



EASTERN DRESSAGE LIAISON GROUP

Paul Hayler Demo - Norton Heath EC



Advanced Medium to Grand Prix Friday 1st July 2011

Paul commenced on the bay 10 year old **Loumic Antoni (Frodo)** who recently achieved 5th place at the BD Winter championships at Advanced Medium level. Currently training towards PSG and Inter I.



Paul explained his warm up methodology was to start by ideally walking each horse for at least 15 minutes, whilst flexing the horse laterally to each side in a rounded, loose contact, to stretch and warm up the horses muscles both longitudinally and over the topline. This same method was then used in trot and also in canter.

The horse was then brought up and then worked in a more collected and upright position to prepare for his working session. Paul used lots of transition work to get Loumic working on and listening to his aids.



To prepare the horse for flying change work Paul :

1 : Firstly put him onto a large circle in counter canter left. He then pushed with his outside leg whilst flexing the horse to the inside right - preparing for the change from left lead to right lead. Then asking for the change using left outside leg pushing the quarters over, whilst asking for the change using right leg against the girth.

2: On a diagonal line asked for the change whilst approaching the 'wall' or boards - thus preparing for improved straightness

3: Lastly sequence changes across the diagonal using counting methods and trying to keep the straightness in this young horse who is new to learning these techniques.



After change training, Paul gave **Frodo** a break loosening him again laterally and over the back via stretching.

Finishing the training session, Paul demonstrated training half passes and said he usually starts from coming down the centre line and half passing to the track. Also finally showing how Paul starts making very good use of balancing the horse through corners, maintaining the same rhythm in trot from the long side, through each corner, and through short sides in exactly the same tempos in collected and working trot.

Bobby and the grey 9yr old stallion Aldborough Rubenhall (Ruben)

were next in. This horse is aimed at next year's European Young Rider championships.

Bobby is working on developing more collection and self carriage with Ruben, without him being strong in the hand. They are also encouraging him more up through the shoulder so that he can become more naturally expressive in his changes - which are correct and well established already.

Bobby demonstrated some good clean changes, but Paul wanted better accuracy in her 3 time tempis, explaining that the 3rd change needed to be exactly over X in order to produce the correct balance from beginning to end of the sequence. In order to commence 1-time tempi changes Paul said he usually started them on the $\frac{3}{4}$ line so that the horse didn't feel hemmed in by the boards or wall, and just to attempt 1 x 1 to start with.



After this work Bobby showed some lovely flowing half passes which then were converted into zig-zags by half-passing toward the centre-line, then straight for a stride, changing bend and half-passing the other way. Always Paul paid attention to the detail of where each movement started, its angle and where it finished.



Finally with Ruben Paul demonstrated how he had started the stallion in piaffe work, from the floor whilst Bobby was riding, using the help

of a long stick by tapping Ruben's legs to gauge his reaction at first using the boards for support around the edge of the arena. Eventually Ruben would need to learn to work off his riders aids for GP as a stick is not allowed at this level. Bobby showed how they had progressed without use of Pauls help, and it looked very promising indeed! Paul stressed that they did not do this work every day as both he and Bobby wanted to keep Ruben as fit and strong and sound as long as possible, and their aim is develop him carefully and slowly for the GP work.

Lastly Paul came in on the stunning **Fabioso** - a 9 year old bay Hessen gelding who has recently completed his first 2 Grand Prix tests.

Paul explained that this horse has progressed very fast indeed and that he simply loves his work, but that he was extremely naughty when he was younger! Paul has never had to use a stick on Fabioso as he is so willingly freely forward off his leg, but as he is a little short in his back Paul takes extra time to relax him and allow his back to soften and let go .



Paul works him deeper to help Fabioso let go over his topline in the warm up. They have worked on getting him in better balance to develop more expression in his paces which we would not see during warm up but would come later when Paul picked him up during the working part of his session. Paul started him off with a really small trot, loosening Fabioso making him soft and relaxed through the neck and back and most importantly listening to his rider and on the job in hand, otherwise he tends to lose attention elsewhere! Paul can always tell when Fabioso is fully on his aids - as the horses' ears become 'floppy' rather than pricked and directed on something else! Paul then used transitions within stretching in all paces to help strengthening

and balance develop before bringing his neck up and out for the working session ahead. Once this had been achieved, more impulsion was introduced - on and back.



During all of this, Paul demonstrated he had only the weight of the reins in his hands for contact with the mouth. Then he developed more expression into the trot for a truly impressive picture! Paul used piaffe and passage before the canter work keeping the neck lower to work Fabioso over the back more.



Again, Paul stressed that he doesn't do too much of this type of work with him as Fabioso offers such a lot, and like all of his horses, Paul wants to keep him sound for as long as possible!

*A fantastic demo which was conducted in the warm evening summer sun, & attended and well received by around 40 people.
Many thanks to Paul, Gill, Bobby and Norton Heath EC*