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# THE PACIFIC & PRAIRIE HORSE JOURNAL

August 2000

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# From the PMU Farm to the Dressage Ring

By Heather Warren

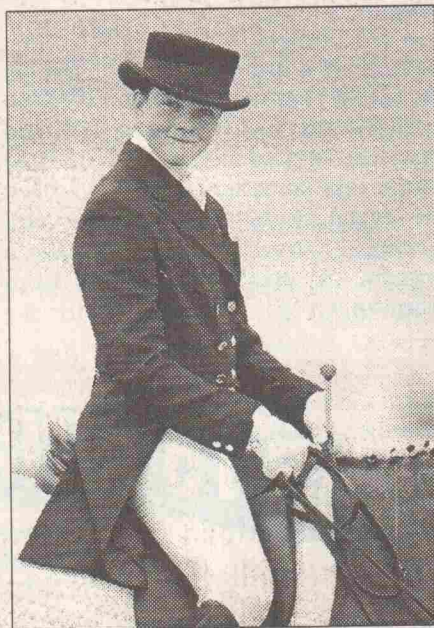
The name says it all. 'Against All Odds', pictured on our cover, got his start in life at a PMU farm in Alberta, and was in the process of being shipped off to the meat packers at four months of age when he was spotted by a veterinarian who took pity on him.

Now seven years old, the mixed breed 15.2 hand gelding is ridden by one of BC's promising young dressage riders, Courtney Dennis, 19, of Victoria. The pair are currently in Colorado for the North American Young Riders' Championships.

Against All Odds is owned by Donna Knowles of Victoria. Her daughter Cindy is the vet who bought him.

"She sent him out to me as a retirement present," said Knowles, who had just retired from nursing at the time.

Looking back, Knowles says Against All Odds, or 'Quincy', as he is known around the barn, had something special from the beginning. Her daughter had told her that normally the horses being



Courtney Dennis Photo: Robin Duncan

shipped to the plant have kicks and bites on them from being packed together, and was surprised he was unscathed by the experience.

"He must have been a winner because he was in with all the horses and he hadn't a mark on him."

According to the records from the PMU farm, Quincy is a Belgian/Quarter Horse/Thoroughbred cross.

Knowles kept Quincy on her acreage until he was three. He was easy to handle, she said, and very quiet and level-headed.

She then sent him to Roanne Tyson of Mountainview Farm, who started him under saddle. Dennis was boarding a pony at Mountainview, and as it had an injury, she began riding Quincy once a week. At first, she had no idea of his potential.

"He just looked like a cute little pony club horse at the start," she said. "We didn't see it at all."

That was four years ago. The pair went on to win at local schooling

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shows, competed at the BC National Championships, and won two golds, a silver and a bronze at the BC Summer Games in 1998. In 1999 they won the BC FEI Junior Championships, and the reserve championship in the Pacific Division of the National Dressage Championships.

Tyson said he was easy to start, although he 'had his moments' in his second year. She credits Dennis for working hard for her success.

"He's not an easy horse to ride," she said.

The very thing that occasionally makes him a challenging ride is what Dennis likes best about him, and what makes him shine in the dressage ring.

"It's his spunk. He's got a bit of an attitude to him which is really neat actually, because it gives him that little

edge, I think, that little bit of pizzazz."

Dennis, who began her riding career as an eventer at age 13 at Victoria's now defunct Eagle Valley Stables, is confident that Quincy will go far.

"I think he honestly could go Grand Prix, he never gets flustered so you can give him a push and he doesn't get worried."

For now, she is thrilled to be on the grounds of High Prairie Farms Equestrian Centre in Parker Colorado, for the North American Young Riders' Championships August 1 to 6.

"I have to thank everyone who helped me get here - my coach, who has helped me so much, Donna, who lets me ride him, and my sponsors," she said. "I'm very lucky to have so much help." ■

## National & International News

### Young Riders Meet in Colorado

The following horse/rider combinations from the western provinces are representing Canada in Parker, Colorado at the North American Young Riders Championships August 1 to 6, 2000.

#### JUMPING

##### British Columbia CSI-JY

Team Coach: Judy Wise

ASPEN, rider Christopher Lowe; SHAMELESS, rider Kenna Mansfield; FINALE, rider Shannon Stogryn.

##### British Columbia CSIOY

Chef d'Equipe: Morgan Thomas

KEEPSAKE, rider Sandra Hardy; CALDERO, rider Lindsay McLean; SHANIA, rider Cathleen Calvert; PELE, rider Brianna Hughes.

#### EVENTING

##### British Columbia CCI\*\*

Team Manager: Mary Howard

MAYAN HONOUR, rider Rebecca Howard; APOLLO, rider Samantha Taylor.

#### DRESSAGE

Tri-Provincial Team CDIOY

Chef d'Equipe: Armand Valkenburg

CLEARLY CANADIAN, rider Lindsey Stroh (AB); AGAINST ALL ODDS, rider Courtney Dennis (BC).

The Outdoor Life Network is scheduled to broadcast the NAYRC on August 17 at 12 pm EST in Canada. Check local listings.

### Fairview College adds New Horsemanship Major

Alberta's Fairview College will enhance its equine programs this fall by adding a Horsemanship major to its existing Training major to complement the Equine Studies Program. The college is one of only five 'horse schools' in Canada teaching horsemanship and training.

The new one-year certificate Horsemanship major will emphasize horsemanship skills and prepare students to excel in horsemanship with the option of obtaining a coaching certificate.

"Between 1993 and 1998, the Canadian horse industry grew by 17.8 per cent. The impact of the escalation is an increase in the need for people with skills in training and coaching," stated Dalin Bullock, the college's co-ordinator of Agricultural Technologies.

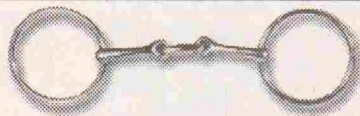
Alberta Learning's Key Performance Indicator statistics indicate the employment rate for Fairview College Equine Studies students was 100 per cent in 1997-98 and 88 per cent in 1998-99, comparable to other programs at Fairview College. Employment rates in the industry are expected to remain high.

The Horsemanship major within the Equine Studies program is a unique certificate program in Alberta, incorporating a practical training emphasis with the rapid advancement of students through CEF Rider Levels 1 to 4. This rapid advancement bonus means that Fairview College graduates will have the option of training and testing for their CEF Coaching Level 1.

Fairview College, a multi-campus college based in northwestern Alberta, celebrates its 50th birthday in 2001. For information call 1-888-999-7882.

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