

Thank you very much for accepting me into the scholarship program! I used the money to attend the annual Riding Right Boot Camp that specifically prepares my horse and I for the d4k weekend. On Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday mornings camp started by our trainer Hollie McNeil coaching us through balimo exercises. Then depending on where you are on the scheduled made by Hollie depends on where everyone split off too.

On Monday after balimo I was scheduled for a study session with Julie Crosier (a riders mom). After studying I ate lunch and went to gather my horse for I was scheduled to have a equitation class with Hollie. The equitation class consisted of me and two other riders that are riding in the same test level as me. As we warmed up our horses Hollie gave out pointers and told us what she saw that we could improve on. After we were done warming up, Hollie really started to judge us as if we were in a equitation class. Having this class really helps me focus on my position more than my horse. After my equitation class I was scheduled for more studying. Later on in the day I was scheduled with a couple of others for barn management lessons taught by Nicole Wilbur. This lesson included how to wrap polo wraps, and standing wraps, whats the difference between the two wraps, how to take temperature, pressure and respiratory, and how to fit a saddle. At the end of the day everyone comes together and reflects on the day and we ask each other about our rides.

On Tuesday after balimo I was scheduled to study in the morning, after studying I had a lesson with judge Crystal Wilt. During the lesson you ride your dressage test and you talk to Crystal about what you think went well and what could be improved. One exercise Crystal showed me that helped me have a smoother canter transition at F. The exercise consisted in me having to leg- yield into the corner while asking for the canter. This exercise helped me jump into canter without my horse bracing. After my lesson with Crystal my horse received a massage from Eva Peterson. Eva was able to tell me that by putting my horse in a pessoa, his back end will strengthen which will help his front end come together. After my horse received a massage, everyone came together and started to work on stall cards for the horse show and eat lunch. After lunch we had a Sports Psychiatrist who has graduated from Ithaca College come to the farm and speak to us about how to manage stress. This was very cool because it helped me realize how I am a "under thinker" and when I ride my test I need to just feel my way through it. If I am so focused on where I am supposed to be next in the test I don't really know what my horse is doing. Another thing that we did which was cool was pick out key words that will help remind us to relax and take a deep breath, to focus in on our riding, and to remind us that if we mess up it will be okay. After the Sports psychiatrist left all of us riders kept thinking and having a "aha" moment realizing what they have to do to relax so there ride will be that much better.

On Wednesday us riders were split into two big groups, the purpose of the big groups were to help us plan our warm up for d4k. This was very helpful so we knew how much time was needed to warm up our horses and how our horses would react to a busy environment. After the big group lessons, we took a practice written test created by Julie Crosier and ate lunch. After lunch we cleaned tack and groomed our horses to look show ready. After camp was over we had a big parent meeting to make sure that everyone knows what time we are loading shavings, hay, and what time on Friday morning we are loading to leave for the show. This boot camp helps my horse and I prepare physically and mentally to prepare for the d4k show every year.

Thank you Jenna Wilbur.