



Prairie Rose Training Center

Mimi Stanley on PR Captain Hook+// with
PR Merrylegs+//,

PR Captain Hook+//

National Champion

2nd, 3rd, (twice) 4th Level Dressage & (twice) Prix Saint George
Reserve National Champion
4th Level Dressage



PR Merrylegs+//, Mimi Stanley & EA Cygnus+//

EA Cygnus+//

National Champion

Sport Horse Show Hack

Prix Saint George, Intermediate II & Grand Prix Freestyle


Reserve National Champion

(twice) Sport Horse Show Hack

4th Level Dressage, Prix Saint George, & Grand Prix

"If you want different... You have to choose to do different."

Karla Stanley • Mimi Stanley

7050 156th Avenue NW • Bismarck, ND 58503 • 701-222-0148
prtcddressage.com • prtc@bektel.com •  facebook.com/prtcddressage



IT'S NOT VERY often that you hear about an 18-year-old earning her U.S. Dressage Federation gold medal. Throw an Arabian gelding and North Dakota into the mix, and you've got Mimi Stanley.

"I don't remember not riding," said Stanley, who rode in leadline classes at age 3 and entered her first dressage show at age 6 aboard her mother Karla's childhood pony, Snuff.

Karla's father, however, was the man who brought Arabians into the family. He purchased four Arabian broodmares during Karla's childhood, and raising the breed quickly evolved into a life-long endeavor.

MIMI STANLEY DEFIES TRADITIONAL DRESSAGE STEREOTYPES

With a USDF gold medal earned on her Arabian gelding, she shows neither age nor breed are a barrier to accomplishing great things.

COREE REUTER

Mimi began showing Arabians because they were available at the time. She competed in a little bit of everything as a child but enjoyed the precision and fine-tuning required by dressage.

"From the first time I met her, Mimi has been incredibly driven, dedicated and focused," said Amy Larson, one of Mimi's long-time trainers. "She has an innate sense of balance and timing that she seemed to come to this earth with. There are so many things that most riders must struggle to understand, skills they must learn to feel, that take years to hone and fully implement. Mimi seemed to grasp many of these skills and concepts, as though she had done them before."

As Mimi aimed toward riding upper level dressage, she and her mother realized that she needed a schoolmaster to help her rise in the ranks.

A FORTUNATE FIND

EA Cygnus+// came to Mimi's attention in the fall of 2004 when she was flipping through the pages of an Arabian magazine and saw an advertisement featuring a stunning 1990 gray gelding with Grand Prix experience.

"I showed it to my mom, and she was distracted, so she just told me to call," said Mimi. "I spoke to his owner and, although I shouldn't have been surprised, I was a bit put off by the price. But Mom said to ask for a video, so we did."

At the end of March the Stanleys made the 3,400-mile drive to Louisiana to pick up "Cygnus." "I was so nervous and excited," said Mimi. "I held this horse in higher regard than any movie star."

Mimi and Cygnus got along well from the start, but it wasn't always easy.

"Cygnus is not really a generous or kind schoolmaster," said Karla. "He's spooky, and he has a big shy in him."

Cygnus enjoys "recreational spooking" and often rockets across the ring on two legs. "He's arrogant and thinks he knows everything," said Mimi with a laugh. "If you think differently, too bad for you. It's a bit trying at times, but I think in order to do Grand Prix a horse needs a little bit of that fire. I always remember that Conrad Schumacher said, 'A Grand Prix horse is a controlled explosion.' We work on the controlled part."

"Cygnus is a giant personality in a smaller-sized package," said Larson. "He will deliver 200 percent to the effort, as long as his personal boundaries are respected. Cygnus' sense of fairness is inviolate."

Mimi and Cygnus made their debut in mid-May of that year at third level. "What stands out most about the show is that his tail got caught on the edge of his saddle pad," said Mimi. "We did half-steps in place of our canter transition, and the judge's comments said, 'You do not get extra points for piaffe.' " They finished the year with a few nice tests at fourth level and Prix St. Georges.

SOME SETBACKS ON THE ROAD TO GOLD

In 2005, Mimi continued showing Cygnus in the small tour classes and started earning the scores she'd need for her gold medal.

"I decided the night before the last day of a three-day show that I would change my entry to Grand Prix," said Mimi. "I'd never ridden the test and didn't know it, but Cygnus was game as always. Looking back it seems a little crazy, but everything we did at the time was new to us, and he'd gotten used to that. But there is a lot of ground between a Prix St. Georges and a Grand Prix horse, even if the horse had been there once."

