



**Austin Dressage Unlimited's 4th Annual
"Improving Your Judging Eye & Showing Skills"**

**"The Practical Application of the Training Pyramid"
Featuring CHRISTOPH HESS**

February 2 – 3, 2013
Sat 9-5pm Sun 8-4pm
Southwestern University campus, F.W. Olin Hall, Rm 105
Georgetown, Texas

**A Big Texas Thank You to
The Dressage Foundation's Edgar Hotz Judges Endowment Fund
& the USDF Region 9 Education Fund
for the financial assistance to ADU that made this Seminar possible.**

Since our first Seminar in 2010, with 70 attendees, Austin Dressage Unlimited (ADU) has held the record for attendance at USDF approved Judging Seminars in the U.S. In 2011 we once again matched that record of 70. In 2012 we were thrilled when we blew our own old record away with 90 registrants. Now in 2013 ADU has surpassed the century mark with 105 dressage enthusiasts registered for this year's seminar, featuring the incomparable Christoph Hess. Held in a large lecture hall at Southwestern University, it was the ideal setting for a weekend of learning. Both the historic city of Georgetown and the campus of Southwestern U are relatively small, and conveniently located in central Texas, a short distance north of Austin, and just off Interstate 35. So this made it easy for travelers to come from far and wide, and find their way around.

It seemed as tho ADU put in a special order for gorgeous weather this weekend – the kind of 70 degree temperatures and sunshine that make us glad we live in Texas during the winter! Even Christoph took advantage of the weather, by taking rejuvenating brisk walks around the expansive greens and old oak trees throughout the campus during his lunch breaks, and at the end of the day. On breaks some attendees were seen sitting and laying in the green grass and sunshine on a hillside outside the lecture hall. They blended right in with the young college students on campus.

ADU Education Team leaders Carol Schmickrath and Cean Embrey once again assembled such a great group of dedicated volunteers, that even with the record turnout of attendees, the seminar progressed very smoothly and efficiently. Teamwork, exceptional preparation, communication, and organization are a trademark of ADU's annual seminars. Each year improvements are made based on lessons learned and feedback from previous years. So each year gets better and better.

This year's seminar had attendees coming from every state in our USDF Region 9 – Texas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, Mississippi, and Arkansas. But we also happily welcomed attendees who came from as far west as California, and as far east as Tennessee. Vicky Carroll led a hard working registration team to efficiently process the huge crowd coming for this popular event. On Saturday the seminar began at 9 am, but the team was in place before 8 am to process what was encouraged to be early arrivals. As 1 volunteer said "*I was here the full 1 ½ hrs before the seminar started. But you probably only really needed me for the last 10*

minutes before the seminar, because that is when almost everyone arrived at the registration tables!” Nevertheless, the registration team was so well organized and efficient that processing that many in that short of time proceeded very smoothly. A separate “PowerPoint downloading” table had even been set up with thumbdrives for those who may have had trouble receiving the emailed PowerPoint that had been sent the week before to registrants.

After registering and receiving their packets, attendees walked into the huge impressive sloped lecture hall. Every seat had been prepared for them with a Dressage Foundation brochure, donated issues of Warmbloods Today magazine, and donated small snack bags. ADU pitched in for gallons of coffee and water refreshments. A team of ADU juniors Shirley Stewart, Katrina Jones, Lorraine Britton, and Houston Jones, handed out donated *Eqyss* grooming products and drawing tickets for a large number of donated door prizes that were awarded regularly throughout the weekend. One of ADU’s high tech gurus, Barbara Vander Weele, had put together a collection of interesting videos to show before the seminar started, as entertainment for those in the lecture hall waiting for the seminar to begin. This included some of the hilarious Colbert dressage reports, as well as Olympic dressage competition video to inspire us all.

Priority seating front & center was reserved for the 18 Judges & L Graduates who attended this seminar as “full participants” (a few judges & L graduates, disappointingly, only signed up as Auditors, so were considered Auditors, and were not given full participant privileges). Another row of front row seating was designated for our junior dressage riders, who were treated by ADU to being allowed to sit with Christoph at lunchtime on Sunday as well.

