

My first Dressage4kids Youth Dressage Festival experience has come to an end, although I would say with significant success! I finished first out of 16 riders in the Training level 18-22 division with an 82.733%. I scored a 98% on the written test to place second, placed third on my training 3 test with a 70%, and third on my equitation with a 80.2%. Quincy and I took second in our training Prix Caprilli with a 74.75%. Wellington and I took a spin around the triangle to win the handling class with a 76.667%. I tied for first in the sport horse conformation class. Quincy and I won a danish system blue on our schooling training 3 with a 67.586%. Micaela and I won the tack room decorating contest under the team name "Chasing the Score". Kaydence Selvey also joined our team of two to form a competitive team, placing us as 5C. Middle of the pack works for me!

This experience has been eye-opening as it is a show that encourages the proliferation of well-rounded horsemen, not just riders. This is a value that is critical to my personal philosophies when it comes to the sport. I wanted to do as many things as I could! The only thing I wish is that these classes be made mandatory (haha). The versatility of the horse can be demonstrated via the trail and Prix Caprilli classes, and the versatility of the rider can be demonstrated in the written test, handling class and sport horse conformation class.

I had no clue what to expect walking in, so I would say I overstudied my way to success on the written test. The Hoof Book information was concrete and therefore was a matter of remembrance whereas Denny Emerson's book was a test of common sense. Do be sure to take thorough notes and utilize self-made flashcards. To prepare for the riding I worked with trainers such as Scott Hassler, Ashley Madison and Naomi Parry in the form of both lessons and clinics. I entered my first rated show in the Training 3 test to help me prepare for the nerves that tend to crop up.

The opportunity to show at this year's YDF was provided to me by Anne Baber Wallis and Delaware Valley Combined Training Association. I want to provide them a sincere thank you for their financial support in this endeavor and hope that I did them proud! Thanks also to the volunteers and D4K admin for all of their efforts to coordinate this event. I am glad to have a trainer (MaryAnn Luke) that is game for such adventures and has exposed me to many things- especially the handling/sport horse side of things!









