



Karin Larsen of CBC Country Canada interviews Kelli-McMullen Temple



Karin Larsen of CBC Country Canada interviews Ian Roberts

Daily Diary – Saturday, August 26th

Another busy day, but then again, at WEG they all are! For the Canadian dressage riders and vaulters, it was a good chance to be spectators and watch their compatriots compete.

Eventing

The first order of business for the day was to watch the Cross Country phase of the Eventing competition. Fortunately, the ever-present rain held off allowing the footing on the course to remain relatively dry, although it was obviously quite slippery in several places, particularly on parts of the grass.

Ian Roberts on Napalm was the first Canadian to leave the start box. To everyone's surprise, Napalm slipped slightly on the approach to the third jump and fell. In Eventing, if a rider falls once, he or she may re-mount and continue on but will be eliminated in the event of a second fall. If a horse falls, however, it means immediate elimination. According to Ian, Napalm's fall was relatively minor and he sustained only a few minor scratches as a result. Ian himself was fine, except for the supreme disappointment he felt as his WEG competition came to an unplanned end.

Kelli McMullen-Temple was scheduled to hit the course on Paris II later in the afternoon. Greg Paul, Eventing Chef d'Equipe, told us that they jogged the horses every morning. This morning Paris wasn't quite himself. In consultation with both Kelli and the veterinarian, the decision was made to withdraw from competition. Greg said, "He is a young horse with a great future, so we decided to save him for another day."

Like Ian, Kelli was extremely disappointed. She said, "I'm sad that I'm not getting a chance to go out there. It's unfortunate, but far better not to risk it."

Both Ian and Kelli were interviewed by CBC's Karin Larsen for Country Canada's television coverage of our Canadians at WEG. Like the competitors, Karin was also disappointed.

Of the course, Greg said, "It was a thrilling and very surprising afternoon. The course was very fair – it caught a lot of riders out, but horses were not hurt in the process."

Talking with Mike Gallagher, he said, "In designing cross country courses, the idea is to 'test the best' and 'not kill the rest' in the process." Everyone agreed that those who rode the course well and coped with the technical

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difficulties made it look easy. Those who had problems generally experienced refusals or slips and slides (like Ian's) as opposed to catastrophic accidents.

Dressage

Germans love dressage. Hours before the scheduled start of the Grand Prix Freestyle class, thousands of people filed onto the grounds. Negotiating the pathways to the food vendors became an almost impossible task. But, as Judy said, many of them are very "light to the aids" as a gentle touch would get them to step aside and let us through (most of the time).

The spectator seating area was filled to capacity with an exuberant crowd. The performances were quite a spectacle under the massive lights in the main arena. The cool night air did nothing to discourage the fans from appreciating the performances of the best dressage riders in the world as they and their horses danced to a variety of musical styles.

Karen Robinson's client, Bernadette Pujals of Mexico, performed a lovely Kür to music that perfectly matched her horse's style and rhythm. Congratulations to Karen for a job well done! Bernadette ended up in 10th place with a score of 75.000%.

Vaulting

Some of the largest horses on site are the ones used in Vaulting; but some of the smallest people are Vaulters. Everyone in the Canadian contingent is still amazed by the sport and its participants. The grace, agility, strength and flexibility that these athletes demonstrate every time they leap onto a horse's back is awe-inspiring!

To put it in perspective, imagine mounting an 18-19 hand high horse, from the ground, with no stirrups – or for that matter – no saddle!

The Team competition is even more thrilling than the Individual. Imagine 3 people performing gymnastic moves in rhythm with each other, the music, and a moving target – the cantering horse! It's beautiful to watch. If you've never been to a Vaulting competition – you've got to find one to see. We can see why one of the popular acts in Las Vegas is based on Vaulting!

Tid Bits

We discovered that a Canadian product is being displayed and sold with success at WEG. Montreal's Patricia Da Silva, Vice President of Marketing for Ecogold, is sharing a booth with a German retailing company and marketing their Canadian manufactured "Frictionless™ Saddle Pad" and other products. She's quite excited about breaking into the European market. One of Canada's dressage riders, Ashley Holzer, uses the pads and her photo is prominently featured in a large poster outside the booth. Apparently Canadian fans have been stopping by to see the pads and have their photos taken in front of the poster.

Nova Scotia's Jen Hamilton, a Jumper coach, was spotted chatting with Mike and Alison Gallagher. She's on hand as coach to one of the Eventers from New Zealand.

If you are one of the recipients of Mike Gallagher's blog, you already know that a staple of the German diet is pork. It is found in almost every possible dish and seeking an alternative has become something of a mission among the Canadians here at WEG. Chicken? Fish? (Forget about beef.) And green leafy things like lettuce are extremely scarce.

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