

AN INSTANT PICK—PART 2

By Jan Marquardt

Izzy had quite the year in 2009 and after a couple weeks off, she's ready for 2010! Houston Dressage Society Winter Shows I & II were held at the Great Southwest Equestrian Center, Katy, TX in January, 2010. We took Izzy to compete in T-4 and Young Horse classes. She was just amazing, earning four blue ribbons in her four classes, plus High Score Champion! Her T-4 on Saturday was respectable at 66.8 and 70.0% on Sunday. Izzy and her rider/trainer, Erika-West Danque, did great on their first "YOUNG HORSE TEST OF CHOICE" earning 75.2. WOW, we are just thrilled that Izzy continues to just take all this in stride and every show, she's getting better and stronger. Now we have decided to raise the bar and see if we can qualify her for the 4 Year Old National Championship, to be held at Lamplight (Wayne, IL) in July.

January also was when we received notice that Izzy had been recognized by the American Hanoverian Society for The Dr. Walter Hartwig Prize for the Best North American-bred Young Mare award (for more information <http://www.hanoverian.org/awards/hartwig.shtml>). Izzy was the



2009 Reserve Champion with special recognition to her breeder, Sherry White of Graystone Farm in Maumee, Ohio. (Hopefully Sherry will write an article on the trials and tribulations involved with producing an embryo transfer foal ... many thanks for the extra effort!)

The HDS Spring Classic I & II in April was more good news for Izzy who won the USEF 4 YEAR OLD YOUNG HORSE-QUALIFYING FINALE CLASS on Saturday with a 77.6% and was National and Reserve Champion respectively. We are just proud to bursting! Izzy won in her first Level 1 test with 68% and earned a second place ribbon for her score of 72% in Training Level. Plus, a real bonus! Gary got to share in the rewards when Izzy was High Score Champion for the weekend (75.2%) and received the Hedley Lamberty Owner's Award, sponsored by Anna Burtell, for 2010. What an honor! Thank you so much, Anna!

In May, the American Hanoverian Society Magazine ran an article on the winner and reserve champion for The Dr. Walter Hartwig Prize for the Best North American-bred Young Mare Award. We can hardly believe all the press Izzy is receiving and are truly humbled by this entire experience.

June was the HDS Summer Show I & II and Izzy didn't disappoint! She was in a total of five classes and brought

home five blue ribbons plus the High Score National Champion and High Score Hanoverian! Izzy scored a 76.6 in the 4 Year Old Young Horse Class (resulting in a 77.1 average so our fingers are crossed that's enough to keep us in the top 15 to go to Lamplight in July)! The waiting is extremely nerve-wracking and the competition is very tough! It's now the end of June and it appears that Izzy will not be going to Lamplight. She's the 3rd alternate by 7/100ths of a



point so we're a bit disappointed but we're grateful for this wonderful journey.

We can't believe it, we received a call (this is Friday before the Wednesday mandatory jog for the Young Horse Championships) and have gotten our invitation! Now if we can manage to get Izzy to Lamplight in time for the jog, Izzy can compete! Unbelievable!

There's no time to get a professional hauler in to get her there on time, so we pack her up and head to Illinois. Thank goodness our dear friend, Terri Wall, never cancelled our airline reservations (she remained confident to the very end that Izzy would go) and Erika arranged her schedule to make the trip.

Gary and I left very early on Sunday morning to start the very long trek to Illinois. Poor Izzy probably felt like she'd never get out of the trailer again (this is a photo I took with my cell phone at one of the many rest stops we made ... she seems to be saying "are we there yet?"). What a trooper she is!



We made the 1500 mile trip in two days, stopping at a mare motel one night and then stayed with our friends, Donna and Paul Chiocca, who fortunately have an indoor ring which gave Izzy a day to find her legs again before heading onto Lamplight. (Continued on page 10)

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Not to mention, Donna getting up at 5am to be sure that Izzy was braided for her jog that afternoon because while Gary was taking Izzy to Lamplight, I was driving to O'Hare to pick up Terri and Erika so we were really on a tight schedule.

Since I'm a Chicago native, I am very fortunate to have life long (horsey) friends in Illinois and Gary's family is in Bloomington, so we had our own personal cheering section. Team Izzy had quite the turn out. Izzy's breeder, Sherry White, made the trip from Ohio, many of Gary's family came including his 82 year old mother, one sister, both of his brothers, sister-in-law and nephew. What a family reunion. Several other friends traveled through horrible weather to cheer us on and bring Izzy her favorite treat, green apples!

Yet another friend, Jay'me Stevens, insisted on giving Izzy her own special pedicure! It was hot, humid and miserable so this was a truly a labor of love.

Marilyn Kulifay also stopped by for a cup of coffee while Erika was warming up on Ana Isabellah! It was so nice to see some friends from "home" and she was kind enough to offer Erika some last minute comments.

Sometimes it takes a village ... and you could feel the love. It still brings tears to my eyes (no kidding).

Erika and Izzy had a little bad luck by being the first to perform after a horribly wet night. There was a bad storm, lots of rain, flooded streets, Chicago even closed down a couple of their highways (if you can believe that??). A tree came down on one of the show barns (no one hurt, thank goodness, but I suspect that Contester II was very happy to be moved). So there was an hour delay in getting the Championships started and Izzy is first in the ring. The ground crews tried to hand rake/drag the ring because it was too wet for equipment to be used.

The good news is that Izzy doesn't mind standing water, which is a good thing because it was definitely sloppy. During her test, a girl (yes, she is blond) in a raincoat actually climbed over the fence while Izzy was in the middle of her test which caused Izzy to stop, shy and get a bit wild eyed. Once she realized she was not going to eat her, she continued on without any further dramas! Izzy didn't get penalized for that but I'm sure it didn't help their momentum.

We are very proud of both Ana Isabellah and Erika-West Danque, finishing 14th. This was a remarkable experience ... and we couldn't be happier! Thanks to everyone in Team Izzy ... and our most sincere CONGRATULATIONS to everyone who participated. Great horses, great riders, great experience! What an education this has been! And now for the long journey back home to Willis, Texas!

Izzy has already qualified for Training Level for SWDC and Region 9 so we thought we'd try to see if she could qualify for Level 1 as well. So after giving her some time to rest from her long journey, her next show was the HDS Laborious Day Show! We were very fortunate when

Izzy qualified in one weekend in First Level and she had her best 4 yr old Materiale classes (83% on Saturday and 85% on Sunday). Now she can rest until November championships.

The end of October, the United States Dressage Federation published their award winners for 2010 and we are thrilled to see that Izzy is the 2010 Material Horse of the Year Champion 4 & 5 Year Old Mare! It doesn't get much better than this!

We are just so proud of her and of course, Erika ... they have been just a fabulous team with a great connection.

The last show for us in 2010 are the Championships held at the Southwest Equestrian Center in Katy in November. Izzy and Erika earned a Reserve Champion in Training Level for Region 9 with 72.40%, a third place in SWDC with 69.40%, and fourth place in both Region 9 with 66.842% and 67.237% in SWDC in Level One.



Now for the tough decision ... do we continue showing in 2011 or bring her home and (hopefully) make her a momma (fulfilling her Elite Mare requirements)? Decisions, decisions!

About the author: Jan Marquardt and her husband, Gary, own Walkabout Station in Willis, TX. For more information, please see their website www.walkaboutstation.com