

Day 5:

I woke up this morning both excited and sad for the last day of the clinic. I was excited for today's activities and excited to go home and apply everything I have learned to ride my own horse! I was sad that it was the last day, though, because this trip has been amazing and working with all these incredible trainers has been fantastic.

We had our last workout with Bob, where we did a lot of lunges, sprints, and burpees. My legs are definitely feeling the burn from these last 5 days of early workouts! I will definitely be trying to keep up this routine when I get home.

We rode a test of our choice for either Janet Foy or Linda Zang. I decided to ride Fourth Level Test 1, and my judge was Linda Zang. Lendon Gray helped me in the warmup, which was great. There were a few things that I hadn't worked yet on my borrowed horse that was in the test, such as canter-halts and walk pirouettes, so we spent a bit of time working those things. Lendon also had me ride Sunny a bit more up in a show frame and really work on setting him up for moves in the corners. I can't say I did a very good job of bringing those things into the mock show ring, but they are lessons that I will continue to work on with my own horse at home.

I rode my test in a different arena than I have been riding in all week, and my horse got tenser than I expected him too. He got a bit strong in the hand, so after I rode through my test, Linda worked with me on sitting up tall and riding him from the inside leg to the outside half-halt. It was very interesting this week to see how different trainers define and execute a half-halt.

This week has been an incredible experience. I am so thankful to Holly Chernoff for lending me her beautiful horse to ride, to Robert Dover, Debbie McDonald, Jan Ebeling, Shelly Francis and Linda Zang for the amazing lessons, and especially for Lendon Gray, Robert Dover, Dressage 4 Kids, and all the others who sponsored and supported this incredible program. I would suggest it to absolutely anyone; it has taught me so much about not just riding but about Horsemastership and being an all-around good horse person. This week has been fantastic and I am really looking forward to applying what I have learned to my future dressage career.

- Jamie Pestana