LIPIZZAN TEAM WINS A GREAT RACE
By Dr. Delphi Toth,
Huszár Farm Lipizzans, Valley City, Ohio

This is a true story, told to me often by my first and beloved riding master, Michael VonDerNonne, an old-world classical horseman who was born in 1897 in the Austro-Hungarian Empire and who came to live in northern Ohio after World War II.

The first time I saw Michael, he was atop a magnificent gray doing an elegant passage down the barn aisle. “Wow!” was all that my child’s brain could manage in response to this stunning presence. As I watched this wonderful tall man come down from his wonderful tall horse, I saw him become shorter and shorter as his came to the ground and his legs began to bow out, reducing his height by yet another few inches. He was so bow-legged a pony could have been slipped underneath him as he was standing there. Herr VonDerNonne, I learned, was a former cavalry officer, an Eastern European aristocrat and a dressage master. I became his student then his apprentice. Over our years together, Michael shared many stories of his life before the wars, during the wars and after the wars, always with horses, and especially with Lipizzans. One of the best stories was about a great horse race. Michael was the Captain and Trainer for the Lipizzan team in this great race.

The story telling always began with the same words. Michael would say, “On the sixth of September in 1927, in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, a race took place, a race like no other.” He explained that the race was designed by the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of War to test the stamina of different breeds of horses: Thoroughbred, half-bred Thoroughbred (Stud Lubicevo in Serbia), Arabian (Stud Ilok at Srem), half-bred Arabian (Stud Gorazda in Bosnia) and Lipizzans (Stud Stancic in Croatia). Each of the major State Stud Farms selected a team of four horses to compete. The race was for a distance of 255 kilometers (158½ miles), night and day, through city and countryside, on varying road conditions, each team starting in different parts of the Kingdom, and converging in the Capital. No special diet was allowed, only the usual work/cavalry diet of hay and some oats. Tack was uniformly an English saddle with felt pad, simple snaffle bit, bridle without any special kind of noseband, no spurs and no whip.

The team of Lipizzans consisted of four mares born in 1923 on the State Stud of Stancic: Gaetana (by Maestoso Biber), Mocskos (a nickname meaning “messy” in Hungarian; and she was), Naha and Bachstelza (the last three by Siglavy Monterosa). The mares had been green broken at three years old, ridden only for a month to test their suitability as broodmares, then they were bred and returned to the pasture. These four mares were not specially selected for the race; they were chosen for the race team only because they did not get pregnant in their first breeding and were therefore of no immediate use to the stud farm that autumn.

The mares were readied for this great race by Michael, then a Cavalry Captain, and three fifteen-year old military cadets who were to be his riders. Michael said that for five months he trained the Lipizzans and the cadets in basic dressage, emphasizing balance, rhythm and conditioning. The other teams, Michael admitted with a mischievous smile, were well-trained stallions, even the half-breds. “But my ladies,” he said, “Ah, my young Lipizzan ladies, they made me happy with their natural balance, strength, enthusiasm for work, and sweetness.” “How could I resist the ladies’ charms?” said Michael. With a wink and slight twist of thumb and forefinger by his lips, he confessed
that only rarely could he ever resist the charms of ladies, equine or human. Even in his 80s, Michael was a most charming gentleman.

“We had a good dinner with wine, and some nice cognac, then we were ready to begin the race, at 6:00 in the evening,” said Michael. Twenty-five hours and 17 minutes later, riding throughout the night, “My four Lipizzan mares and my cadets, moving side-by-side with me in nice military formation, we all arrived at the finish point together and saluted,” he smiled. The Lipizzans had completed the race, averaging 6.3 miles per hour over the entire course, flat land and mountains. Throughout the race, all of the Lipizzan mares remained sound, with no leg or hoof problems, with no soreness and with good appetites.

