

Equestrian legacy continues in young trainer's successful hunter/jumper program.

The world of equestrian sports rests on its history and tradition. Being a legacy in the world of show jumping, Nathalie Manning strives to maintain the history and tradition her family has created in this industry.



Granddaughter of Joan Irvine and Morton "Cappy" Smith, Nathalie clearly has horses in her blood. Nathalie's career started at the ripe old age of 3, when Cappy, a USEF Hall of Fame inductee, put her on some of the horses at the farm. A surprise to no one, Nathalie fell in love. As she grew up, Nathalie not only learned from her grandfather, but from some of the East Coast's top trainers. As a top junior rider from Newport, RI, Nathalie competed successfully in some of the top equitation medal finals.

After graduating high school, Nathalie went to Mount Holyoke College in South Hadley, MA. During her time there, she led the nationally-ranked equitation team to Intercollegiate Horse Shows Association's Nationals, and competed for the association's prestigious Cacchione Cup.

After college, Nathalie moved to the West Coast. Needing to spread her wings, she started working for The Oaks in San Juan Capistrano. She rode the young ones, showed the more experienced ones, and also held down a job as a science instructor at the Ocean Institute in Dana Point.

At one point Nathalie considered applying for law school. In the midst of taking the LSAT and applying to top schools across the country, she stopped and realized there's nothing she's ever wanted to do more than to continue the family legacy.

In 2009 Nathalie turned pro and opened Acorn Farm at The Oaks. Thinking of the history her grandparents created, Nathalie continues to teach all of her clients the art of riding and

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horsemanship, which have garnered many, many wins. Not only does she lead her clients to victory, but she herself continues to uphold her legacy competing in the Grand Prix ring with her mount, Con Spirit.



She's also seen regularly bringing up young jumpers in the Young Jumper Championships. Aboard Dorienna, Nathalie won the 7 Year Old Young Jumper Finals in 2015.

To say she has done her family proud is an understatement. Though Nathalie is not your typical legacy. Intent on proving to the riding world that she has the talent and skill to do it on her own, Nathalie started Acorn Farm with one school horse and her personal horse at the time, Cooper. She started to advertise in the area and was able to build a nice base of lesson clients. She also still rode for The Oaks.

As she progressed, she bought young horses, brought them up through the ranks and sold them, to buy the next one, and the next one and the next one. After buying and selling a few, she had finally saved enough to buy her beloved Con Spirit, "Henry," as he's called in the barn.

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Henry was purchased as a coming 7-year-old in Europe. He and Nathalie have grown up together. They have created such a bond and partnership as they have climbed the ranks in the jumper ring. In June of 2015, Nathalie and Henry won their first Grand Prix. They won on the beautiful grass field at a Blenheim EquiSports show in San Juan Capistrano, again leading her family legacy in to the next phase of growth.

Acorn Farm is a shining example of a successful show barn. Nathalie has designed her program to adapt to any rider, horse and their challenges. Her staff, Lauren Dendiu, Florence Phillips, Claudia Ryan, Guillermo Flores and Ricky Flores are simply the best. The horses are treated with the best care that can be offered, and the depth of education clients receive is nothing short of exceptional. Nathalie strives to provide her clients with the most well-rounded education on and off the horse, focusing on horsemanship, to ensure their continued success both in the show ring and at home.

Nathalie is most often seen with a gleaming smile on her face as she bounces from ring to ring at the horse shows. By far one of the sweetest and friendliest people you will ever meet, if you're not familiar with her, introduce yourself. She always loves to meet new people.

For more information on Acorn Farm, visit www.rideacornfarm.com.