



# *Notes from the Office*

April 2010

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## **The Long Term Equestrian Development Model: more than just theory.**

During the Winter Olympics (able bodied and Para) we watched some of the best athletes in the world compete on the International stage. There is no doubt that these athletes are fit, determined and focused on producing the highest level of performance in their quest for an Olympic medal. We have seen millions of dollars go to the “Own the Podium” project and the result of this financial investment was clear when Canada won medal after medal on home soil. The investment in Canadian athletes was a positive move for government and private sponsors, it allowed athletes to train and consequently produce podium performances. The coverage of the Winter Olympics showed the country what could be achieved with a purposeful plan that was executed years before the Olympics, with buy in from athletes, coaches, support personnel, clubs, training facilities and a host of other stakeholders.

It is a fact that to produce an elite level athlete, thousands of hours of training, practice and coaching are required. The research shows that it takes 10,000 hours or 10 years to produce an elite athlete in any given sport. Coaches worked diligently with their athletes, but the results were not always consistent or of the level desired. Coaches could watch other successful countries and see what they were doing and take this information back to their athletes and their coaching programs. There was no Canadian plan for greatness, what was observed was what was used. While this tactic was not entirely unsuccessful, it was not producing consistent high level performances. Younger athletes were not able to access training programs that would lead them into the High Performance sport levels. Athlete development, which is crucial to our sport, was not working. The gaps in the system became very evident. Sport Canada recognized that something more was needed, and challenged all sports to produce a plan that would follow a system based on exercise science, growth and maturation of athletes, and a host of other factors that affect athletic development. Equine Canada worked with experts, coaches and riders to produce our Long Term Equestrian Development Model, known as the LTED. The process took several years to complete.

So what does this mean? Was it just an exercise in paperwork? What good does it do for me: I do not plan on competing in the Olympics!

It means that Equine Canada certified Coaches and Instructors have a blue print of the tools and information they need to produce better athletes both physically and emotionally. The LTED focuses on effective training of all athletes and participants and on the crucial role of the coach in driving all aspects of the sport. It also recognizes the essential role of the parents, breeders, sponsors, officials, administrators, sport scientists and other stake holders. The LTED is Athlete centered and Coach driven. The LTED is not just a model that can be used to help a few riders to compete at elite levels. It is

designed to provide a solid foundation for all riders at all ages and levels encouraging long term participation, enjoyment and achievement.

The focus on participation and long term enjoyment of our sport has many benefits that are not as visible as “podium” performances. Active adults are fitter and healthier, active children grow up with fitness as a lifestyle, teenaged riders focus on their sport and often due to this have better grades and stay away from undesirable activities. In short, active participation in our sport helps everyone at all levels. Increased activity combined with athletic excellence on a world stage provides an incentive to funding resources to continue helping our sport.

The stages that have been developed in the Equestrian model have been adapted from the generic athlete development model. Six stages have been designed in the Equestrian model:

**FUNdamentals:** Riders 3-8, this is the entry point

**Learning and Training to Ride:** Riders 8-14

**Learning and Training to Compete:** Riders 12-18

**Learning and Training to Win:** Riders 16-21

**Living to Win:** Riders 21+

**Active for Life:** all ages

The age groups were assigned to each stage using optimal growth and maturation ages as recognized by Sport Science. However, it is also recognized that riders start to learn to ride at many different ages. Using the framework provided, the principles of development still work using the Fundamental stage as the entry point for all riders, regardless of their age.

Do you want to learn more about the Long Term Equestrian Development model? Speak to your coach or call the office at 604-856-4304, 1-800-345-8055 and ask for your free copy of the Long Term Athlete Development booklet.

### **New Road Safety Bib!**

A brightly colored, highly visible road safety bib is now available from Horse Council BC for only \$19.95. It comes in yellow, orange or pink and reads "PASS SLOW & WIDE PLEASE" on both the front and the back. Visit the HCBC website's Recreation section on the Road Safety page for photos. Call the office to order.

### **More Road Safety Items**

Horse Council BC has produced a Road Safety Handbook for Equestrians with information about road riding and tips to help keep riders safe. You can order a copy through the Horse Council BC office by calling 604-856-4304 or 1-800-345-8055 or by e-mailing [recreation@hcbc.ca](mailto:recreation@hcbc.ca). You can also view or download a copy of the [Road Safety Handbook](#) on-line.

As an appendix to the Road Safety Handbook, there is a page of Pre-Ride Checklists that you may find useful. A copy of the [Pre-Ride Checklist](#) is also available on-line.

There is also a [Road Safety Rack Card](#) designed to educate motorists, pedestrians and cyclists on how to treat equestrians on public roads. This is available to Horse Council BC member clubs for distribution in their communities to driving schools, Autoplan agents, cycling clubs or

public libraries. A [sample press release](#) that can be tailored to different communities is also available in electronic format.

Horse Council BC has just introduced [Emergency ID](#) for both you and your horse! Call us at 1-800-345-8055 or 604-856-4304 (in Lower Mainland), or e-mail [recreation@hcbc.ca](mailto:recreation@hcbc.ca) to order.

