted international eventer Meghan O'Donoghue for a clinic at Phancy Pharm on December 5th. She focused on grid work with the riders. The Square pictured below was set up to be ridden straight across or on the diagonal, and spaced for cantering. Riders were asked to first trot and canter both straight through and then diagonally through the grid.

Eventually everyone cantered the diagonal in in a figure 8 pattern that became tighter and tighter as they moved the loops from around the arena to just up to the wall. Mastering this exercise seemed difficult!

Eventually the riders incorporated the jumps on the wall in a 5 stride figure 8 pattern that jumped the grid, and vertical and oxer jumps.

Ask anyone who rode—this was hard work!



THE MI-SHO BOARD NEEDS YOU!

MI-SHO is an all volunteer organization and the current board members volunteer their time to support your organization. Typically board members rotate out after a few years, although we don't have prescribed term limits. We would like to invite interested members to consider joining our board.

This year we will be saying goodbye to Lori Zackrie and Macy Kuhl as they leave the show ring to pursue other interests such as trail riding and college. We wish them well and thank them for all their hard work. They have been key to the success of the last two years Mi-SHO horse shows and our awards banquet.

But now it is time to fill their positions and who better than our own membership to join us and learn the ropes?

The MI-SHO board meets monthly in the O'Fallon area for a dinner meeting on a Monday night. We always have a great time and usually find a place to enjoy some libations. You will find we are a fun group.

The big events of the year are the Annual Awards Banquet in January and the Mi-SHO Annual Horse Show in September. Organizing these events requires coordination and volunteerism in order to make them successful. In addition, we need help calculating end of year points, publishing the newsletter, organizing clinics and coor-

inating with show organizers to build the recognized show schedule.

Do you have input or suggestions for the board about our annual events? Here is your opportunity to shape next year's show season. We can continue to improve if our members join us! Help us make Mi-SHO flourish.

One thing to consider is that serving on the Mi-SHO Board of Directors is a great resume builder. A leadership position in a organization with national affiliations is always a plus.

Feel free to attend one of the monthly meetings to learn more about your board and what we do. We will continue to post meeting times on our Facebook page, so stay on the lookout for it.