The other breeds and teams did not fare so well. Michael noted that no other breed had all four horses finish. One purebred Arabian stallion arrived in individual first place, in 24 hours and 23 minutes, but his three Arabian team-mates failed even to finish the race. Of the half-bred Arabians, one stallion arrived five hours after the Lipizzans, another seven hours later, and the last two did not finish. One Thoroughbred stallion came in 14 hours after the Lipizzan mares, but his three team-mates were unable to finish the race. The half-bred Thoroughbreds did not finish.

Twelve hours after their arrival the horses were asked to gallop a two kilometer-long (1¼ mile) track and then given a veterinary inspection. The four Lipizzan mares, individually and as a group, were declared to be in better condition than any of the other horses who had completed in the race. Michael was proud of his “four Lipizzan ladies who showed all the others how it could be done.”

Michael said many times that the lesson of this great race of 1927 was that correct elementary dressage is the foundation for any horse to learn balance and how to move correctly at all gaits, collected or extended, conserving energy and creating efficiency of movement. He did not view dressage training as limited to only competition horses. “All horses, even the simple plow horses, need to learn how to move properly carrying a rider or pulling a wagon or gun or plow,” he explained. “And beauty, do not forget that the horse moving correctly is beauty,” he emphasized. An unbalanced horse is not beautiful to watch or comfortable to ride.
LIPIZZAN TEAM WINS A GREAT RACE (continued)

Michael often commented that conformation, intelligence, balance, energy and an enjoyment of work make the Lipizzan an outstanding and versatile horse which, with the right training, can do amazing things. “Remember the four Lipizzan mares who came out of the pasture and won the race in 1927, defeating all the fancy thoroughbred and Arabian stallions,” he smiled, again twisting the air where his military mustache had been for most of his life. “I love my Lipizzan ladies.”

Delphi, riding cross-country with Michael in the early 1970s

Michael VonDerNonne, in the 1970s, fifty years after the Great Race of 1927

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Tempel Lipizzans to Make Fifth  
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Tempel Lipizzans will once again appear in a Presidential Inaugural Parade. The President-Elect Barack Obama’s Inaugural Parade marks their fifth appearance, Previous Presidential Inaugurals include Richard Nixon in 1973, Jimmy Carter in 1977, Ronald Regan in 1981 and 1985. Linda Leffingwell, the granddaughter of founder Tempel Smith, said that there will be between four and six riders in the inaugural parade who will wear their traditional Renaissance uniform of red, white and blue.
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The Lipizzan community lost one of its most valuable supporters when Tom Hull, 60, passed away peacefully at home with Melody at his side following his battle with cancer.

Tom was instrumental in the formation of LANA in 1992 and it was all because he accompanied Melody to a horse clinic at John Gliege’s ranch in Arizona. Tom arrived in Arizona with the high expectation that he would have the entire weekend of uninterrupted quiet to explore the wonders of his new laptop computer while Melody was focused on the horses. He almost got his wish except that he spent the weekend working on something entirely different than what he had envisioned when he left Indiana. Tom’s inadvertent comment to a room full of Lipizzan enthusiasts that he couldn’t understand the difficulty in merging the two registries’ records as the pedigree information was “only” data opened the door to a veritable frenzy of suggestions once he followed-up the first comment by announcing that he had a database program on the laptop computer. Tom didn’t get the quiet weekend he had anticipated because every time someone finished their clinic ride, they bounced back to the office to offer more suggestions. By the time Tom left Arizona, he had the nucleus of what would ultimately become the first computer pedigree program for the Lipizzan horse on this continent on the new laptop.

Tom was a true Renaissance man -- he enjoyed life -- he loved music, sports, his big, black Newfoundland dogs and he often traveled all over the United States because of both music and the horses. Born March 29, 1948, to Lucille and Gerald Hull of Anderson, Tom attended St. Mary’s Catholic Church, and graduated from Highland High School in Anderson, Indiana in 1966. Although he obtained an accounting degree from Anderson University, he combined his business skills with his love of music by working at the Anderson Music Store for more than 25 years before becoming the manager of Music Today at the same location for an additional 10 years. He played saxophone and organ, and as a young man, he was a member of his father’s swing band, which performed throughout central Indiana.

