

# Fletrich top American in FEI classes

By SARA CAVANAGH

**WELLINGTON, Fla.**—Riding Otto, owned by Margaret Duprey's Cherry Knoll Farm of West Grove, Pa., Todd Fletrich was the top placing American rider in the FEI classes at the WEF Dressage competition on March 17.

Fletrich of Coatesville, Pa., and Otto placed second in both the FEI Grand Prix and FEI Grand Prix Freestyle, and Fletrich said he was very happy with the competition.

"It was definitely a good weekend. It was a great show, the atmosphere was great, and Otto was really super," said Fletrich.

"Todd has been riding for me for about 10 years," said Duprey, who has three grand prix horses with Fletrich, Otto, Amadeus and Danseur. "Todd trains out of my farm both here in Florida and in Pennsylvania."

Following Fletrich's success in Florida, he and Duprey are first going to Lexington, Ky., for the test competition for the World Equestrian Games and then are aiming to compete at the trials for the WEG, which will be held in August, two weekends back-to-back at the National Championships at the USEF headquarters in Gladstone, N.J.

"I'm very excited but kind of cautious," said Duprey. "With horses, things can happen. Both Todd and I are taking it a day at a time."

"Everyone's excited about going to Lexington," said Duprey. "It's like a shakedown, where you can get organized in the stabling and the stadium for the people that make the team."

**FLETRICH** said he was very pleased with his tests in Wellington.

"I basically thought it was a super test," he said of his Grand Prix performance. "I would say that the judges that have seen me and judged me already were higher because they know what we are capable of, but we received positive comments from all of the judges. The judges who gave me 70 percent also gave me nines for the piaffe and were confident enough to give me the higher scores where he was really

good."

For the competition Friday evening, Fletrich said that he and Otto performed their freestyle for the first time in competition, and it was also the first time that they had entirely run through the routine.

"I didn't school the freestyle at home because we had just completed it and I had been away, so my main concern was to focus on the Grand Prix," he said. "I think the new freestyle was a great success. We were not too far from the winning score and I had basically a mistake-free test. Things could always be better, but it was great."

"I had positive comments from all of the judges about the music and the performance, so it was very rewarding and exciting," Fletrich said. "The crowd really enjoyed the music and I got a 10 in one of my piaffes, which is pretty awesome. I got almost a 75 percent from one of the judges and the lowest score was a 72. It is in my grasp. I definitely feel that we have been consistently getting better and the scores have continued going up."

Fletrich has been competing at high levels for most of his life.

He competed at the North American Young Riders Championships four times and won the Individual Gold Medal and Team Silver in 1991.

Fletrich served as Region 1 Coach and chef d'equipe at NAYRC from 1988 through 1994, and his student Catherine Malone won the Individual Gold in 2005.

**EARLIER** in the winter, most of the top dressage riders in the world traveled to Wellington to compete in a five-star competition, Feb. 3-6, that offered over \$100,000 in prize money.

Steffen Peters and Bavel continued their winning ways by emerging victorious over Anky Von Grunsvan of The Netherlands on Salinero, with Isabell Werth of Germany on Satchmo taking third in the Grand Prix.

In the Freestyle, however, Van Grunsvan was the winner over Peters, with Werth, who had recently had a child, again placing third.

## Million-dollar qualifiers

## truly world class group

**OCALA, Fla.**—The HTTS Winter Circuits in Thermal and Ocala produced 45 riders who rode in eight or more HTTS Grand Prix classes and are eligible to compete in a \$1 million class this fall.

The Top 40 Eligible Riders based on money won on their leading horse is a diverse group of renowned riders from around the country and around the world.

Riders from the East and West Coasts, as well as those who reside internationally, now occupy the top 10 spots of the Rankings.



Photo by Susan Stickle

Todd Fletrich and Otto in the FEI classes at the WEF Dressage competition on March 17.

## Welles and Armani win Invitational

**TAMPA, Fla.**—Jeffrey Welles and Armani won the \$200,000 Gene Mische American Invitational on April 10 in front of a crowd of over 5,000 that included the ailing Mische himself.

Mische, who had been gravely ill with a staff infection, was released from hospital three weeks ago he attended the horse shows in Tampa daily and was part of the presentation ceremony at the Invitational.

Welles was one of only three to go clean over the difficult course designed by Olympic course designer Steve Stephens, and was second to go in the jump-off, behind Mac Cone of Canada riding Ole, who had three down in the speed round for 12 faults.

Behind Welles was Peter Leone of Franklin Lakes, N.J. "I didn't want to be silly and go flat out with just one horse behind me," said Welles. "I knew Peter's horse had a big step,