

In Perspective

As the photo at right attests, everything is a matter of perspective. Along similar lines, I was teaching a somewhat out-of-shape, “mature” woman one day, jollyng her along in the manner of the kindly trainer, pushing her gently to exceed her self-imposed limitations.

“You can rest soon,” I offered. “One more time down the long side, and you can walk at C.”

“That’s *not* soon,” she wailed.

Perspective.



On a slightly different plane, back in the mid-‘70s, I was able to acquire a scholarship to the American Dressage Institute-sponsored summer seminar at Gladstone, which came on the heels of the Montreal Olympic Games. Colonel Aage Sommer, who had just presided at C at the Games, was to be the principal conductor, assisted by the USET coach, Colonel Bengt Ljungquist. Most of the participants were far more advanced than I, including Edith Master who had just ridden on our bronze medal winning team. I was a mere novice professional who had been invited to have a glimpse of the Big World Out There.

Another participant was Maryanne McPhail, who has gone on to own several Olympic horses and has been a great supporter of the US dressage community. The night before, several of the riders went to dinner with Colonel Sommer, a regal gentleman with a long cavalry background. I tagged along. Over coffee, I remember Maryanne expressing some anxiety about riding in front of the Colonel the next day.

He very graciously replied, “*You* have nothing to prove. I am the one who should be nervous! I must help you to be better.”