"Mimi's determination makes her a bit like a guided missile," said Larson. "She is deliberate in her approach,

"HE'S ARROGANT AND THINKS HE KNOWS EVERYTHING.
IF YOU THINK DIFFERENTLY, TOO BAD FOR YOU."

—Mimi Stanley

In addition to winning their USDF gold medal in 2008, Mimi Stanley and EA Cygnus earned the Adequan/USDF Junior/Young Rider Grand Prix and All-Breeds Junior/Young Rider Grand Prix Horse of the Year titles.



(Bob Tarr Photo)



DRESSAGE

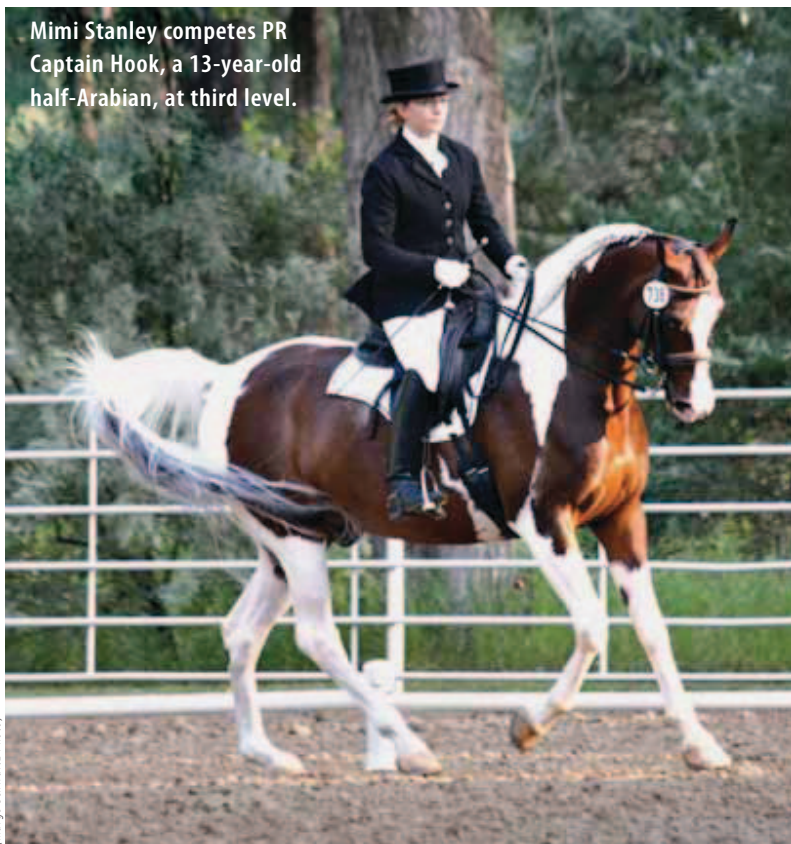
**"MIMI'S DETERMINATION MAKES HER A BIT LIKE A GUIDED MISSILE.
MY JOB HAS BEEN TO SOMETIMES SLOW HER DOWN."**

—Amy Larson

confident in her expectations and always assumes that the very best possibilities are within reach. Her horses mirror her attitude with a positive flair and great energy. My job has been to sometimes slow her down."

Mimi and Cygnus competed at Grand Prix a few more times that year, receiving one score over 60 percent. The excitement about her upcoming season quickly fell short, though, when one day Cygnus wouldn't walk out of his stall. A six-hour drive to lameness specialist Tracy Turner in Minnesota followed, where he was diagnosed with laminitis caused by Equine Metabolic Syndrome.

Mimi Stanley competes PR Captain Hook, a 13-year-old half-Arabian, at third level.



(Marge Schwartz Photo)

Similar to Type II Diabetes in humans, EMS is mainly due to insulin resistance and affects overweight horses between the ages of 8 to 18. Cygnus had put on a slight amount of weight, and his exercise was less intense over the winter—and that was enough. Fortunately, the Stanleys caught the laminitis before there was any permanent damage.

"We now have him on a low carbohydrate diet and keep him very slim," said Mimi. "It can be challenging to give Cygnus enough exercise, because he plays too hard during turnout and hurts himself. It makes winter riding hard, but we do a lot of conditioning basics."

In early spring, Mimi took Cygnus to train with Schumacher in preparation for a season of Grand Prix, but she noticed that he seemed tense. A few days before a show, he started rearing in passage.

"We were very worried and backed way off his workouts,"

said Mimi. "At the show, he seemed fine in the warm-up, so down centerline we went. At A, Cygnus spooked, came against the bridle, reared and bolted. He was really upset and seemed terrified."

They were dismissed from the ring with no idea what went wrong.