Tom married Melody Summers in 1972 and through her added an involvement in horses to his business and music interests. He was co-owner of Ye Olde Tack Shoppe, which sold riding equipment and horse care products. For more than 20 years, Tom and Melody displayed the shop’s merchandise at the Madison County 4-H Fair and catered to the needs of young riders and exhibitors. When the Pan-American Games were hosted by Indiana in 1987, Tom was the scoring official for the dressage competitions. Tom became a director of LANA when the two registries were combined in 1992 as well as a Trustee of the Lipizzan Pedigree Trust.

Computers, however, were Tom’s true calling. Following his trip in Arizona, Tom began the careful research and verification process necessary to produce the first hardcopy studbook for the Lipizzan on this continent. The format and thoroughness of his studbook were praised at international Lipizzan breed meetings as “the bible.”

Tom, with Melody at his side, traveled around the United States to annual meetings both large and small and promoted the Lipizzan through all kinds of fairs, clinics and horse expos -- notably Equine Affair and the Hoosier Horse Fair.
A visit to Europe to celebrate the Lipizzaner Gala, a celebration of the 425th anniversary of the Spanish Riding School (and the 200th anniversary for Piber) held in Köflach, Austria, in 1998 was a highlight as well as a reward for work well done. Tom helped Melody and Sandy Heaberlin publish the first history of the Lipizzan horse in North America and more recently transformed the black studbook into a CD for breed enthusiasts.

Besides working on the computer, Tom Hull enjoyed listening to jazz, checking the stock market, commenting on politics, eating burgers and fries and chocolate chip cookies, having two beers with his evening meal, playing basketball, riding his motorcycle and later his bicycle, watching his high-definition, big-screen TV, going to movies with Melody, telling a good story on himself, laughing until tears came, and relaxing with his friends.

Melody and Tom shared 36 wonderful years together. If you ask many of Tom’s fellow Board Members, you would find each one to have a particular fond story involving Tom. The group who went to Austria recounts how Tom doggedly chased after John Gliege’s daughters on the streets of downtown Vienna -- one hand dragging his small wheeled suitcase containing all his camera gear as he tried to eat the ice cream cone held in the other hand faster than it was melting (a battle he was not winning), all the while wearing a silly grin that was only Tom’s. Picture the rest of the group sitting under a tree at the Piber castle, watching Tom as he ran after Melody as she dashed from horse to horse, pasture to pasture, and barn to barn. We can still hear Tom’s voice telling Melody that she could not take a horse home and to “step away from that foal because the guard was watching.” (actually Tom was quite sure the guard was counting horses all day long and as he had taken hundreds of photographs on the trip, he could prove it). Another memory would be of Tom sitting off to the side of the booth at most any horse expo with his laptop, happily letting Melody expound on the attributes of the breed, as he studiously added data or tweaked the program so that it would do what he envisioned.

Fellow Board member Delphi Toth remembers Tom as an “absolute treasure for those of us in the Lipizzan horse community. He gave of himself and of his time with good spirits, integrity, and a sense of fun and adventure. He was devoted to compiling accurate pedigrees, with endless patience in investigating the confusing and sometimes contradictory international records, and he created a comprehensive data base to share with all Lipizzan owners. We will miss his booming laugh, his sweet smile, and his warmth.” Months ago, Tom and Melody told fellow Lipizzan Board members that he was ill, but he continued his activities with his usual good spirits, even participating in the last annual meeting.

No one can replace Tom in our small community; he was unique. Our thoughts are with Melody as we also mourn her loss.
Announcing the Formation of the Thomas A. Hull Memorial Scholarship Fund

The LANA Board has set aside $3,000 in a moneymarket account for a scholarship fund in memory of Tom Hull’s many contributions to both LANA and the Lipizzan community.

