

# Meet the Clinician



DISCERNING EYE:  
*Fore works with a horse  
and rider during the  
2010 Adequan/USDF  
National Symposium*

Veteran trainer and judge Lilo Fore will share her love of riding and teaching in the USDF adult clinics

BY KATHERINE WALCOTT

I appreciate anyone who comes and wants to learn, period. I fully understand that not every rider rides the same and not every horse can do the same. But we can teach every horse something and make every horse a little better, and I think every rider who wants to learn is able to learn more.”

Thus runs the teaching philosophy of FEI-level instructor/trainer, FEI 4\* dressage judge, and sport-horse breeder Liselotte “Lilo” Fore, clinician for the 2011-2012 FarmVet/USDF Adult Clinic Series, which kicks off this fall. (For the schedule, see “The 2011-2012 FarmVet/USDF Adult Clinic Series” on the next page.)

## Symposium vs. Clinic

Along with FEI 5\* judge Gary Rockwell, the German-born Fore, who now calls Santa Rosa, CA, home, conducted last year’s Adequan/USDF National Dressage Symposium in Jacksonville, FL (see “The Bridge,” February). Although the symposium and adult-clinic formats are similar, the clinics will have a different focus, according to Fore.

“At symposiums, you use the riders mainly as guinea pigs,” Fore says. “You’re not getting totally into the nitty-

gritty details of it, where in these clinics I hope to be able to make a point—not just flowing over the training of the horses, but really going into details.”

Those details, she says, will focus on the basics. “I want riders and auditors to understand that one cannot skip true basics without somewhere down the line hitting a roadblock. And then if you do hit that roadblock, not just to force yourself through that roadblock but to step back and find the reason why that roadblock occurred.”

In a symposium setting, a roadblock would mean a detour. “I would talk about it and probably, so that we don’t just sit there on that one spot, would pick something else. But I would definitely mention it and say, ‘But this one needs a little bit more time for me to correct.’”

But in a clinic setting, Fore would instead spend the time getting to the root of the problem, even if it is not quite what the rider had expected to be working on.

“What I would like people to realize is that most of us, when we give clinics, seminars, and symposiums, there is only one thing we want, and that is for them to improve,” Fore says. “Sometimes it takes a little bit from them to trust us—to make sure that we need to maybe change certain

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things. For instance, a person coming into the ring says, 'I want to work on piaffe.' Well, I'm looking at the rider and I'm seeing that the horse is not on the bit. Well, guess what. What I then say is, 'You know, that's a great goal to have, but let's just see if we could improve the horse's throughness and then we see how far we can go.' Or riders want to show Third Level but they have no [flying] changes."

Fore realizes that auditors must be equally patient. "I think sometimes, watching dressage in the ring, it's like molasses running down the wall," she quips. "Unless you're sitting on the horse yourself, sometimes it can be a little bit frustrating for people to sit on the benches and watch riders having to do something over and over again. But we as clinicians are not going to make the riders do something which we think they maybe shouldn't yet be doing, just because the auditors are on the benches. What we try to do, at least, is make sure that the auditors know why we couldn't progress further than that today, and what needs to be achieved before we can go on to that next exercise.

"We have to make ourselves understand that the horses are the most important part," Fore continues. "We have to speak for the horses first. So just because there is a rider who wants to do certain things and there are auditors on the side who want to see certain things, we are not going to force the horses to be able to do certain things just because of them."

That patience, of course, needs to go both ways. When she is teaching, "I try to be as patient as I can," Fore says. "Once in a while I get a little, um, strong, but only because I feel like a rider could do it, and I feel like a little more effort could be given to make it better." In teaching both horses and humans, she says, "You need to know when to push and you need to know when to back off. But sometimes you do have to push a little bit to be able to get something done."

Fore's final observation on teaching and training: "You have to keep a sense of humor to work with horses. I tell you what: You better keep a sense of humor also to work with people!"

## The Riding Teacher

Fore describes herself as a rider first and foremost. "Riding is my love. When I'm on the horse, I'm probably the happiest person on earth," she says.

Even during her fourteen-hour days, Fore makes the time to ride. "I ride every day I'm at home. I'm not a spring chicken any more [she's 67], but I can outride a lot of 20-year-olds."

Fore is no stranger to the finer points of dressage instruction: She is an examiner in the USDF Instructor/Trainer Certification Program and a past chair of the USDF Instructor

## The 2011-2012 FarmVet/USDF Adult Clinic Series

Here is the schedule of the adult clinics with Lilo Fore. There will be one clinic in each of USDF's nine regions. The clinics are open to auditors of all ages, but riders must be aged 22 or older. For more information, including rider applications and auditor registration, go to [usdf.org/education/clinics/adult](http://usdf.org/education/clinics/adult).

- Region 8, October 22-23, 2011 – Sugar Hill Farm, Victor, NY
- Region 4, November 5-6, 2011 – Providence Farm, Palmyra, NE
- Region 9, March 3-4, 2012 – Stormin G Ranch, College Station, TX
- Region 5, April 21-22, 2012 – Golden Spike Event Center, Weber, UT
- Region 3, May 5-6, 2012 – Shannondale Farm, Alpharetta, GA

The remainder of the clinic dates will be announced later in the spring.

Trainer Committee. Her combined riding and instructing expertise allow her to view her teaching as an extension of her riding. "The reason I got into teaching is the fact that I do love horses. I've seen a lot of riding and a lot of horses being a little bit misused—not because riders want to be mean to horses or they want to be brutal; it's more through ignorance. I felt that when I grew through my own riding skills and I became, well, a quite good rider, I really do feel that I can think myself and feel myself into a horse very, very much. I feel like I know what they're thinking. I feel like I know what they're feeling. I wanted to be able to share that."

Because of this ability, Fore teaches as if she is riding. "When I teach, I feel like I am on top of the horse," she explains. "I literally teach like I am sitting on the horse and feel exactly what happens. I'm turning the rider into my tool. I make this rider become partly me. It maybe sounds a little bit corny, but the horses tell me what they need. And I just watch them and listen to them, and I teach accordingly."

## Goals

For the USDF adult clinics, "My expectation is that every horse leaves the arena better from the way it entered, and to make every rider understand a little bit more of what they were trying to achieve," Fore says. "I want them to get out of the clinic and say, 'You know, I learned something.' If it's just one thing, I will be happy." She hopes that the auditors will have similar experiences: "I want the auditors to understand and learn *something*. If they are going away with one thing learned, in my opinion that's been a good clinic." ▲

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