

# DressageDaily



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Monday, January 14, 2008



## **2008 Wellington Classic Dressage Challenge I**

**Presented by Collecting Gaits Farm**

### **Sabbatical from Work Pays Off for Amy Stuhr At Wellington Classic Dressage I**

By Lynndee Kemmet for DressageDaily.com

West Palm Beach, Florida – Amy Stuhr said her Prix St. Georges win at this weekend's Wellington Classic Dressage Challenge I isn't just a victory for her, but for all dressage riders struggling to balance a full-time job and their riding career. "This gives all the normal, hard-working people out there hope. I competed against a huge class of fabulous riders. This win is for everyone who has a job and is overwhelmed with work and family and stress."

Saturday's FEI Prix St. Georges Open GAIG/USDF Qualifier had more than 30 riders, causing it to be split into two classes. Shawna Harding won the first class, and the first leg of the Wellington Classic Dressage \$5,000 Prix St Georges Challenge with Come On III and a score of 73.75 percent. Stuhr won the second with her 13-year-old gelding Dinar and a score of 70.75 percent.

The win astounded Stuhr, 40, who, when back home in Kansas, devotes 50-60 hours a week to her career as a bank loan officer. She normally only finds time to ride on weekends. "At home, I have a young professional who does a fantastic job keeping my horses going. Her name is Melissa Allen and I can really trust her. She's a beautiful rider and can handle anything. I can come to the barn on Fridays, get on and not skip a beat."



Although she considers herself an amateur, Stuhr does have years of riding experience. She's trained with Chris Hickey for many years and their friendship goes back decades. Twenty years ago, they both competed in the North American Junior/Young Rider Championships. "I have to give Chris a lot of credit. Without him, I wouldn't be here. He's been fabulous and very generous with his time." Hickey and Stuhr also co-own a horse. Over the years, Stuhr has made weekend trips to Florida, but this is her first winter actually showing there herself. Based on her weekend trips, she wasn't sure she would like it.

"I'm used to being in the Midwest and I'm certainly used to riding in big shows, such as Lamplight, in Wayne, Illinois. But when

I'd come to Florida for a weekend, I had a good time but never a really great time. No one knew who I was or that I rode. I just came to see Chris and my horse. I thought this is something that I should do and told myself that if I didn't like it, I wouldn't come back," Stuhr said. "But now, having come here and being able to ride consistently and show, I must say, it's been the most incredible experience. It's an absolute must-do for anyone who is serious about this sport. I'm so glad I did it."



When asked if she'd like to come back for another winter show season, Stuhr said. "Absolutely. I'm going to go home, let the dust settle a bit and then start courting my boss again." To get to Florida this season, Stuhr took her boss to lunch to sell him on the idea. It wasn't a hard sell. "I took my boss out to lunch and I said, 'Todd, you know that all the work we do is on the internet and on the phone. And you know what a good employee I am.' He didn't even let me finish the sentence. He said, 'Whatever you want to do, we'll make it work.'"

So in December, Stuhr and her father drove with Dinar to Florida and here she'll be until early February. "I want to give a plug to my parents, Bob and Angela Stuhr, because they've been a big help making all this possible and helping take care of things back home."

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### **Amy Stuhr and Her "Mixed Breed" Dinar Enjoy Their Win at the Wellington Classic Dressage Challenge I**

Ask Amy Stuhr about her partner in Saturday's Prix St. Georges win at the Wellington Classic Dressage Challenge I and she'll tell you that Dinar is a "bit of a mix with a little bit of everything in there." She imported the 13-year-old gelding from Germany when he was eight. "Officially, he's a German, part-bred Arabian gelding," Stuhr said. His dam is Anika, a Holsteiner mare. His sire is Decoration by the Anglo-Arab stallion Matcho and out of a mare that is by the Thoroughbred stallion Black Sky.

Dinar's official name is Dinar As, but Stuhr dropped the second part. "Too often it came out as 'ass' and I didn't need that," she joked. He was a breeding stallion in Germany and scored a 135 in his 100-day test coming in just behind the popular stallion Contendro. Stuhr is only his second owner. Dinar was a German Federal Riding Horse champion in both jumping and dressage. The road that brought Stuhr and Dinar together was a winding one.

Stuhr and her parents own Greenwood Sporthorses. In 2000, they bought a filly at the Hanoverian Elite Auction. The breeder of that filly introduced them to Holger Kubelke, from whom they later bought a number of young horses. It was Kubelke who told Stuhr of Dinar, who was then a stallion. He convinced Dinar's breeder and owner, Armin Gantczkow, to let him take the horse for training. It was while Dinar was with Kubelke that Stuhr came to see him.

"My father and I pulled into Holger's farm and right behind us was a carload of Spaniards looking at horses. We walked in the barn and on crossties is this black beauty. He was just stunning. I thought, 'I hope he's not an idiot to ride because he's gorgeous.' Holger rode him and he was a darling. I got on him



and this carload of Spaniards was there and I would not get off this horse until they left because I did not want them to try him. I had been kissing so many frogs and I finally found my prince and I was not losing him to this other group of people," Stuhr said. "The Spaniards finally gave up and went away. I got off and told them I'd be back next week with my trainer Chris Hickey. Chris came back with me the next week and rode him and gave me the thumbs up and that was that."

It was at the Wellington Classic Dressage Challenge I Sunday in the covered arena that Stuhr also rode her very first freestyle, and topped the class with a 71.5%. Her immediate plans for this year are to do more freestyles and try to qualify to compete at Devon in the fall. After that, Dinar may find himself with a new rider.

Stuhr said that her chance to compete in the Young Rider Championships resulted from someone loaning her a good horse. Hence, she aims to pass that generosity along by loaning out Dinar to her friend Aless Hall's daughter, Jackie.

Stuhr said she's also now looking for another riding horse for herself and hopes eventually to compete at Grand Prix. But for now, she'll soon be leaving Florida behind to return with Dinar to her family's other horses that are still back home in Kansas – two riding horses, a broodmare and a yearling. "And I want to thank everyone who has helped make this possible. My parents, Chris, Melissa and I want to thank Jan Smith who has the farm next to us and has been a lot of help."

FEI Prix St Georges Open GAIG/USDF Qualify (P2)  
(C) Berrey,

- 1- Amy L Stuhr- Dinar- 70.750%
- 2- Susan Jaccoma- Wadamur- 70.500%
- 3- Katherine Bateson Chandler- Rutherford- 69.250%
- 4- John Zopatti- Mitchell- 68.750%
- 5- Holger Bechtloff- Relentless JP- 68.500%
- 6- Marco Bernal- Farewell -68.250%
- Heather Bender- Saragon Interagro- 68.000%
- Nancy Later- Ornato- 67.750%

- Lisa Hyslop- Rolling Stone- 67.750%
- Jacqueline Shear- Wakan- 66.000%
- Betsy Tyler- Cambridge- 65.000%
- Heather E Houck- Tacolando Triple R- 64.750%
- Jan Brons- Tornado- 64.750%
- Kerstin Christina Baier- Nabucco- 61.750%
- Jenna Wyatt- Flash Forward- 61.000%
- Anthea Christian- Gazel Sodal- 59.750%

FEI Intermediaire 1 Freestyle Open GAIG/USDF Qual  
(C) Babcock,

- 1 Amy L Stuhr- Dinar- 71.500%
- 2 Robin Shehan- Marsaelis- 66.500%
- 3 Erin Moran- Widerhall- 64.250%