The fund will be monitored by the Lipizzan Pedigree Trust. Each year individual members of LANA (or its successor) may apply to Trust to request a scholarship which would pay for one (1) session with a SRS trainer. A single scholarship will be awarded each year. The scholarship criteria is that the horse being either ridden or schooled by the SRS trainer will be a Lipizzan and that the horse’s owner/rider must be in good standing (a member) of the organization. The then current Trustees will choose one recipient each year.

Article 5 of the LANA Articles of Incorporation purposes reads: 2. To maintain the highest quality of the Lipizzan horse through the promotion of good breeding and training principles. The establishment of this scholarship benefits an individual training a Lipizzan which is one of the permitted purposes of the organization and by limiting the award of 1 session per year (est. $150 per year), the scholarship fund should benefit the Lipizzan community for the next 20 years.

Neapolitano IV LaSada III (right) Sadar is a 4 yr. old purebred gelding. Lunges well and works at liberty. $8,000

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Queen Elizabeth Gifted With Slovenian Lipizzan

Slovenia, the former Yugoslav republic, which is located between Italy, Austria and Croatia, presented Great Britain’s Queen Elizabeth II with the 16 year old Lipizzan stallion, 085 Favory Canissa XXII, during her recent visit to the country in October.

However, the horse will not be returning to England with its royal owner -- the stallion is a symbolic gift and remain at the Lipica stud farm, much to the relief of the stallion’s chief trainer, Igor Maver. Favory Canissa is Slovenia’s champion in dressage and a leading competitor amongst the world elite.

The Queen, who has had a lifelong appreciation of horses and riding, watched a presentation of the eight rider school quadrille with close attention and interest.

Following the performance, the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh, accompanied by Slovenian President Danilo Türk, were given a tour of the Lipica stud farm, which included Favory Canissa’s newly renovated quarters, by it boss Matjaž Pust, joined by Kobilarna Lipica Council chair Mihael Brejc.
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Blue skies, comfortable temperatures, and the hospitable atmosphere of Blue Water Dressage Stables were a perfect backdrop for what was to be a memorable educational experience for auditors and riders attending the July 19 – 22, 2008 dressage clinic with Spanish Riding School Bereiter Herbert Seiberl.

Under the patient and careful guidance of Bereiter Seiberl, horses and riders underwent beautiful transformations as a matter of course. Riders and auditors wrote glowing comments in the clinic evaluations and talked enthusiastically about what they had experienced and seen, and after the clinic, I reflected on what it is about Herbert that elicits this type of reaction.

Most people would probably agree that, regardless of the sport or subject, there are a few commonalities that differentiate a good instructor from a superior instructor. These character traits and teaching styles can help make a student’s learning experience an unforgettable one as opposed to merely a good one.

Obviously needed are an in-depth and extensive knowledge of the subject, and a high degree of skill so that they can demonstrate what they teach. Herbert’s expertise, coming as it does from the Spanish Riding School’s 430+ years of experience and dedication to classical horsemanship, has been refined into a system that turns out some of the best riders and horses in the world. It’s also important that the instructor has the ability to articulate concepts so the student understands what the instructor is trying to convey; and has a vast amount of patience.

Herbert exhibits all of these qualities, and then goes beyond that with the fine nuances that elevate him to the status of a superior teacher. He has a genuine passion and love for horses and riding that come through in his teaching, and he is sincerely committed to helping people become better riders. He is so patient, encouraging and kind, while at the same time holding riders to a high standard and making sure that basics are correct before progressing up the levels. He also has great insight and ability to determine the issues that a horse and rider have, and what to do to correct them. In addition, his sense of humor and ability to put people at ease make it easy to relax and ride with him.

He is wonderful at conveying concepts that can be intangible and difficult to understand until one has experienced them repeatedly... half-halts and a connection with a horse that is through and on the bit come to mind.

There were too many concepts and movements worked on and improved during the clinic to cover in this article, so I’ll write a little about connection.