Respectfully,

MI-SHO Board



SHOW RESULTS

Congratulation to all our Grand Champion and Reserve Champion Winners

Walk Trot

Grand: Lily West on Fly Me to the Moon

Reserve: Hanna Nelson on Prince Charming

Cross Rail

Grand: Karen Zinn on Jato

Reserve: Ellie West on Fly Me to the Moon

Short Stirrup

Grand: Elise Mannix on Call Me Classy

Reserve: Lucie Lowe on Wildwych Hazel

Beginner Rider

Grand: Cheri Drennan on De Starru

Reserve: Kayla Edwards on Blue Bonnet

Limit Rider

Grand: Shelby Wright on Kokopelli

Reserve: Kaitlyn Nance on Rolie Pollie Ollie

Open/Amateur/Children's Hunter

Grand: Dee Dee Westermeyer on What's on Tap

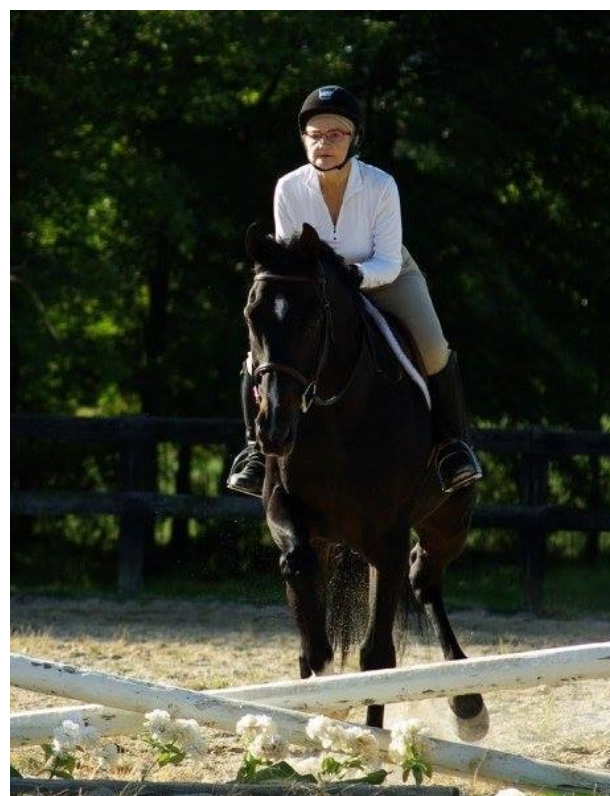
Reserve: Darby Wright on O'Yes



Lily West



Cheri Drennan



Karen Zinn

Beginner Jumper

Grand: Sidney Snyder on She's Got Jazz

Reserve: Micah Lowe on What's a Catch



Lucie
Rowe



Ellie West - above



Kaitlyn Nance

Shelby Wright— below



Elise Mannix

SHOW RESULTS

Congratulation to our Hunter Derby Winners

Hunter Derby

- 1st Darby Wright on O'Yes
- 2nd Sarah Cole on Charming Romeo
- 3rd Micah Lowe on What's a Catch
- 4th Cheri Drennan on De Starru
- 5th Dee Dee Westermeyer on What's on Tap
- 6th Lucie Rowe on Wildwych Hazel



Lucie Rowe



Sarah Cole

Darby Wright





Jessie Skaggs

MI-SHO would like to thank our Show Sponsors:

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Tricia Nance's Origami Owl

To Scribe or Not to Scribe by Lynn Coehoorn

USEF Rules on Scribes.

- Scribes should have a knowledge of the tests being ridden.
- Scribes (including electronic scribes) must not be an owner, coach, trainer or family member of a competitor/horse in the class(es) in which they are scribing.
- Scribe changes should not be made more than once per day for each judge.
- It is strongly recommended that scribes not compete before judges with whom they have worked at the same competition. Apprentice judges are prohibited from competing before judges with whom they apprentice at the same competition.

I have always wanted to scribe for a dressage judge. I've heard, "you'll learn so much." But I never was brave enough to try it. I was usually riding at the schooling shows. But this year I'm without a horse so I thought I'd try it. But at Regionals?????

SLADs was advertising for volunteers and I had Friday off. It was a day I suspected they would have trouble finding help so I contacted the volunteer coordinator. I told her I'd never scribed before but would volunteer for the lower levels. She signed me right up!

I did a little research on line and found some interesting do's and don'ts. The most important was the approved abbreviation list. Then I headed to the show.

My judge arrived 2 minutes before the first ride time. I introduced myself and she said, "I assume you've done this before!" Well no. The look on her face was priceless. Completely flabbergasted to say the least. "Well I hope you know something about horses?" Yes "Do you ride?" Yes. "Dressage?" Yes. "Well here is what I need you to do." And she proceeded to rattle off a list of how and what she wanted me to write. Then she rang the bell and we were off.

At this point I was starting to regret my decision to try scribing at Regionals. But she checked my first sheet, and said "you'll do". So I guess I passed.

Well I did learn a lot. Write and write fast. The judge wanted me to include qualifiers like "a little, some, more" "to soften the blow" as she said. The abbreviation list is a must. I hate to say it but the worst riders made the most writing. A score 7 and above does not require comments, so I could watch the best riders and only write down numbers. Unlike schooling shows, the judge is not allowed to give any verbal correction or training advice. But there were "could use more . . ." comments. The ride would end. The judge would write her final comments and scores, and she'd ring the bell for the next ride. We stayed on schedule all day. There was no messing around in her ring!

I wish I'd had stamps for items I wrote over and over again. Seems we all have

ABBREVIATIONS

Use the suggested abbreviations listed in the "USDF Guide for scribes", but don't worry about adhering to them slavishly, advises Maureen van Tuyl, USEF "R" dressage technical delegate. "Write what is shortest for you and what makes sense," she says.

