

Katrina Sadis  
rides Zepelim  
in Wellington.  
PHOTO BY  
ANNAN HEPNER



## Rising Dressage Star Katrina Sadis Gains Knowledge And Experience In Wellington

By Annan Hepner

*At just 17 years old, Katrina Sadis is pursuing her dreams of success in the sport of dressage with tenacity and maturity beyond her years. The talented athlete has previously spent the winter in Wellington for the community's competitive opportunities. This year, she made the leap to move here full time, on her own, as a working student for Marcus Fyffe Dressage.*

Sadis, a Michigan native, grew up galloping her Quarter Horse through pastures and riding in her local 4-H program. She stumbled upon dressage when she was 10 and was immediately hooked.

"I think the relationship you have with your horse really made dressage stand out for me," she said. "I have always loved the beauty of the sport and the amount of dedication you must have to be successful. The training never really stops. You can always keep improving."

She soon became involved in Lendon Gray's youth dressage programs. For two seasons, she participated in the Winter Intensive Training Program, a boot camp for young dressage riders held in Wellington. Sadis had the opportunity to lease Poldy, a pony, through the Dressage4Kids program, and the pair developed a remarkable partnership in the FEI Pony division, culminating in a national championship in 2014.

After graduating from the Pony division, Sadis made a smooth step up

Katrina Sadis and Zepelim at a horse inspection during the Adequan Global Dressage Festival.  
PHOTO BY ILANA CRAMER







Trainer Nicholas Fyffe gives advice to Katrina Sadis before her ride. PHOTO BY ANNAN HEPNER

to the Junior division. She purchased Zepelim, a Lusitano gelding, with the help of her trainer Nicholas Fyffe, an international Grand Prix rider who competes for Australia. The pair competed at the 2015 FEI North American Junior and Young Rider Championships in Kentucky.

“She has nerves of steel in competition, yet she marries that with such an empathy in her riding,” Fyffe said of Sadis. “It’s a really rare combination to see, and it will be very exciting to see what she does in the future.”

Sadis chose Marcus Fyffe Dressage, operated by Fyffe and his partner, Canadian Olympian David Marcus, as the ideal place to expand her dressage expertise through hands-on experience and intensive learning.

Both Marcus and Fyffe work hard to provide the highest level of care for horses and clients. Though they were initially concerned about her young age, the duo decided that Sadis’ dedication and drive to work hard would make her a valuable asset to their team.

“We wanted to support her because she is very talented, and she has really become an important part of our team,” Marcus said. “I am impressed by the amount of maturity that she has in her understanding of the sport.”

Sadis begins her day at 6 a.m., and she drives her two roommates, who are participating in Gray’s program, to their barn before arriving at Stillpoint Farm, the year-round base of Marcus Fyffe Dressage. After feeding the horses and mucking out stalls, she begins grooming them and tacking up. Sadis has daily riding lessons, and when she leaves the barn, she has to complete her homework for her online high school.

Though her schedule is packed, she is thrilled with the opportunity to watch Grand Prix riders every day and learn about care for international-quality horses. She attributes her positive experience as a working student to the entire Marcus Fyffe Dressage team.

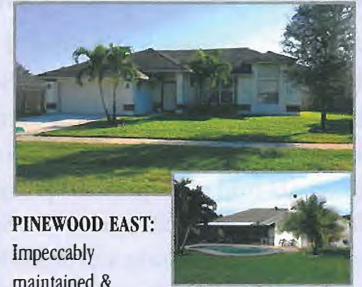
“Being a working student is hard work, but everyone is very supportive and the barn has a really great energy,” Sadis said.

Sadis has been competing Zepelim in the international Young Rider division at the Adequan Global Dressage Festival this season and hopes to represent the United States as an Under 25 Grand Prix rider next year.

“She has everything it takes to rise to the occasion and be a top international rider,” Marcus said. “She is placing herself strategically where she can thrive in Wellington.” ■

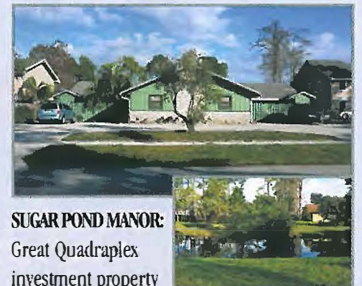


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