To a rider who was having difficulty with a mare avoiding connection, he said, “You have to show her the way... forward, stretching downward, through the neck, on the bit. You need good connection on the outside rein, and then you can give a soft and fast vibration on the inside rein. When she is through, then you can hold your hands still and keep a soft contact. Then before her head comes up, give a few more soft vibrations on the inside rein.”

Herbert repeatedly stressed to all of the riders how important it was to develop a soft and trusting
connection with the horse’s mouth. Sometimes riders can interpret “soft contact” to mean loose reins, or virtually no contact.

“There’s a big difference between soft contact and sloppy reins. You need contact, but a soft contact,” he said, showing the difference between a connection that a horse is comfortable with and can trust, and one that is inconsistent and disappearing/unsteady.

One rider wrote in her evaluation, “I’ve taken two of Herr Seiberl’s clinics now, both on borrowed horses. After each clinic I experienced an immediate and dramatic improvement in my riding on my own horse. After the first clinic I noticed a huge increase in the stability of my seat, and after the second clinic I was able to maintain a beautiful contact with my horse’s mouth—neither pulling nor “throwing away” the reins—for the first time in our history together. Herr Seiberl’s instruction is precise, to the point, and extremely effective.”

Herbert acknowledged that stronger aids are sometimes needed to get the desired response from the horse.

“Soft aids are great and perfect. But when there is no response, you must be clearer and give the aid a bit more strongly. It doesn’t mean pulling or hitting, it means saying clearly, ‘this is what I want you to do.”

Pulling is something that Herbert immediately works on correcting. Regardless of the level of the horse or the movement being done, the message was the same. For trot-walk transitions with a horse who had a tendency to fall on his forehand: “Don’t pull… when you pull, you lose his neck, you lose his back, and his head goes in the air.” Instead: “Before you make the transition, make him a little rounder. Prepare with the outside rein - give a half-halt with the outside rein one stride, two strides, breathe out, and transition. If you do it his way every time, soon you can be very soft and when you breathe out like that, your horse will understand that you want him to walk.”

For canter-walk transitions, the method was similar: “Prepare him for two strides. When his poll is at the highest point, collect him with the outside rein… collect him, collect him, breathe out, and walk. When you feel his haunches are under him, both hands say ‘walk’.

This is where the systematic teaching of the SRS is especially apparent: Regardless of the level of the horse and rider, forward, straight, and calm are essential, and the progression to higher level movements develops naturally following the development of lower level movements. Correct canter-walk transitions lead to flying changes. Correct shoulder-in leads to half-pass, etc.

Throughout the lessons, Herbert’s instructions were given in an encouraging, calm manner, and sprinkled with, “No problem!” when mistakes were made, and “You have time” when people were getting tense. This makes for a very receptive learning mood and a relaxed environment in which to learn. He works the horse and rider hard, but somehow keeps it from being stressful, especially when the rider is having difficulty.
A Journey of Graceful Communication (con’t)

One rider, who is also a professional trainer and instructor, commented on her evaluation, “I had a great time and learned a lot. I thought Herbert was very patient and should be an example for professionals...that you can teach in a kind, gentle manner and still be effective and get the message through to the student.”

Agreed another, who is an adult amateur, “Every horse and rider team improved with each lesson. Herbert’s mastery and timing, combined with his kind and quiet encouragement, provided the perfect environment for concentrated learning. I was able to go home and continue improving on my own. I feel my riding went to a new level. I feel very fortunate to have been able to ride with Herbert, and I hope to do so again.”

The auditors appreciated the fact that Herbert “rides” the entire lesson with the student. He is giving feedback and commenting virtually every stride, and therefore the auditors can understand exactly what is being addressed.

One auditor wrote, “I got something useful from each ride. He adapts his teaching to each rider’s ability – not only how they ride, but how they learn.”

Needless to say, I’m delighted that Herbert will be coming back to Michigan for two clinics in January. Those of us facing five+ months of grey skies, snow, and cold really appreciate the inspiration and motivation that riding with Herbert provides! Information about both clinics can be found at www.dressageclinics.org, call me at 616.283.4741, or email me at jorie@dressageclinics.org.