"Don't write too big or you won't have room. start at the top of the box if you have a wordy judge."

"USDF Guide for Scribes" is a concise reference containing an extensive list of popular scribing abbreviations and symbols.

usdf.org/docs/ShowFlash/web/GeneralInfo/Before/GuideforScribes.pdf

This is a great resource



the same issues—no surprise there!

Above the bit

Bracing in transition

Needs to/Must stretch down

Not balanced in halt/gait/transition

Not Straight (crossing the arena/halt)

Distracted (looking around in the halt)

Some Lateral Tendencies

Circles to far into corner (long & low)

Resistant

Late to Aids

Needs more bounce in the canter step

Haunches in/out/leading

According to USDF Connection, “a good scribe will help the judge stay on track, help them keep up with the test, point out if they’ve missed a score, or let the judge know if the rider has gone off course,” Well I’m certainly glad I never had to tell the judge she didn’t know the rider was off course. I did have to ask for a score one or twice. So you must pay attention to the test. The judge always did a mid test check, “and now we are on the free walk.” just to make sure I was keeping up with her. That was helpful.

If you mess up—fess up. There were times when the judge spoke so softly I couldn’t hear her comment or score over the trucks, tractors, golf carts running around. Judges are master of the whisper and its extremely hard to hear them when they are turned away from you watching the rider. If in doubt ask for clarification.

The hardest part for me was keeping my

mouth shut and my opinion to myself.

She wanted each rider to immediately enter when they got the bell. I’m afraid a “patience” slipped out when she was fussing about a rider circling at the entry. Oops! Remember—never carry the judges comments outside the judges box.

I really did enjoy the day I spent scribing. It was cold and windy and made it hard to write with cold hands, but I got to see some beautiful horses, some great rides and even started guessing what the judges score would be. I was getting pretty accurate by the end (judging the halt. Ha ha)

SCRIBING DO’s

- Arrive at the judge’s booth 15 min before first ride starts
 - Verify all the score sheets are there for the rides scheduled, and that they match the test being ridden
 - Before each class, preview the test being ridden so you are familiar with them
 - Be sure name & number on score sheet matches the rider
 - Stay focused on the judge and test so you can keep up
 - If you believe a movement was not scored, continue on and verify the missed score with the judge at an appropriate time
 - Write legibly, using standard scribing abbreviations
- Ask the judge at the end of the test any questions you still have

DO NOT

- Arrive late!! Judges and show management become very anxious about covering!
- Offer your opinion to the judge about the rider, horse, or ride
- Distract the judge with idle chatter
- Use odd symbols or abbreviations that are not standard or commonly known
- Improvise if you get lost or behind

SADDLE FIT with Debbie Witty

<http://saddlefit.com/>

Debbie Witty was recently at Royal Oaks Equestrian Center in Foristell MO. She is the owner and founder of Trilogy Saddles and is herself a certified saddle fitter from the Society of Master Saddlers of England. She personally trains all her saddle fitters. Having spent two days watching her work with riders in the St Louis area, including me, I have learned just how truly important saddle fit is!

Debbie gave an informative talk to the group in the evening. Her message? “**Balance and Symmetry**” She taught us how to palpate your horse to determine if they are symmetrical from one side to the other. Does your horse have a hallow on one side? Most do. That might be causing saddle fit issues that padding could correct.

TIP OF THE DAY:

Shim your saddle with yoga mats. They can be stacked, are just sticky enough not to slip, and are thin enough to stack to whatever thickness you need. As your horse's muscling improves, just remove a layer. Place them between the saddle pad and half pad and make sure you cut the layers smaller so they ramp up under the saddle so there isn't a bulky edge and that they extend beyond the saddle.

Debbie covered the 7 points of saddle fit:

1. Gullet Width

Minimum of approximately 2.5 inches or three fingers in the length of the channel of the saddle. The goal is no pressure on the spine.

