



Ian Roberts and Napalm



Vaulting cheering section

## Daily Diary – Friday, August 25<sup>th</sup>

It's really difficult to keep track of what day it is here for some reason. There's so much going on: both Judy and Ceci are trying to be everywhere at once to make sure that we know how our Canadian athletes are faring. Cealy told Ceci (now try and keep THAT straight – Cealy is the photographer, Ceci is the writer! Poor Judy – she has to try and keep them straight!) that she could expect to lose weight during the 18 days in Aachen from not eating much or well and doing a lot of walking. She was right!

## Eventing

With both competition and exhibition horses pounding the grass turf in Stadium 2 over two days, and the continuous rain, the footing became less than ideal by the time Paris II and Kelli McMullen-Temple entered the ring this afternoon. Kelli said, "I thought he was great. I am happy with how composed he was in the ring."

Our Canadian riders are in 30<sup>th</sup> (Kelli) and 52<sup>nd</sup> (Ian) position respectively going into the Cross Country phase tomorrow.

## Vaulting

Other than the people directly involved with the sport, among Canadians there is very little knowledge about the sport of Vaulting. Even within the Equestrian community not a lot of people know much about it.

That has certainly changed for the members of the Canadian squad here in Aachen. In a show of support for their fellow Canadians, people from the other disciplines (Dressage, Endurance and Eventing) as well as other Chefs d'Équipe and our Chef de Mission, Mike Gallagher, and his wife Alison, grooms and other supporters all showed up to watch. Thursday, we all watched the Compulsory portion of Round One for both the women and the men. Then back again today to watch the Freestyle performances.

Mike said, "I didn't know much about it coming in, but, I'm AMAZED by Vaulting and the things these people are doing."

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We don't think that anyone watching the performances could fail to be both intrigued and amazed. We saw one young lady do a "split" on the back of a horse, putting one big toe on his ears and the other on the dock of his tail! Oh, and we should mention – the horse canters throughout the entire routine, which often includes small leaps, somersaults and other tricky movements difficult enough to accomplish on a stationary place, never mind on a moving target!

For children it's an ideal sport for combining both horses and the physical training of gymnastics. Paul Townsend, the father of 14-year-old Jessica, who is competing for Canada, said, "She works really hard. We can support her and pay for the lessons, but she has to do the work and really want it." The family lives in Surrey, BC, and Paul said it's a great way for his daughter to be involved with horses without the expense of owning one.

Rebecca Marland, mother of 15-year-old Hannah, had a "Good for you" and a hug for her daughter after Hannah's first International level Freestyle. "This is her first big competition. I'm overjoyed that she survived the nerves and the anticipation. She's been awesome – and she's just 15! She'll want to come back. Her Compulsories were great, but she has done better in her Freestyle. She was nervous. I'm thrilled to bits that we know what to build on for next time." Hannah's Freestyle was developed on a *Willie Wonka* theme, including her costume.

In determining the FEI World Female Individual Vaulting Championship, scores from yesterday's Compulsory Vault and today's Freestyle Vault are averaged to determine the final placings. Only the top 15 Vaulters from the first round proceed to the second and unfortunately none of the Canadians made the list. But, there's always another time.

Colin Schmidt said, "Canadians are lucky because Susan (Baron - Skyline Tack) makes a surcingle (with grips) that is good for all levels of vaulting. She sells it for \$500 Cdn. and others can cost up to \$2,000 from Europe. The back pad has to be firm and stiff so that it disperses the weight - no pressure points, and those cost about \$200 US.

## **Tid Bits**

Vancouver's Karen Robinson told us she was very excited today. One of her Freestyle Design clients, Bernadette Pujals of Mexico, is in tenth place after today's Grand Prix Special. That means she will be performing the freestyle designed by Karen, for the first time, in tomorrow evening's Grand Prix Freestyle.

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