

WCAR Meritorious Rider Grant Recipient Zoe Kornberg Talks About the Reward of the Award

Every January I make a list of riding goals for the year. Typically, they are a mixture of realistic possibilities and “ideal scenarios.” Predictably, I often fall short of one ideal or another, but it’s always good to have things to reach for, and I do end up attaining many of my ideals. This year, for the first time, I can look back over the year and say that I met my goals, both realistic and ideal. I attribute this in no small part to the 2007 Meritorious Rider Scholarship Grant of \$5,000, and I am forever in the debt of the WCAR, and the generosity of the show managers who donated it.

My goals for the year included campaigning my young jumper often enough for him to progress at an optimal rate, to end the year in the High Junior Jumpers, to catch ride as much as possible, to compete at Spruce Meadows, and to participate in the USEF Talent Search Finals (for which I’d never had the proper horse). Thanks to my scholarship, I met all of those goals this year. And I had a lot of fun doing it!

The scholarship money has lasted the entire show year—I began using it in the spring and will finish up with the last of it at the LA National. Being able to attend so many shows this year has enabled my seven-year old jumper to advance properly at a critical time in his development as a jumper. At our last show in October we finished in the ribbons in our first mini-prix.

The fact that we were able to conserve funds at California shows meant that there was enough money left for me to compete at Spruce Meadows. This had been a long-standing “ideal” goal for me, and I am so grateful that I was finally able to experience that. Riding at Spruce Meadows helped prepare me for the rest of my summer, which I spent riding and competing for a sales barn in the Netherlands.

Being able to attend so many shows also meant increased catch riding opportunities. For the first time, I had a wonderful catch ride for the USEF Talent Search Finals, and was happy to finish in the ribbons. It was so much fun and a great learning experience.

Our sport is a difficult one to be competitive in for riders of limited means. Looking back over the 2007 competition year, I am struck by the huge difference that having the WCAR grant made in my riding. I will be forever grateful to the WCAR and to the five show managers who each donated \$1,000, and I hope that others on the west coast appreciate their very positive contribution to the sport, and follow their good example. Kudos and a million thanks to WCAR, and to Dale Harvey, Larry Langer, Tim Postel, RJ Brandes, Robert Ridland, Stephanie Wheeler and Adrian Ward.

I encourage all who are considering applying for this year’s grant to do so—you may find yourself meeting your ideal goals!

- Zoe Kornberg