2. Adequate Clearance through the Pommel

Initially unloaded/ungirthed with pressure down on the middle of the pommel, the saddle will sit with a clearance of approximately 2 1/4 inches or three or more fingers stacked vertically between the top of the withers and the bottom of the pommel (new saddles could be more). Too close to the withers means the saddle is wide, and too much clearance (with a moderate wither) can indicate that the saddle is too narrow--both scenarios can create discomfort and an imbalance in the saddle.

Once girthed and after you've ridden, we are seeking clearance maximum of three fingers or 2 1/4 inches, minimum of two snug fingers.

3. Angle of Tree Matches Angle of the Horse's Body

We are checking for even pressure. This evaluation includes running your hand beneath the entire length, about one inch or more

from the front edge of the panel--you will feel where the rigid structure sits.

4. Point Pressure

The end of the tree point is an obvious place to check for excessive and localized pressure. Recheck for even pressure, or how you can create even pressure. Then evaluate why there is pressure--can those spots be softened or flattened? Does the saddle sit too low so that the points are too far down the horse's body? Can you make it right by adding a pad, artificially making the horse's body larger so that the saddle is sitting up with the correct amount of clearance? Or is it just too narrow with too much clearance and too much pressure down through the tree angle?

5. Balance of Saddle

The whole objective of saddle fit is to create a position to enable the rider to sit over the top of her leg for proper ear-shoulder-hip-heel alignment. If the saddle is sitting with the cantle low and the pommel too high, the rider will be sitting in a chair seat with her leg out in front of them. When the cantle is too high and the saddle sits with the pommel too low the rider will feel like she is falling forward.

6. Panel Coverage

We want the panel to accommodate the horse's back to the best of the saddle's ability, both laterally and longitudinally. There should be no huge gaping holes, but just enough space for your fingertips between the panel and the horse's back. Check the saddle panel laterally from the gullet out to the edge of the gusset to see if the angle of the panel follows the angle of the horse's back. We are seeking as much panel on the horse's back as possible for pressure distribution. Use the same thoughts to test the rest of the panel.



To evaluate bridging: With one hand applying weight to the center of the seat of the saddle, use the other hand between the panel and the horse's back to check for smooth, even contact. During bridging the saddle panel creates pressure on each side of a hollow spot where the panel does not lie evenly on the horse's back. The void will be noted primarily in the center of the panel length-wise. Just remember there can be a bit of room, approximately enough to stick the tips of your fingers in, but not up to your middle knuckles. However, if you fill that easement in you can make the panel actually create a great deal of pressure.

from her at that time. She felt my horse needed to muscle up more before I spend money getting a different saddle for him. She evaluated him with the saddles I already had, made recommendations about padding and half pads and it worked. He moved beautifully.

My advise? If you ever get a chance to work with a saddle fitter, it will be worth it. Fit does matter!

The balance of the saddle is indicated by the proper alignment of the rider's body and the fact that the rider can easily stay over their leg.

To evaluate rocking: Place your fingertips on the pommel and cantle, applying light weight to each at the same time. Then create more weight first on the pommel then on the cantle. The saddle will rock like the rockers on a rocking chair. This will be your regular observation of a saddle that rocks--the panel is too round, curvy or sausage-like in those critical areas. The tree may be too curvy and the panel is not properly designed to accommodate a normal back.

Checking the sweat or dirt pattern on a clean white pad will give you a wonderful opportunity to assess the entire fit.

7. 18th Rib

Palpate until you find the back of the rib cage. Gently follow the rib cage up toward the spine. Depending upon how much flesh the horse carries, you may have to estimate the angle of how the rib ties into the spine. The back of the panel should not extend beyond the 18th rib due to lack of structural (rib cage) support.

Of course the proof of saddle fit is how you and your horse react in it. Are you balanced; is the horse moving straight? I can tell you my horse's response was remarkable. He moved freely, and changed gates without hesitation. But what impressed me most was the fact that Debbie did not recommend that I buy a saddle



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