

# DRESSAGE TEAM REVIEW 2012 - 2013

## DRESSAGE IS A JOURNEY

After a seventh place finish at the 2012 IDA Nationals, the St. Andrews Dressage Team set out to start the journey over. The team was now without five of its seniors who graduated that May. Coach Jackie Dwelle explains, "Casey Curtis, Lauren Parker, Paige Tillison, Katelee Johnson and Andrea Tito graduated in 2011. These girls all worked hard to improve their riding and competitive skills during their time at St. Andrews and were all important to the success of the dressage team...Dressage is not an easy sport and has traditionally been the smallest of the disciplines taught at St. Andrews. It truly does take a long time to become successful if a student is new to the sport. The team worked well together last year and it was exciting to have both Kristen and Lindsey at Nationals." Starting off the season was a show hosted by Averett University, followed by the home show held at St. Andrews the first week of December. The St. Andrews team rode well, placing first overall with strong rides.

February was a busy month for the team as the entire spring show season was completed in three weekends. Beginning with a second place finish at North Carolina State, five riders placed well to kick off the spring showing season. St. Andrews hosted the next show and it was an experience to remember.

North Carolina is not known for its particularly wintery weather, so the chance for snow that February 16th was not taken very seriously. No sooner had the show started, however, did the snowflakes start falling. Held in the covered arena, it was akin to riding in a snow globe as everyone did their best to keep warm. The show was judged by Kay Meredith, an USEF 'S' judge for over thirty years. An experienced judge and an accomplished rider herself, Meredith is a founding member of the United States Dressage Federation and has earned the USDF gold, silver, and bronze medals. She has competed

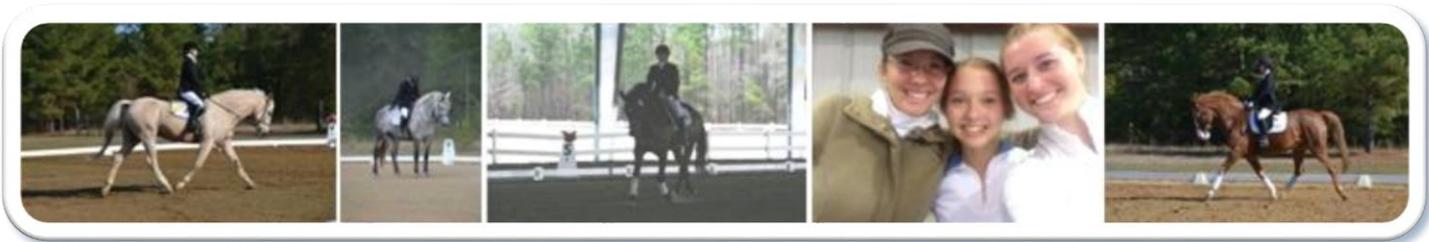
all over the world and at the Pan-Am Games and World Championships. An extremely qualified judge, Meredith replaced the original judge who had a scheduling conflict and could not make it herself. Meredith made sure the show ran on time and each division went without a hitch despite the wintery weather. The St. Andrews Team finished third overall with a brilliant ride from Senior Lindsey Agaliotis with a score of 78.8% on her first level test and was the high point rider for the day. This was especially fitting as it was Lindsey's last home show for St. Andrews.

Following the snowy event at St. Andrews, the next weekend for the team held a two-day show at Averett University to finish off the IDA season. Despite strong rides, St. Andrews still finished second and ended up second in the region finishing behind Averett. Even with the second place regional finish, the team was still able to send two riders to IDA Nationals based off of individual scores and their first place ranking in the region for their division. Sophomore Kristen Parker was first in the Introductory Division and Senior Lindsey Agaliotis who was first in the region for First Level.



**2012 – 2013 Reserve Regional Champions. Front/center Senior Hannah Firth Reserve Champion in Upper Training. Lindsey Agaliotis and Kristen Parker Champions in First Level and Introductory Level respectively.**





Kay Meredith proved to be a valuable resource to the St. Andrews Dressage team beyond her contributions as a judge. She decided to adopt the team and assist through clinics and sharing her knowledge with Coach Dwelle. She has held two clinics at St. Andrews thus far and has contributed greatly in improving not only position, but also the effectiveness of the team. The exercises she provided are highly effective in improving rider strength and therefore, position. Coach Jackie Dwelle, when asked on how Meredith has helped the team, explained, "I am extremely grateful for the support Kay Meredith has given to St. Andrews. She was wowed by our facility during the Snow Globe show and has since given much of her time and expertise to helping me become a better coach as well as pushing our riders to work harder to improve their skills. It has certainly given me insight into how hard the top riders work as well as confirming the importance of a correct and strong riding position. No matter what question I ask, Kay's answer is always based on design of position which I have come to find out is much harder than I ever thought!"

The Intercollegiate Dressage Association 2013 National Championships were held at Mount Holyoke in Massachusetts. With twelve teams competing and twelve individuals in each level competing from a variety of schools, IDA Nationals was a major step up for those used to competing at regional IDA shows. Kristen Parker, a sophomore competing as an individual for the Intro level, said, "Nationals was a great experience for me. It was different than the normal IDA shows as there were so many different schools there and I didn't know what to expect from the other people. It was a little intimidating at first, but then I got there, checked in and the hosting school, Mt. Holyoke, made everyone feel welcomed. It was an eye opener to what big dressage shows after IDA will be like and I hope to one day attend". Kristen ended up placing seventh overall for her division. Senior Lindsey Agalotis placed third for First Level and says about her experience, "My experience at IDA Nationals this past year was one to remember. I had participated and

competed at the national event every year I rode for the dressage team, therefore I knew how the event was run and what to expect from the competition... This year was very special to me because in the years past, it was set early on in the competitive year that I had already qualified. This year, it literally came down to the last show, where I rode First level Test 3 and received a score of a 78.8%, my personal best of any test. This was a big moment for me, not only because of the score, but it guaranteed my spot to represent my region at Nationals again. My hard work and determination was definitely rewarded, as I drew a somewhat more difficult horse that just had a not so great ride by another competitor, and in ten minutes of rebuilding his confidence in me as a rider, went in to earn third place at the national level at the highest level intercollegiate dressage offers. I cannot credit this great accomplishment without the support of my coaches Jackie Dwelle and Carla Wennberg and my always supporting parents Joanne and Bobby, as they were always at each competition helping, supporting and encouraging me to do my best." IDA Nationals proved to be a valuable experience for these two St. Andrews riders and was an excellent reward for their hard work throughout the year.

The dressage team has a lot to work for in the coming season. Riders will continue to work hard and utilize Kay Meredith's assistance as they work towards their goal of IDA National Championships, hosted by Averett University in 2014.



**New Horses**  
**Smoke:** 16 year old Registered Buckskin and Paint Quarter Horse gelding  
**Maggie:** 7 year old, Grey, Draft Cross mare

