

Hunters and Jumpers

The H/J World in Aiken is Growing

By RAGAN MOREHOUSE, PHOTOGRAPHY BY GARY KNOLL

Let's say you are a hunter/jumper rider who has just moved to town. Where can you board? With whom should you train? Who should you talk to if you need to buy a new horse? Lucky for you, you have choices.

As with polo and eventing, the ranks of the hunter/jumper set have swelled in recent years, and it looks as if the numbers will keep increasing. I spoke with a few of the trainers who frequent Aiken's shows to find out what is happening here to draw and keep so many professionals.

Daybreak Farm

Stephanie Von Bidder also knows a thing or two about slowing things down. Spending her formative years above the Mason-Dixon line in the high-pressure show world, Stephanie knew that she wanted something different when she started her professional life.

"I grew up just outside of New York City and rode in some very competitive hunter/jumper areas – New York, Connecticut and New Jersey. It was a great learning experience. I was exposed to a very high caliber of horse and rider. But I really wanted to be someplace where the horses could live a little more naturally," she explains. "Here we have great turnout, perfect natural footing all year, and the winters are easy on the horses – no indoor rings!"

Stephanie has created a low-stress haven at Daybreak Farm.

"My intention is to serve my clients with premium horse care and training in a fun, friendly, low-pressure atmosphere. Daybreak is not a huge show barn. My program is small and individualized and our focus is on quality."

Stephanie offers full service boarding, lessons, horse leasing and training. She also markets a select group of sales horses, some of which she owns and some of which are clients' horses.

"I am very much a riding professional and having sales horses keeps me in the tack. Having to ride a constantly changing stream of horses keeps my skills sharp," says Stephanie. "I love marketing quality horses in all stages of their training and pairing them off with appropriate owners. Watching them move on to success is exciting!"

Stephanie Von Bidder – Daybreak Farm 803.221.7194

www.daybreakfarm.net