Last Minute News from Jori: The Michigan clinics with Spanish Riding School Bereiter Herbert Seiberl was cancelled due to clinician illness. These clinics will not be rescheduled in January. Two SRS Bereiters who were kind enough to say that they’d fill in for Herbert are unfortunately unable to teach the clinics this weekend, and other dates later in January didn’t work out. Jori appreciates the willingness of Bereiters Herwig Radnetter and Rudi Rostek to help out and teach in Herbert’s place. We appreciate the many people who registered to audit or planned to walk-in at the clinics, as well as the riders who have been looking forward to their lessons. Herbert will be in Michigan in July; dates will be posted at www.dressageclinics.org and sent out via email to the SRS Clinic list in late February/early March.

Dear Lipizzan Owners and Breeders,

I want everyone to know that the LANA pedigree database created and developed by my husband will continue to be the foundation for the LANA registry and possibly any future organization. When Tom and I learned that his condition was terminal, one of our discussions was the continuation and use of his database and pedigree program. To that end, we agreed that the obvious person to step in as replacement registrar—in her dedication, knowledge of the breed, business efficiency, and computer capabilities—was Sandy Heaberlin. After a briefing of the LANA Board of Directors and Sandy’s subsequent acquiescence, on January 1, 2009, the Alpha 5 version 8 software, pedigree database, all hard copy files, mail, and office supplies for the registrar’s office were turned over to Sandy.

Sandy will have several tasks in the early months of this new year. One, of course, will be to make herself more familiar with Tom’s program so that the processing of Lipizzan data will continue unabated. The second task, however, will be as important, if not more so, in the long run. Sandy has been asked to do what my husband, because of his illness, did not have time to do: write a user’s manual for the program. Having an operator’s guide will insure that the program and all its capabilities can continue as the foundation for this and any future Lipizzan registry.

As far as the business workings of LANA are concerned, nothing has changed. I will continue to have the post office box at the Anderson, Indiana, address, so everyone should send correspondence, registrations, checks, etc., as before. I will also continue as treasurer. All of the registrar’s mail will be forwarded onto Sandy Heaberlin in Ohio.

Let me finish by saying that I can not express how much all of your kind words, fond memories of my husband, and prayerful support during this sad time have meant to me.

Many thanks,

Melody Hull
2008 Lipizzan Symposium

Gary and Elizabeth Lashinsky were the most gracious of hosts as they welcomed Lipizzan enthusiasts to the 2008 Lipizzan Symposium in Orlando, Florida. Lyn Caeser, Gary and Elizabeth and the rest of the White Stallion Production staff saw to it, together with the staff at the Disney’s Coronado Springs resort, that everything from the reception to the business sessions and dinner were the very best our Florida hosts could offer. The arrangements were superb and the food exceptional.

As usual, most of the people attending the Lipizzan symposium were from the USLR. While the USLR held their business meeting, the LANA directors met separately for a short Board meeting to finalize their proposal for the formation of a unified Lipizzan organization. Following its Board meeting, LANA directors invited the Boards of both the USLR and ALBA to step into their meeting room where all three organizations agreed on a resolution of formation of the LFA as well as steps to consolidation for the formation of the LFA. Both Resolutions are posted on the LANA website at www.lipizzan.org.

While LANA’s board happily agreed to the concept of unification, they remain firm that the new organization must be first and foremost a professional, business organization with a primary purpose of registering Lipizzans appropriately and preserving the integrity of the new organization, and not jeopardize existing and future pedigree records and creating liability risks to both the Board members and the membership.

The interim nine member LFA Board was created to meet unification goals. Representing LANA will be co-founder attorneys John Gliege and John Iannuzzi and Gary Lashinsky (Susan Castle was initially appointed and later replaced); ALBA were Ingun Littorin, June Boardman and Rennie Squier. USLR representatives were Tim Foley, Muffin Smith and Lyn Schaeffer.

