

Rider of the Month

Like so many of those stylish young lady riders around town, Lyndal Oatley started out her riding career as a showie...

"I'm another of the Maree Tomkinsons of this world, started off hacking and did that until four years ago. I had a lot of successful horses, I had Anthem, who was two times Grand National Horse of the Year, and I've won Championships or Runner-up at NSW Horse of the Year, Sydney and Brisbane Royals. I was a lucky girl. I had a lot of good people helping me. At that stage, Vince Corvi was my instructor and he showed me the way the whole time. I had a great time. It taught me how to present the horses, how to work an arena and use the situation to your advantage – now I can put all that to use in another field!"

So why the change to dressage?

"I was happy with what I had achieved in the hacking world. I had always wanted to be a dressage rider, that had always been my aim – but I didn't know how to find the right horse or who to train with... I was lucky enough to take my hack, Anthem to Matthew Dowsley for train-



ing, and there I was introduced to Anagram. Matthew said 'have a feel and see how you like it' and I fell in love immediately! Converted that week, and started training with Matthew six days a week, and went on from there."

But growing up with Vince you wouldn't have had to change very much?

"That was what made the transition so easy, Vince had taught me to do half halts and do transitions, to hold the reins and keep the leg on, Vince is a very clever man, and he has been involved in a lot of people's careers in both hacking and dressage. He is a super man – I was really lucky, because if I had been with someone else, it wouldn't have been so easy, but Vince made the transition smooth for me, and made me understand a lot more."

How did you end up with your stallion, Weltspiel?

"We had a few problems with horses being brought over from Germany. The first horse that we bought – a lovely three-year-old Florestan colt, he died in quarantine from travel sickness. It was devastating."

"So we went over again and bought my Florestan gelding, but between buying the gelding and Weltspiel, Anagram broke down, so I didn't have a horse at a higher level. I really needed to get out and ride a horse that was at medium level so I could learn as much as I can. We went over again – I was a lucky girl I don't deny it at all – and we found Weltspiel at a private barn and fell in love with him. We weren't looking for a stallion, but he is not your typical stallion. He's got a big heart, very willing and didn't seem to have any stallion tendencies at all. It was the right horse at the right time, and I have been lucky enough to keep continuing my learning with him. He's been teaching me a lot – and vice versa, it's a good partnership, I'm very happy."

Lyndal Oatley with the Dietmar Specht Trophy she won at the Australian Dressage Championships...

**LYNDAL OATLEY**