



Star show jumper headlines USHJA Gold Star clinic January 17-20.

Living legend show jumper Katie Prudent is the featured clinician for the California leg of the United States Hunter Jumper Association's second Gold Star clinic. Part of the USHJA's Emerging Athlete Pathway, the clinic is set for Jan. 17-20 at the HITS Thermal venue. Riders earn spots through Zone Jumper Championships and a few wild card options, and auditing is free, open to all and highly recommended.

A 2015 inductee into the Show Jumping Hall of Fame, Katie dominated the international jumping circuit, peaking throughout the 1980s, with several horses including The Jones Boy and Special Envoy. She coaches a small roster of young riders, including Abby McArdle, the winner of this year's U25 National Championships in Florida. She and her husband, fellow horseman Henri Prudent, spend much of the year in France, scouting young horses for their son Adam's sales business, Plain Bay Sales.



Comments Katie made on Chris Stafford's The Horse Show Podcast triggered animated debate earlier this year. Addressing the question of where the U.S. team is going, she shared her opinion that professionals "coddling" young riders was having a bad effect on the attitude,

abilities and, most importantly, horsemanship of those aspiring to the top.

She didn't set out to stir controversy, but she's not sorry for it either. "People can be in this sport at many different levels and I appreciate that," she explains. "That specific question triggers a lot of emotion: the way our future riders are thinking and learning, their view of the sport."

California Riding Magazine editor Kim F Miller was honored to speak with Katie about her upcoming appearance.

Kim: Did you easily agree to being a Gold Star lead clinician?

Katie: Over the years, I travel a lot with my students, competing in Europe, etc., so I've been too busy to do many clinics. The opportunity to get to California and do something so wide-ranging and with other very good professionals struck me as very interesting.

As I read the format of the clinic, I saw that it is so much more than teaching people to ride. With vets, blacksmiths and other presenters, it gives an overall view of what makes our sport tick.

I'm interested in every phase of our sport and I love to impart that to various students. Horses are way more than just a sport: it's an industry where young people can make a living and have fun for the rest of their lives.

Kim: Do you expect the "coddling" topic will come up?

Katie: We can sure talk about that, along with different views of how young riders are coming along.

My view of it, and what I most want to impart, is that the fun of this sport is training horses. It's not about competing and the blue ribbons. If you learn to train horses with great passion, the winning and other things will come.

Kim: If your students are traveling to compete in Europe, they must be in an economic bracket where they could go the way of coddling coaching. What are you doing differently?

Katie: I put them on many different horses, and not always the good, easy ones. I always say, "bad is good." When you get to the highest levels, even if you are riding a good horse, you have to be strong, quick and on top of every move the horse makes. You have to develop those skills. That's opposed to the professionals who want everything to go well for their students.

Written by CRM

Friday, 28 December 2018 04:04



I get right in there with my students in their suffering with a difficult or green horse. You have to train the horse to get better. To me, that's the great joy and reward – making something of a difficult horse.

Kim: Are you concerned about riders being intimidated?

Katie: They'll get over it. My teaching style is blunt and not coddling. I try to help the rider figure out how to solve the problem of every horse they sit on.

Kim: How can clinic riders and auditors best prepare to maximize the opportunity to learn from you?

Katie: Riders should come with no preconceived ideas, with an open mind and an attitude to enjoy learning. Auditors can listen, take notes and see the progression from start to finish over four days.

Kim: Tell us about your student Abby McArdle, who just won the National U25 Championships.

Katie: She's been a student of mine for about five years and is a very hard worker and highly motivated. She's from Chicago, has ridden since she was a kid and her family is very supportive. She rides for my son's sales business, so she has gotten tremendous experience riding horses of different ages, sizes, shapes and experience.



Kim: She sounds like your type of rider.

January 2019 - Golden Opportunity with Katie Prudent

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Katie: I don't have a ton of students. I have three or four at the barn in Virginia, and I have several who have their own barn and meet me at shows. I don't really screen prospective students because they do that themselves. A lot of people don't come to me. I am serious and I do require people be hard working and highly motivated. I know that's not for everybody.

Kim: What's your life with horses like now?

Katie: I ride the kids' horses once and a while to show them what I'm talking about. Otherwise, Henri and I have handed the riding reins over to Adam and Abby. Our biggest job is scouting horses for Adam's sales business. He's busy working and showing, so we scout in Europe and all over the place.

Our main farm is in Middleburg, VA., and we have a small farm in Wellington, right across the street from the show grounds.

Kim: Does Adam aspire to follow your international footsteps?

Katie: He is a good rider, but he way prefers the sales side of it. Whenever he has a top horse, he never keeps it long enough to do anything with it. He likes it that way and always has. And, it's nice that he is in the business but in a totally different way than I was.

Kim: Thanks so much and see you in January!

Additional Presenters

Geoff Vernon, DVM: USET Team Vet

Kirsten Coe: Grand Prix rider

Colleen Reed: Stable manager