

ABOUT DRESSAGE

DEFINITION:

DRESSAGE IS A FRENCH TERM MEANING “TRAINING”. THE PURPOSE OF DRESSAGE IS TO DEVELOP THE HORSE’S NATURAL ATHLETIC ABILITY AND WILLINGNESS TO WORK MAKING HIM CALM, SUPPLE AND ATTENTIVE TO HIS RIDER.

HISTORY:

THE HORSE HAS BEEN USED AS **MOUNTS IN THE MILITARY** FOR CENTURIES. HORSES WERE REQUIRED TO BE OBEDIENT AND MANEUVERABLE. THE FIRST DOCUMENTED SYSTEM OF TRAINING WAS DESCRIBED BY **XENOPHON** ABOUT 400 BC. THERE IS A LONG HISTORY OF RIDING MASTERS IN THE MILITARY AND IN THE RIDING SCHOOLS AS EVIDENCED BY THE MANY BOOKS THAT HAVE BEEN WRITTEN ON THE SUBJECT OF CORRECT TRAINING.

DRESSAGE IS ONE OF THE **OLYMPIC EQUESTRIAN SPORTS**. IN 1900 THE MODERN OLYMPICS CONDUCTED AN EQUINE “MILITARY TEST”. THIS TEST EVOLVED INTO THREE SEPARATE EVENTS: DRESSAGE, STADIUM JUMPING AND EVENTING. WHILE THE HORSE FADED IN ITS USEFULNESS TO THE MILITARY, CIVILIANS CONTINUED THE TRADITION OF HORSEMANSHIP. THE 1952 OLYMPICS MARKED THE FIRST TIME A WOMAN WAS PERMITTED TO COMPETE IN THE MODERN OLYMPICS. HORSE SPORTS IS CURRENTLY ONE OF VERY FEW SPORTS WHERE WOMEN AND MEN COMPETE EQUALLY IN THE SAME EVENT.

DRESSAGE IN MODERN TIMES IS CHIEFLY USED TO SCHOOL HORSES FOR SPORT, IN COMPETITION OR JUST FOR THE RELATIONSHIP SHARED BETWEEN RIDER AND HORSE.

WHAT CAN DRESSAGE DO FOR ME AND MY HORSE?

IF YOUR GOAL IS TO IMPROVE YOUR COMMUNICATION AND PERFORMANCE WITH YOUR “BEST PAL” DRESSAGE CAN HELP.

FOR THE RIDER CORRECT DRESSAGE TRAINING WILL TEACH THE RIDER TO SIT MORE COMFORTABLY AND CORRECTLY BALANCED. THE FORMALIZED USE OF THE NON VERBAL AIDS (SEAT, LEGS & HANDS) CREATES A LANGUAGE THAT THE HORSE MORE EASILY UNDERSTANDS.

FOR THE HORSE DRESSAGE IS A TIME TESTED AND PROGRESSIVE SYSTEM. EACH PROGRESSIVE LEVEL MAKES USE OF THE SCHOOLING FIGURES AND MOVEMENTS TO PREPARE THE HORSE’S MUSCLES AND MIND FOR THE NEXT LEVEL.

WHEN THE RIDER UNDERSTANDS CORRECT POSTURE AND GOOD BALANCE THE RIDER CAN MORE EFFECTIVELY COMMUNICATE WITH THE HORSE.

WHEN THE HORSE IS GIVEN A SOLID BASIS PHYSICALLY AND MENTALLY THE HORSE WILL ENJOY THE CHALLENGE OF THE NEXT LEVEL OF FITNESS AND ATHLETIC ABILITY.

AT WOODFIELD FARM IT IS IMPORTANT THAT TRAINER, CLIENT AND HORSE WORK TOGETHER FOR THE MUTUAL BENEFIT OF ALL.

THE SYSTEM OF TRAINING WORKS BEST WHEN THE SHORT TERM GOALS AND THE LONG TERM GOALS ARE KEPT IN SIGHT AND WORKED TOWARDS IN A PROGRESSIVE FASHION.

**BASIC DRESSAGE IS JUST PLAIN GOOD
HORSEMANSHIP FOR EVERYONE**