D4K Scholarship Report – Isabel Solano 2019

Dressage for Kids provided me with a scholarship to attend a three-day boot camp at Riding Right Farm. The camp was run by Hollie McNeil, with the help of her assistant trainer Nicole Wilbur, a visiting dressage judge, and a sports therapist.

Every morning we started out with balimo and stretches designed to improve our riding positions. These stretches really helped with my upper back and my balance. Once we were done with our stretches, we each had a separate schedule to follow. After balimo, I went with Nicole and two other girls to learn and practice stable management. We did polo wraps, shipping wraps, TPR, signs of illness and different approaches to them. I also rode with Crystal, the dressage judge in the afternoon. We worked on my three-loop serpentines and my geometry. During my free time, I studied all the D4K required reading materials.

On the second day, I rode in a group lesson with Hollie which was meant to simulate an equitation class. This really helped me with my position and how to improve my riding. I used some of the things I learned in this class during the equitation at D4K and it really helped. The rest of the day was spent studying.

The third day, a sports therapist came in to talk to us about how to manage our stress. This really was excellent for me as I get really stressed before my rides. The techniques I learned here I applied at D4K and will continue to apply when I ride. I also took a mock test of the written test and it was very useful and a great way to figure out what I needed to spend more time studying. At the end of the day, we cleaned up our horses and our tack.

I want to take this opportunity to thank the staff at D4K for the scholarship and all the help. This gave me the chance to learn and grow as a rider.  D4K is always one of the highlights of my summer.