It turned out that because Cygnus had been in the clinic due to his EMS, he had missed his six-month dental work, resulting in sharp edges on his back molars that cut his palate.

"They were only a problem when his jaw alignment changed with collection and flexion," said Mimi. "It was a hard lesson to learn, and I had a sore, unfit horse that didn't trust the bridle anymore."

Mimi's goals for that season were quickly abandoned and replaced with rehabilitating Cygnus. "We worked twice a day but very slowly," said Mimi. "First in a halter while his mouth healed and then in his snaffle. I rode him in a first level frame and gradually put him deeper. It was a slow process getting him fit, but the hardest part was convincing him to trust."

After graduating from high school a semester early, Mimi took Cygnus to Tempel Farms in Old Mill Creek, Ill., for a working student position. It was the ideal place to continue Cygnus' training due to the help of Jochen Hippenstiel and his wife Sarah.

"They made themselves available to help us almost every day," said Mimi. "He focused on Cygnus' work being quiet and correct but very available. We would do things like go from walking on a long rein to perfect two-tempi changes. It was just what Cygnus needed."

MISSION ACCOMPLISHED

Mimi entered four Grand Prix tests with Cygnus in her first show of 2008. "I know it's unorthodox to do that many tests," said Mimi. "But that's the beauty of having a really fit Arabian."

Mimi only needed one score for her gold medal and was focused on that accomplishment. A USDF gold medal requires two Intermediaire I or Intermediaire II scores and two Grand Prix scores. Each score must come from a different ride and a different judge.

"I was nervous about the test since it was my first Grand Prix ride of that year," said Mimi. "The ride went well, it was a clean ride, but I didn't know for sure [if I'd earned the score I needed]. I wasn't positive."

Mimi was walking back to the office when a friend grabbed her and pointed to her score on the board. "I think I squealed and turned in circles or something. It was more of a relief than anything else. I remember the second test I rode with Cygnus that day better, because I was riding for me and not my gold medal. It was a celebration ride, but more importantly I had a sound and happy horse," she said.

Cygnus also completed his Horse Achievement Award for Grand Prix, with 10 scores of 60 percent or above at each level,



Bismarck, N.D., is certainly not dressage central, and for the Stanley family, almost any dressage activity requires many hours on the road.

Mimi Stanley must travel 800 miles one way to train with Conrad Schumacher in Illinois, and her other trainer, Amy Larson, only makes it to North Dakota three or four times a year.

North Dakota boasts one rated dressage show every year, and the Stanleys travel anywhere from 300 to 1,500 miles for shows and clinics the rest of the year.

However, the Stanleys aren't planning on relocating any time soon. They've owned their 80-acre farm for more than 30 years and raise their own irrigated alfalfa and hay, as well as Dorset sheep and Nubian goats.

Neither Rain, Nor Snow, Nor Sleet, Nor Hail...

"It's a family business," said Karla. "My husband, Curt, and son, Ross, 16, do a lot of the behind-the-scenes work."

Prairie Rose Farm offers boarding, training, lessons and clinics. "We usually have eight to 10 horses in training, depending on the time of year, and I give a lot of lessons," said Karla. "We do a little bit of everything but focus mainly on dressage."

Temperatures vary drastically, often falling below zero in the winter and above 100 in the summer. "We have five long months of cold weather, and our summer season is relatively short," said Karla.

Mimi has adapted her training to work with the climate. She often trains by long lining instead of riding in the bitter cold, and she uses the deep snow to work on her horses' piaffe and passage or lateral movements.

"You don't have to feel held up by your situation," said Mimi. "We live in North Dakota with 45 inches of snow on the ground and more on the way, but it's what we have and we deal. You can make things happen without having perfect circumstances."

from four different judges and four different competitions. In addition, he was the 2008 Adequan/USDF Junior/Young Rider Grand Prix Horse of the Year and the All-Breeds Junior/Young Rider Grand Prix Horse of the Year.

When Mimi received her gold medal in December, Karla also received her bronze medal, making dressage a true Stanley family sport.

"People have been so generous with their time and information," said Karla. "You don't see Arabians very much, but

what Mimi has done proves you don't have to have the ideal image of what a dressage horse is to be successful."

SHE'S LOOKING FORWARD

Although Mimi was thrilled with her achievement, she knows that Arabians won't be her ticket to international competition. However, she does hope to take Cygnus to the Brentina Cup, a Grand Prix competition for young and aspiring professionals.

"Arabians are well accepted, but there's still a stigma. If a warmblood comes into the ring, a judge may think, 'This will be a nice test.' But if an Arabian comes in and looks just as nice, a judge may think, 'We'll see,'" said Mimi. "You have to be correct and prove it. Some of the dressage movements are just naturally harder for the Arabians because they aren't bred to be dressage horses."

