

Bredahl wins with Eskada

Pair sweeps California Dressage Society event

By SHERI SCOTT

SPECIAL TO VALLEY LIVING

Solvang's Charlotte Bredahl swept the third- and fourth-level open championship classes at the California Dressage Society's 37th annual championships with her new mount, Eskada. The pair scored 70 percent and 69.775 percent in the CDS Open Horse of the Year Championships at third and fourth levels, respectively.

Eskada scored 69.889 percent and 70.217 percent to win the Great American/USDF open championships at third and fourth levels. The show was held at the Los Angeles Equestrian Center in Burbank on Oct. 7-10 and included the Great American/United States Dressage Federation Region 7 (California and Nevada) championships.

"I never expected to him to win four championships," said Ms. Bredahl. "His owner couldn't believe it. She had last seen him at his very first show in May, where he did third-level 1 and 2."

The 17.2 Dutch Warmblood gelding came to Ms. Bredahl in the summer of 2002 from owner Sayoko Nakatani's farm in British Columbia. He was a barely broke 4-year-old at the time, with no brakes or steering. Ms. Bredahl spent the first two weeks she had him riding him on a lunge line. She told Ms. Nakatani that it was going to take a long time before he was ready to show. She replied that was fine, and to treat Eskada like he was her own horse and not to rush him. It was May of 2004 before Ms. Bredahl took him to his first show.

"I figured the more training he had before I started taking him anywhere, the better," she said.

Eskada was terrified of everything, and Ms. Bredahl spent many hours hand walking him. After his first show she started taking him to friends' stables and to polo matches to get exposure to the world. Ms. Bredahl also spent hours hand-walking Eskada at the championships on Wednesday getting him used to the grounds.

"Eskada was basically very, very good," she said. "He was very loopy, but even though he was worried about things, I could ride him through it. Three months ago I probably wouldn't have been able to get him by any of that stuff, but he's really getting a lot more confident."

The canter work comes easily for Eskada. Ms. Bredahl said he is very easy to sit and has a natural uphill balance. The changes have been very easy for him, she said. His lateral work is quite good now. When Ms. Bredahl first started riding him, he was extremely stiff to the left. Now he consistently receives 8's on his trot and canter half-passes.

"He has a good talent for the hard stuff, too," said Ms. Bredahl. "I've played with him on the long lines in piaffe. That's not going to be hard for him. He's a very collectable horse. The hardest thing for him next year will be doing full canter pirouettes."

Ms. Bredahl plans to spend the next six months at home training Eskada and bring him out at Prix St. George and Int. 1 at the Del Mar show next April.

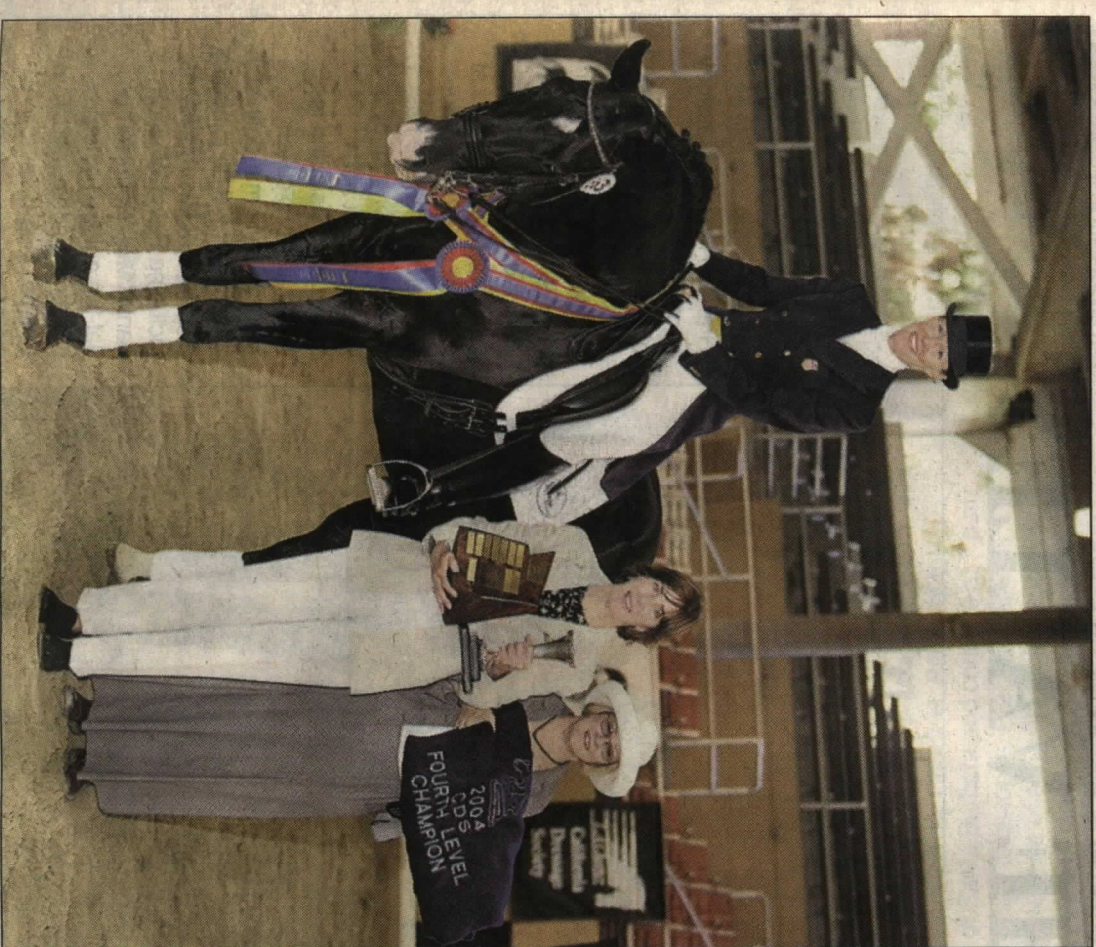


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