Snacks were provided for attendees at the seminar on Sunday. Knowing how strictly health and fitness conscious dressage riders are, several large bowls overflowed with granola bars and boxes of raisins, compliments of ADU. Carol & Cean also brought in a few platters of homemade meringues and cut-out sugar cookies in horse shapes for those who might have a sweet tooth weakness. Attendees swarmed and before long, there was nothing but crumbs left of the cookies and meringues, while the bowls of “healthy” food sitting nearby remained mostly untouched. So much for health conscious equestrians! The sweets were in such demand and coveted, that the last 3 cookies were rescued from the plate, and given away as a very popular door prize to the crowd.

Christoph began the seminar by letting the audience know that he wanted this to be THEIR program. He encouraged questions and involvement from everyone, and used a wide variety of media to educate the viewers. This kept another of ADU’s computer whizzes, Shannon Martin, busy keeping up with him, which she did so expertly. About the only “high tech” trouble we had was the battery wearing out on Christoph’s microphone – which was promptly changed with the spares we had on hand in anticipation of such a problem. As one auditor put it, the seminar was a *“Great balance between lecture, PowerPoint, DVDs, and practice judging.”*

Christoph put in a lot of miles and a lot of stairs running from person to person in the audience of the huge lecture hall, getting up close and personal discussing their questions and comments. He made each person feel that their thoughts were important, and turned their statements into educational opportunities for everyone. *“The presentation was alive and interactive.” “He was able to involve all levels of attendees.” “Wonderfully energetic. Kept audience engaged.”* One of the favorite exercises was on Sunday when Christoph showed video performances of various levels of dressage tests. ADU volunteers had made score cards of 1 – 10 for each attendee. Christoph would show the test 1 movement at a time, and ask the members of the audience to hold up a card with the score each person thought might be awarded. The good and not so good points were discussed, the movement replayed, and attendees learned how and why each score was given. Their eyes and minds were educated, and Christoph continually emphasized the “spirit” of good riding and training. *“Mr. Hess covered a broad range of topics from the viewpoints of judges, instructors, and riders, while consistently maintaining empathy for the horse.”*

Seminar post evaluations reflected the attendees overwhelming satisfaction with this 2 day ADU educational program. With a possible range of 1-5, averages were a 5.0 for the speaker rating, and a 4.7 format rating. Additional comments included:

A transformative experience.

Well organized. Incorporated audience's discussion. A very talented educator. Thank you for this gift.

Good presentation. Better 2nd day when participant talking time was limited.

Enjoyed prep, diplomacy, attentiveness to and engagement with the audience. Utmost credibility.

Absolutely FABULOUS, very well spoken, clearly translated ideas, great videos, great format.

5++ Very interactive with participants, focus on training compatible with the nature of the horse.

5++ Wow! Couldn't have been better. Can I give it a "10" ?

Thank you for the wonderful presentation. I am so impressed with how this event has continued to grow and provide our region with world class education. As in the past, the organization was exemplary and made everything flow smoothly. I truly appreciated the ability to meet Mr. Hess in person. He was amazingly candid and open in his thoughts on the past errors and future direction of judging. You and your volunteers provide an important and impressive educational service to our area. Thank you!

Sherry Guess – USDF Region 9 Director

Congratulations on another fantastic Continuing Education for Judges and L Grads! Christoph Hess was excellent and ADU's organization was top-notch!

Marilyn Kulifay - USDF Region 9 Judges & L Grads Chair

Many thanks to our volunteers, sponsors, & donors who made this Seminar such a success:

ADU Education Team:

Carol Schmickrath

Cean Embrey

Registration Team:

Vicky Carroll

Bob Carhart

Carol Moore

Barb Shifrin

Paula Britton

Lisa Stewart

Kelly Jones

Rebecca Pack

Computer/Electronics Gurus:

Barbara Vander Weele

Shannon Martin

Michael Jones

Youth volunteers:

Lorraine Britton

Katrina Jones

Shirley Stewart

Houston Jones

Christine Sims

Additional Volunteers:

Kirsten Lotter

Janet Stokes

Patty Buck

Sponsors of beverages/snacks:

Austin Dressage Unlimited

Carol Schmickrath

Patty Buck

Cean Embrey

Attendee gifts & door prize donors:

Austin Dressage Unlimited

Warmbloods Today magazine

ADU's Equestrian's Cookbook

Brookstone Farm

Top Flight Farms

Kirsten Lotter

Whole Foods Market

Mrs Russells Horse Treats

Eqyss Grooming products

ADM Forage First Horse Rewards

Two Socks Designs Embroidery service

Austin Dressage Unlimited (ADU) mission statement:

"Promoting education in the Dressage community while encouraging Advancement towards goals through a mutual support among friends."