

June 25, 2005

Gaby's prescript: I just want you all to know that when I wrote this letter, yesterday, it WAS sunny and beautiful!

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Hello, West Coast Active Riders!

And greetings from gorgeous, sunny Calgary, where the beautiful weather we've had for the past few days has just about cancelled out our memory of...well, let's just say we could all use a little reminder of why we love California so much. And I swear it's not only that I promised Ian Alison not to say anything bad about Canadian weather...it really is that nice right now up here! Just in time for two more weeks of the kind of show-jumping that makes us all want to practice more, dream bigger and thank our lucky stars for the opportunity to participate in such a super-cool sport.

Despite a few damp days, we've seen some terrific American riding from all our representatives...and how great is it to see some of our West Coast hometown favorites like Joie Gatlin, Richard Spooner, Will and Nicki Simpson, Francie and Dick Carvin, Rich Fellers and Guilherme Obligado (to name but a few!) contend with the very best in the world?! Three cheers for another amazing American rider, Norman Della Joio, who won the CN Grand Prix at the Spruce Meadows National (June 11) with the lovely Glasgow, one of the best horses anywhere and looking better than ever these days!

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And perhaps the most exciting news...less than two weeks until the Spruce Meadows Paramount Resources Prix de Nations, the featured event on July 5th, in which four WCAR teams will contend with teams from North America and Europe...stay tuned for lots of upcoming excitement. Big congratulations to our four teams representing the rest of us at this prestigious event... Our 1.10 meter team: Richard Neal, Pam Buie, Troy Christiansen and Aimee Primm; Our 1.20 meter team: Gretchen Privett, Richard Neal, Rachel Kummer and Kathryn Burdett; Our 1.30 meter team: Julie Hancock, Crystal Hickey, Erica Buie and Stephanie Saperstein ; And our 1.40 meter team: Tammy Chipko, Tiffany Hickey, Kelly Connor and Hannah Selleck. Great luck to all of you- we'll be cheering for you!

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For our Sprucers: Welcome to Calgary...how excited are you?! Our team festivities begin as soon as you arrive...please check in with Gaby at your earliest convenience to try on your beautiful Ariat hunt coats! (Call me at 917-743-5527 or follow your ears to the barking Chihuahuas at Sandstone in Barn H...). Also, please check with the horse-show office (phone number: 403-974 4200) to make sure that you are nominated for the Prix de Nations the week of the North American. WCAR will declare you for the class the night before, but do make sure that you are nominated for this class in advance. Any changes, complications, horse-switches or the like that will surprise me? Please talk to me as soon as you can- these are the types of things that inspire gray hairs to grow on my head...we're all about that advance notice!

Once you have picked up your team coat and double checked your entry with the office, you can relax until our team meeting- now a tradition, right?- on Monday evening (July 4) at Earls, at 6:00 p.m. Earls is located on McLeod Trail, about ten minutes north of Spruce Meadows- phone: 403-278 7860. We'll all meet in the back of the bar area (just ask for the WCAR party) for toasting, cocktails/ sodas/ juice, appetizers and the official cheering-on of our teams. We're going to start a

little earlier this year so that you can all be rested for our early morning, but anyone is more than welcome to stay on after to enjoy dinner. During our team meeting, we'll be passing out our team patches and gift bags (As Piglet says to Winnie the Pooh, "Say you like it! Say you're surprised!") and toasting all our team members. We'll also tell you about where to get your team saddle pads and coolers. This meeting is a great chance to get acquainted with your team-mates and meet your chefs d'equipe. It's all about you! You've come a long way to get here, so enjoy this great opportunity- the first of many- to represent your country in international competition! We are very proud.

Just a little reminder for all of you...you may already know that by accepting the WCAR travel stipend for competition, you will be asked to perform some volunteering for WCAR throughout 2005. (Good news- WCAR is a 501 c3 and I am happy to write a letter to your school if you need to fulfill a community service requirement!) I will keep you in the loop as opportunities for volunteering pop up, but here are two in advance:

- 1) We need one 2005 Spruce Meadows team member to write a short article (about one page typed, double spaced) about his or her experience in this year's SM Prix de Nations event. A great article will fulfill your entire volunteer obligation, and you'll be featured on our website, too!
- 2) Also, I need one person to help me distribute and then collect (and clean!) WCAR coolers and saddle pads. This is a slightly bigger job, but may be right up your alley if you're not all over that essay.... Bring on the volunteering!

Finally, we are asking all our team members to write a thank you note to Paramount Resources, the sponsor of this terrific class at Spruce Meadows, and to the Southern Family, attention Linda Heathcott, who make this whole tremendous event possible. You can leave these notes with me and I will make sure they get to the recipients. This is a super-nice thing to do for all the people who stand behind this class, and a great way to show our support for their kindness and generosity.

Have fun, enjoy the great weather, and get ready for some Star Spangled Banner- that's what I'm talking about!

Yours,  
Gaby Salick