

IQ Dressage Newsletter

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Demystifying Dressage

Dressage is not some scary, elitist equestrian art. As a matter of fact, the word 'dressage' is simply French for *training*. It's like calling snails *escargot*. A snail in its natural state is generally not all that intimidating, but add a little garlic and butter and give it a fancy foreign name and, all of a sudden, it becomes mysterious upper-class cuisine. It's the same thing with dressage.

Maybe refer to it instead as 'classical' training? The great thing about it, no matter what name you use to identify the discipline, is that the ultimate goal is to unite horse and rider both physically and mentally. When done right, dressage training is meted out in patient, logical steps that allow the utmost consideration and respect for your horse's musculoskeletal development, while simultaneously building on the rider's sensitivity, balance and technique.

Admittedly, you won't end up with a dead-broke horse in 90 days or less, and some eventers blame the mind-engaging elements of dressage for the rampant mishaps on the cross-country course. Additionally, there are people who will swear you have to invest in a \$200,000 imported German Warmblood to do well with dressage. Not true. If your goal is to stand on the Olympic podium in 2016, there may be a shred of validity to such advice, but if we're being completely honest, absolutely any horse, of any breed, age, size and athletic ability (or lack thereof) is inarguably helped by applying these age-old, time tested and proven training philosophies.

Buy the Book

A MUST read; Dr. Gerd Heuschmann's
"**Tug of War: Classical vs. Modern Dressage**"

This text eloquently and intelligently explains the differences between considerate, traditional training methods and the detrimental practices employed in some of today's competitive circles. Terrific info on equine anatomy, too!

Featured Dressage Quarter Horse: Teequila



Best qualities: cute! **VERY Smart**. Funny. Inquisitive.

Registered name:

Skip the **Teequila**

Nickname: **Peanut**

Age: 13 (foaled Jan 24 '95)

Sire: ImaTruSkip

Dam: Cindy Go Te

Size: 14.3 hh

Trained, owned and ridden by:

Sarah Robertson, SLC UT

Imported from: Ohio

Length of **dressage career**:
6 months

My hero: Wes Sharp (farrier)

Best lessons: **Danielle** Hunt
and **Marlo Vivenzio**

Favorite clinician:

Joanie Bolton

Favorite activity: eating

Favorite time of day:

meal time!

Favorite treat: **carrots...**

no, ginger snaps.

Hmm...maybe apples. Oh,

and peppermints. Okay,

ALL treats are good.

Favorite tack: Bitless bridle

Latest and greatest

accomplishment:

cantering softly, full

arena on the rail and in
20-meter circles without
breaking gait.