The remainder of the Saturday session was moderated by Ingun Littorin and John Iannuzzi regarding discussions about the structure of the LFA and a general questions and answer session about unification, memberships and horse registrations. The newly re-formed LFA board meet in a separate business session and presented revised steps for unification, including the appointment of a bylaws committee -- Lyn Schaeffer, June Boardman and Susan Castle.

Evening festivities included a wonderful dinner prepared by Disney staff. Following dinner, Michael Poulin, Gary Lashinsky’s trainer and Dressage Olympic medalist, presented an open and often humorous dissertation on the state of dressage today, his general experience in training horses, particularly the trainability of the Lipizzan horse of which he is too an enthusiast.

The evening concluded with the annual auction where $2,949 was raised. Highlights of the auction included a breeding to a Tempel farm stallion, a copy of Imperial Horse and four Johann Ridinger prints. In addition, Dover Saddlery donated a Spanish Riding School Kollektion Whip which was raffled off. According to a recent report, auction receipts totaling $3,382 are being held by Tempel Farms for future use by the LFA,

Resignation of Susan Castle

On December 6, 2008, Susan Castle resigned from LANA’s Board of Directors, from the Lipizzan Pedigree Trust and as LANA’s representative to the LFA. Susan cited personal reasons for her resignation.

We want to thank Susan most sincerely for her service to LANA and to the Trust. She contributed selflessly for many years, helping to promote Lipizzans and to enlarge the bloodlines in America through her importing of many fine horses from Piber. We wish her well in her new ventures.

The LANA Board of Directors and The Lipizzan Pedigree Trust
The Spanish Riding School uniform traces its origin back to the empire-style uniform of the French military uniforms of the Napoleonic era which were fashionable in 1795-1820. The traditional rider uniform, which has remained relatively unchanged for over 200 years, consists of high boots, white buckskin riding breeches, and a high necked, brown uniform tailcoat with a small sugar pocket in the left tail and the bicorne hat.

Politics played a part in what the riders wore in the winter riding hall. From old photographs, you can see nobility and school directors in the pre-World War I Austrian uniforms. During WWII, the Spanish Riding School was under the command of the German High Command, and as such, the red and white Austrian flags placed in the riding hall pillars were replaced with flags bearing the German Swastika. Fortunately, Col. Alois Podhajsky (SRS director 1938-1964) was able to persuade the officers in command to permit the riders to return to traditional uniforms for most of the performances.

The Spanish Riding School does have a dress uniform but not as shown in the Disney movie, *Miracle of the White Stallions*. Disney found the original brown uniform too simple for a gala opening and introduced the short, gold-trimmed red the gala uniform but combined it with the traditional riding breeches, tall boots and forward slanted bicorne. The traditional gala uniform
consists of the short red coat with gold braid but the breeches are more trouser-like in appearance and worn with short boots. The bicorne hat is also worn longward, not sideways.

Likewise, the saddle pads can tell you much about the horses and riders. First, the gold-plated bridle are only used for performances. All horses, except the young stallions, wear red and gold or green and gold saddlepads under the saddles. Red is for “All Steps and Movements of the High School”, “Pas de Deux”, “On the Long Rein”, “The Grand Solo” and “The School quadrille.” Green is used for “Work In-Hand” and the “Airs above the Ground”. Also the saddlepads are used to differentiate the status of each rider: the director of the school has three gold bands and gold fringe, the chief riders have three bands and no fringe, riders have two bands, and assistant riders have one. Young stallions are not exhibited in the same equipment – they are ridden in a plain snaffle bridle and English-style dressage saddle.

Col. Alois Podhajsky riding Maestoso Alea I (left) has changed very little from the photograph taken in the 1930s, both riders are wearing the familiar traditional uniform.
A Big Thank You
to Gary and Elizabeth Lashinsky and Lynn Creaser of White Stallion Productions for Hosting the 2008 Lipizzan Symposium and the LANA Annual Meeting