

## Dream Come True

Now, two years later, her passion for the gallant black stallion has resulted in win after win at area horse shows. "He is a star everywhere we go," Athene gushes. Last year, he participated in the Lendon Gray clinic, Breed Demonstration and Versatile Horse & Rider competition at Equine Affaire in Massachusetts which draws tens of thousands of people. After he performed during the Lusitano demonstration, Athene proudly shares that "fans lined up at his stall just to touch him." This past November, Athene and Zulu were again selected to compete in the Versatile Horse & Rider competition at Equine Affaire, their 12th annual event.

Athene reports that the horse who has successfully competed at first level and has scored as high as 71.75% wins practically every dressage class they enter. He was Reserve Champion Stallion in the Open Sport Horse competition at Ten Broeck Farm in Massachusetts this past summer. At a recent Eastern Region Andalusian Horse Club (EAAHC) competition,

Zulu won Dressage Suitability and Best Movement classes as well as some of the Working Equitation (WE) classes, his first attempt at the sport: WE Obedience and WE Obstacles.

Kimberly Garvis, WE clinician who worked with many of the competitors following the show, comments, "He is amazing. He learned so quickly how to maneuver through the obstacles and was able to maintain such a fluid motion."

When asked to give advice to others thinking about attending an auction, "It is so important to be conscientious. Do your homework - examine every horse in the brochure and on the DVD," Athene advises. "My most valuable asset was taking my trainer. It is so easy to become overwhelmed by the beauty and majestic appeal of these horses. On the other hand, your trainer knows your skills and needs and can evaluate the horses dispassionately. My trainer and I rode six or seven horses at the try outs. It turned out that Zulu had that magic appeal and, fortunately, was also a good match for me as a rider."

## Unexpected Talent

by Pat Payne

**K**atrina van den Bosch wasn't planning to purchase a horse at the Canadian Warmblood Horse Association's 2005 Fall Classic Breeders' Sale. In fact, she and her husband had specifically agreed *not* to buy or even look at any of the horses in the sale. "We had quite a discussion about it!" she recounts with a laugh.

But when a black four-year-old Canadian Warmblood (and also NA-KWPN registered) gelding entered the ring, they each noticed the horse. In part, it was because they had some background knowledge on him. Katrina's brother-in-law had bred the gelding's dam, a mare named Princess, so Katrina was already fond of the line. In addition, Ulysses PR, as he was known, had been bred by Powder River Ranch in Saskatchewan and Katrina knew the Actons, owners of the ranch.

### Impulse Buy

So, she says, both she and her husband were stunned when the bidding stayed low on the gelding, who is by Indoctro and whose dam is by Ferro. The bidding stayed low and they decided, impulsively, to place a bid or two. "Three bids later, there we were—the proud owners of this black horse we had never even seriously inspected!" she continues.

"After we bought him, I headed over to see the veterinarian to request his X-rays. I truly didn't know what we would find," she recounts. "You can imagine how relieved I was when the X-rays were clean and showed no problems. Of course, the veterinarian looked at me a little strangely and suggested that most people review the X-rays *before* the sale!"

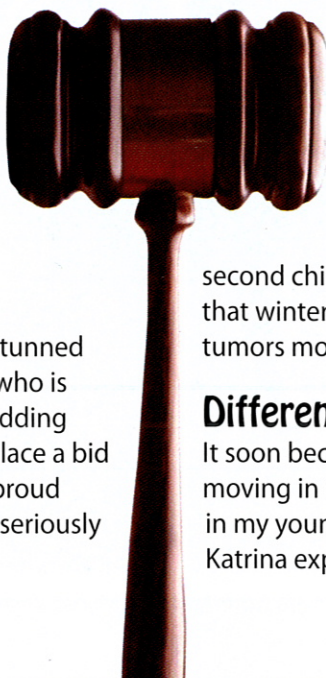
Katrina renamed her new horse Julio and brought him home to her farm in Olds, Alberta. "Every day, we liked him more and more. He's very sweet and kind, a pleasure to handle. I will say, however, that he was one of the most complicated horses I'd ever ridden. He was definitely harder to get truly straight than most horses," she says.

"As a result, I took him out of the ring and rode him out on the grass much of the time," Katrina continues. "He was fine being ridden near farm machinery and completely relaxed around other horses. I was really grateful for his temperament and attitude!"

The next summer, Katrina had a friend take over the ride on Julio, as she was expecting her second child. She also scheduled some time off for Julio that winter so he could have several sarcoids (benign skin tumors most common in young horses) removed.

### Different Paths

It soon became clear, Katrina says, that she and Julio were moving in different directions. "Although I rode jumpers in my younger days, now I want to focus on the hunters," Katrina explains. "But this horse really wants to be a





jumper. He's amazingly explosive over his fences—in a really good way, but not in a hunter way. I did show him in the hunter ring and he was incredibly well behaved but it's really not the best place for him," she says.

In 2008, Katrina made the decision to send Julio to a jumper trainer. She selected Andrew More in Calgary, about an hour away from her home. "With three young children now, my riding schedule is sporadic. And it really was clear Julio was best suited to the jumpers," she continues. "Because he was already seven when he went to Andrew, he was really ready and moved up the levels very quickly. He started in the .9 meter classes and now he's in the 1.20 meter classes, which is about four feet," she says.

"Now he'll move up to the 1.25 meter classes when they're available, but not every show offers them. He needs a little more experience before moving to 1.30 but we think he'll probably be ready later in 2010," she continues.

"It's been really fun being an owner for a change, instead of a competitor. With a young family, my horse life will just need to be a little different for the next few years. Right now, competing is really difficult for me, simply because of the time commitment," Katrina explains. Because of her limited time and her interest in the

*"... think of them as a place to see a lot of quality horses at once, all available at fair market value..."*

hunters, Katrina has decided she will consider selling Julio if she finds the right home, one where he can continue his jumping career. And in the last five years, she has continued to attend—and purchase from—the Fall Classic Sale. "We've bought a horse almost every year for the past four years," she says with a laugh, explaining it has been a great way to expand her breeding operation.

## Auction Advice

Katrina helps out as a volunteer with the Fall Classic each year by overseeing the free jumping demonstrations, so she sees lots of sale horses. She says prospective auction buyers will have the most success if they prepare for their purchase much more thoroughly than she did when buying Julio. "Really do your homework with the catalog before you even go to the sale," she advises. "Either in the catalog or online, there should be photos available for you to study. Research the bloodlines and talk to the people who understand the traits associated with those bloodlines."

**Below Left: Katrina and Katey, her youngest, with Julio. Right: Andrew More on Julio during the 2009 Masters at Spruce Meadows.**



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