### **Ride & Drive Reward Program 2000 hour Rider!**

Barb Smith of Coombs on Vancouver Island has logged her 2000th hour in the saddle since she joined the Ride & Drive Rewards Program in 2004! She will be presented with a \$50 Gift Card from Greenhawk Harness & Equestrian Supplies, courtesy of Glynnis Schultz, owner of Greenhawk's Vancouver Island store in Brentwood Bay Village. Visit the HCBC website's Recreation section for details on the Ride & Drive Reward Program.

### **Back Country Horsemen Rendezvous at Rock Creek May 28-30**

If you've wondered what the Back Country Horsemen are all about, Rendezvous is the perfect time to find out! May 28-30 are the dates for the annual gathering, which will be a weekend of camping, education and entertainment on the banks of the Kettle River in Rock Creek. For more information, visit the Back Country Horsemen page in the Recreation section of the HCBC website.

### **BC Summer Games Needs You!**

Volunteers are needed for the BC Summer Games this July 22-25, in Langley. If you are interested in helping you will need to register with BC Summer Games at [www.bcgames.org](http://www.bcgames.org) or contact HCBC for more information. For 2010, on a trial basis, athletes may attend a second BC Summer Games if they are competing at a higher level of difficulty than at their first BC Summer Games. For Dressage, this will be Second Level, for Jumpers this will be 1.20m, and Reining athletes will compete with a one-point handicap. Athletes must qualify at the level they will compete at during the Games. Classes will be held as "level of choice" with all athletes in each discipline competing against each other in one class, regardless of the level of difficulty they are riding at. Athletes attending the BC Summer Games for the first time in 2010 may challenge the higher level of difficulty, and must also qualify at the level they wish to compete at. Athletes attending for the Games for the first time will be given priority in the selection of zone athletes and wildcards. Demonstration sports of Vaulting and Para Dressage are also being offered during the 2010 Summer Games.

### **2010 BC Heritage Finals**

The 2010 Finals will be held July 17-18 at the IPE fairgrounds in Armstrong, BC. The BC Heritage Circuit (formally Western Heritage) is a provincial program designed to preserve the versatility of General Performance disciplines across British Columbia by supporting community horse clubs, generating interest in Western riding and English flat classes and encouraging riders,

coaches and breeders to achieve personal success at competitions at an introductory or grassroots level. Horse Council BC supports and facilitates the activities that take place at qualifying events to ensure riders of all ages, recreational or competitive, have the opportunity to compete, and to ensure that provincial officials are well trained and educated and all horse breeds are recognized for their most desirable traits. The annual BC Heritage Finals rewards riders, owners and trainers for their dedication to General Performance and the welfare of BC owned horses.

This program is designed to promote and encourage participation in western riding and english flat events. Competitors of all ages and skill level can qualify throughout the province for the Championships held each July. The qualifying season begins July 1st and ends June 30th each year. Great prizes and awards are offered for all levels at the Championships. Qualifying competitions are available on our list of [horse shows](#), identified by "BCH". Check out our forums page to learn more about the BC Heritage Circuit and General Performance competition and riding.

### **2011 Equine Education Conference**

Plans are being made to hold the first HCBC Equine Education Conference in Kelowna at the Delta Grand Okanagan Resort and Conference Center, January 21-23, 2010. Watch our website and Notes from the Office for more details. You will not want to miss the speakers and information that will be presented at this conference. EC English Coaches and Instructors will receive updating hours for attendance.

### **HCBC Bookstore**

Have you checked out the Horse Council BC book store recently? If not, it is really worth a look. The online store is accessible from our website at [www.hcbc.ca](http://www.hcbc.ca) or you can shop in person at our Aldergrove office. If you are in the neighborhood, drop by as we have many books on our sale shelf at greatly reduced prices.

**Trail Riding by Rhonda Hart Poe:** This book covers in depth how to train your horse, prepare and ride on the trails in a safe and enjoyable manner. It covers many aspects including what to carry on the trail, camping, poisonous plants and more. This book is an excellent resource for trail riders. **\$28.95 plus GST and shipping**

**Equine Sports Coaching by Alison Lincoln:** This is a vital book for equine coaches. Drawing on tried and tested coaching practices used successfully in other sports provides an introduction to coaching specific to the equine environment. Covers many aspects, including performance analysis, periodisation, sports psychology and communication skills. **\$48.95 plus postage and GST**

**Riding Through by Debbie McDonald:** This is a reflection of a Olympic medalists lessons on life and Dressage. This book contains valuable information on dressage training and techniques but also a look into what the special bond is between Debbie and Brentina. **\$32.95 plus postage and GST**

**101 Drill Team Exercises by Debbie Sams:** Riders of every skill level and horses of every breed will enjoy practicing drill team patterns. You can put the exercises together to form complete drills with which your team can use as a performance. These patterns work for Western Drill teams, Dressage Quadrilles or anyone who wants to have fun with a group. **\$39.95 plus postage and GST**