But it doesn't stop her from working with them. Mimi competed two half-Arabians, Starfires Orion+ and PR Captain Hook+/- at the lower levels. She also plans to campaign the ¾ Arabian pony mare, PR Merrylegs+/- at fourth level in 2009.

In the wings, Mimi has a Lipizzaner mare that she's training for Tempel Farms and a young Arabian stallion.

In the meantime, she is continuing her education at Bismarck State College (N.D.), where she's majoring in equine studies and minoring in business.

"At times it's very daunting being Mimi's parent because of her personal drive," said Karla. "She has a single-minded determination and is so serious about what she wants. Her work ethic is wonderful, and trying to provide her with the right opportunities has been something else. As a family, we've really taken on the attitude of 'Why not?'"



(Karla Stanley Photos)



"We live in North Dakota with 45 inches of snow on the ground and more on the way, but it's what we have and we deal," said Mimi Stanley of Prairie Rose Farm.



Dream Big, Prove Big



Dressage rider Mimi Stanley of Bismarck, North Dakota, has her sights set big: to someday compete internationally on the U.S. Equestrian Team. During the past decade, she has demonstrated gravitas in the steps toward achieving that goal.

At the 2009 Sport Horse Nationals, Stanley will be competing on three horses in various divisions. She will ride EA Cygnus+// in Arabian Sport Horse Show Hack, Dressage Intermediate II and Grand Prix; PR Merrylegs+// in HA/AA Arabian Mares In-Hand and Dressage Third Level; as well as Starfires Orion+// in Dressage Third Level and Dressage Second Level. To cap of the week, she will be one of three riders demonstrating Freestyle Music Dressage for Saturday night's entertainment lineup.

The 20-year-old equestrienne grew up riding and training Arabians on her family's 70-acre, 40-horse farm, Prairie Rose Training Center, situated in the scenic Missouri River breaks and bottoms along the historic Lewis

and Clark Trail. Her transition to FEI-level dressage competition required persistence, sweat equity and opportunities offered by those who recognized then-15-year-old Mimi's potential and determination.

From the start, Stanley's mom, Karla, has been her coach and trainer at home. To help raise her caliber of riding and take her to the Grand Prix level, the Stanleys sought outside assistance and entrusted that guidance to Conrad Schumacher.

In Mimi's first lesson under Schumacher, who is known for his impassioned and sometimes intimidating teaching style as much as for his keen eye and training genius, she says, "I was absolutely terrified, way more so than at any shows, and I had shown at nationals twice by then."

Mimi has demonstrated that she is worth Schumacher's time. She had previously won 2003 Arabian Youth National Top 10 Training Level, First Level and Hunt Seat Equitation titles on Merrylegs and Karla's mare, Stephanite+ and a 2004 Canadian Arabian Nationals Top 10 Open Training Level on Merrylegs. Since training with Schumacher, she moved up the levels in 2005 and earned Canadian Arabian Nationals Reserve National Champion Second Level and Top 10 First Level on Merrylegs and Reserve National Champion Fourth Level on Cygnus. A trip to the U.S. Arabian Sport Horse Nationals in 2006 earned Mimi a Top 10 Open & Amateur Second Level win on Merrylegs and Reserve National Sport Horse Show Hack on Cygnus. Back at the Canadian Nationals in 2007, she won Top 10 Second Level on Merrylegs, National Champion Second Level and Top 10 First Level on long-time client Sally Henry's horse PR Captain Hook+// and Reserve National Champion Prix St. Georges and Sport Horse Show Hack on Cygnus. In 2008, Mimi earned Canadian National Top 10 First Level with her new Half-Arabian, Starfires Orion, National Champion Second Level and Reserve National Champion Third Level on Merrylegs and National Champion Prix St. Georges on Cygnus. At 2008 Sport Horse Nationals, she rode Starfire's Orion to Top 10s in First Level and Second Level.

"One of the things I've appreciated over the years is that a trainer like Conrad Schumacher would be willing to work with Mimi," Karla says. "He has appreciated her seriousness and shared his knowledge from the Old Masters."

Mimi trains several times a year with Schumacher, as well as Amy Larson. She has also ridden under George Williams, Kathy Connelly, Jeff Ashton Moore, Lendon Gray, Melanie Tenney, Sarah Geikie, Debbie Riehl Rodriguez, Amanda Johnson and Jochen Hippenstiel.

