

## Daily Diary – Sunday, August 27<sup>th</sup>

Another ‘spectator day’ for Canadians. And, there was lots to see. Stadium Jumping for Eventing; Freestyle competitions for the Vaulting Teams; and the circus atmosphere behind the stables as the remaining dressage horses try to move out while the show jumping, reining and driving horses try to move in.

Many of the riders who competed in the Eventing Stadium Jumping commented that it was a thrill to be riding in the huge, main ring. How nice that the organizers set it up that way and put the finals of as many events as possible, so far, in the main stadium area – including the finish line for Endurance, the Dressage ring and the stadium jumping for the Eventers. That stadium accommodates many more spectators than the other rings and has the advantage of the huge night lights for dark afternoons or evening activities.

After Zara Phillips (GBR) won the Individual Gold Medal, Judy commented that it was nice to see her parents, HRH Princess Anne and Capt. Mark Phillips, gather around for smiles and hugs – just like any other proud family. Earlier in the day Judy said, “It’s odd to see a Royal (HRH Princess Anne) sporting a British Team baseball cap and dressed so casually – like any other team supporter.”

One sport that has astounded all of us Canadians - and many others - is Vaulting. These young people are astounding athletes. Essentially, they're doing high level gymnastics on the back of a cantering horse. You would have to see these movements to really grasp the skill, strength and agility involved.

The Team Vaulting is even more awe inspiring - three athletes performing together on one horse including stacking 'pyramids', back flips and dramatic position changes.

The huge crowds during the week-end must have meant huge sales for the many vendors on-site. Equestrian sport is very popular in Europe, and particularly in Germany. Whole families attend for a day’s outing – enjoying the competition, shopping and, if the mobs in the area of the food vendors are an indication – the food.

Many of the show jumping riders from several nations were on site today watching the Eventing Stadium Jumping. It’s gratifying to see athletes from one discipline showing an interest in, and supporting, other disciplines’ athletes.

The weather remains “typically Aachen” – a hint of sunlight sends everyone scurrying for their sunglasses while keeping a firm grip on their umbrellas, secure in the knowledge that the latter will be needed again, probably sooner than later. A powerful thunder storm and heavy rains passed through the city late-afternoon but had no dampening effect on the activities at WEG.

Judy and I found a lovely restaurant in a hotel just up the street from ours. They actually have salads made with GREEN LETTUCE – a rarity here – and the food is excellent (except for the predominance of pork on the menu). Their desserts are not for the faint of heart – or those with heart conditions. The chocolate mousse assortment is literally “to die for”.

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