

Lois Heyerdahl Clinic Held at Cedar Falls Equestrian Center



Lois Heyerdahl communicates with Deb DeVries & her horse

by Amanda Stump
Photography by Amanda Stump

When I was approached by my trainer, Deb DeVries at Cedar Falls Equestrian Center, about riding in the Lois Heyerdahl clinic I was a little apprehensive. I have a spotty riding history due to a bad accident several years ago and just recently switched to dressage from hunter/jumpers. Deb assured me I would love Lois and the

clinic would be extremely beneficial. I signed up and ended up being the first rider on the first day of the clinic. I brushed my pony (a cute little Appaloosa with dressage knowledge borrowed from Deb's school program; *photo at right*) and wondered what I was in for.

In the arena I warmed up a little and Lois silently appraised my riding. I was sure she could see I was a recent addition to dressage and I warned her about my lingering fear issues from my accident. She nodded and started working with me. To my surprise she seemed to know exactly where Deb had left off in my training and started helping me get my pony in a frame. By the end of the first day I was able to get the pony on the bit and step up well. I was thrilled, as I had not been able to accomplish that before!



Lois was very interesting to watch with other riders as well. She explained things to the auditors as she worked with the rider. Even though most of the riders were at levels above where

I am, I was able to follow her explanations and see the difference her suggestions made. Lois also had many interesting (and usually extremely funny) stories as well and made the day fun and light.

The second day of the clinic was used to push the riders further. I worked on bending and steering (pretty basic for most but very helpful to me). My husband (*pictured at left*) also rode in the clinic with his two horses. He is riding training level tests and schooling second level currently with Deb. Lois saw our horses and knew they were trained to high level dressage. By the end of day two Mike was schooling some 4th level exercises with our AngloArab (half pass at the canter was the main one) and got a wonderful extended trot.

My husband is a jumper rider and started dressage mainly to help with jump courses. He was thrilled he was able to get higher level dressage moves out of our horses!

Both of us finished the clinic feeling better about our riding and having learned a lot. Lois is tentatively scheduled to return to Cedar Falls Equestrian Center in the spring for another clinic and I'm already looking forward to it!