When the Stanleys purchased "Cyg" in 2005, it was a huge step in advancing her riding career. Mimi earned her USDF Bronze Medal (qualifying scores at First through Third Levels) on Merrylegs and Cygnus in 2005, her Silver Medal on Cygnus in 2006, and in 2008 not only her USDF Gold Medal but also eight of 10 scores Cygnus needed for his USDF Grand Prix Horse Performance Certificate. Mimi and Cygnus were also named alternates for the 2008 Dressage Foundation's Advanced Young Rider Olympic Dream program to study dressage in Europe. Her success was even sweeter when her mom earned her Bronze on Stephanite last summer.

Competing against some of the toughest competition in the United States, Mimi and Cygnus won the 2008 Adequan/USDF Junior/Young Rider Grand Prix Horse of the Year, which has never been done with an Arabian or Half-Arabian.

After Sport Horse Nationals, Mimi has set some goals in the coming years. "My goals are to compete in the Brentina Cup and the North American Junior Young Riders Championships, pursue my judging and instructor certifications, train FEI horses and ride for the U.S. Equestrian Team. My method is education and precise practice. My passion is dressage."



The

DRESSAGE FOUNDATION

Helps In So Many Ways ...



The Dressage Foundation Chooses Four Young Riders for Olympic Dream Program

(May 21, 2010) Lincoln, NE – Four advanced young riders have been selected for the 2010 Advanced Young Rider Olympic Dream Program, which annually sends young riders to Europe for an intensive 10-day dressage experience. The program is administered and funded annually by The Dressage Foundation (TDF). On May 12, an independent selection committee, after reviewing dozens of applications, chose Mimi Stanley (ND), Brian Hafner (CA), Christine Stephenson (CA) and Kristen Schwaegerle (NH) to make the ninth annual TDF trip to Europe. The committee chose Laura-Hope Gammell (RI) and Kathryn Butt (SC) as the first and second alternates, respectively, however, the original winners will all be participating. The selection committee based their decision on candidates' essays, competition scores, recommendations and signs of commitment to the sport of dressage. John Boomer, past President and CEO of TDF said, "The committee was very impressed with the quality and quantity of this year's candidates, and they have selected a wonderful group of young riders."

The program, conceived by Olympic medalist and TDF board member, Michael Poulin (FL), will be led this year by Ann Guptill (CT) and Annie Morris (NY). Beth Baumert (CT) is serving as administrator as she has since the program's inception. Poulin believes TDF's Olympic Dream program helps American young riders reach their potential. He aims to fuel "the power of the dream" for young people, and help them "develop a sense of proportion, a sense of themselves and of being proud of who they are and what they're doing."

On June 28th, the group will travel to Frankfurt, Germany. The tentative plan, subject to the schedules of German trainers, is to visit former U.S. team coach, Klaus Balkenhol, Spanish team coach, Jean Bemelmans and German Olympians, Ingrid Klimke and Hubertus Schmidt. The group will also visit Schafhof, the home of former German Olympian, Ann-Kathrin Linsenhoff, and her trainer Klaus Martin Rath, along with his son, Matthias Rath who was a reserve rider for the German Olympic team in 2008. The group will return to their home towns on July 8. While traveling, the young riders will record their observations in daily journals and chronicle the events with photos and video to share with their home dressage organizations.

Primary chaperone, Ann Guptill is a USDF Certified Instructor and is on the faculty for the program. She has won numerous regional and national titles at all levels, including the 1987 Pan American Games team silver medal. Ann teaches students of all levels at her Fox Ledge Farm in East Haddam, CT (www.foxledgefarm.net). In addition she and her husband Ed Iarusso operate Equestrian Arts Productions, a musical freestyle company (www.equestrianartsproductions.net). The second chaperone, Annie Morris, is a USDF Certified Instructor through Fourth level, who has been training with Lendon Gray for four years.

"This annual trip is made possible by very generous donors," said Jenny Johnson of The Dressage Foundation. "We're very grateful to those who make this trip possible." Further information on the Advanced Young Rider Olympic Dream Program will be kept current on the TDF website: www.dressagefoundation.org.

*"How do we inspire ourselves to greatness
when nothing else will do?"*



JC Sassy ++//
 National Champion
 2nd & 3rd Level Dressage
 Reserve National Champion
 Sport Horse Show Hack



PR Merrylegs+//
 National Champion
 2nd Level Dressage
 Reserve National Champion
 Sport Horse Mares in Hand
 2nd & (twice) 3rd Level Dressage

Starfires Orion+//
 National Champion
 1st Level Dressage
 National Top Ten
 1st & (3 times) 2nd Level Dressage
 USDF National All Breeds 1st & 2nd Level
 Dressage Horse of the Year



"Success is a process - Not an event."