



(Heath Ryan – Regardez Moi)

“THE ENTERTAINERS”

(Written by Earle Olaisen)

Today, I had the opportunity to interview Heath Ryan in relation to his magnificent stallion Regardez Moi, who have both, shown to us here in Australia and Internationally, their love for the sport of dressage. “The Entertainers”

The future of Regardez Moi, - will this be his last Grand Prix Freestyle here tonight? performed at the Saddleworld National Dressage Championships for 2015.

The future of both Heath and Regardez Moi?

Well, Regardez Moi has been probably the horse of my life. We actually bred him and he is 21 now. He was, until yesterday, the reigning Australian Grand Prix Champion. We placed 8th in the Grand Prix, so now he has lost that title. He had held that title on four different occasions in previous years. He is definitely getting older, and the results yesterday were very close, but the funny thing is that he is still sound and completely healthy but he just runs out of aerobic energy. To give that Grand Prix everything he has got for that four and half minutes really taxes his breathing and endurance. He did a really good test yesterday, but not quite good enough to be the winner. However he is still right at the pointy end and these are the best horses in Australia at the moment. He is still right up there in that bracket. I'm very proud of him, it's a very brave and magnificent effort. In terms of being his last run, I think it is probably very close, but what do you do with a magnificent stallion? He still looks wonderful, he is genuinely sound, he is not on any medication or drugs. He is completely genuine, and he works every day, and he loves his work. So you know it is almost criminal, or it feels like it's criminal, to retire him. He loves being out here, in competition, having everyone come round and make a fuss of him. He loves meeting new people, because when they are stabled here at SIEC, there are horses on either side of him. He just loves that.

Being part of the Australian scene, at the highest level, is something he has been doing for over a decade. It is just a magnificent contribution to Australia. And he loves it. So while I am loathe to predict when it will be his final run and he will retire, inevitably it will happen. In the past we have been Australian Champions, lost the tittle and then come back, re-challenged and won again. I probably can't see us re-challenging for another Australian title again. The guys are too good, and he is definitely feeling his age now. So I think in terms of being the Australian Champion again, he will be bowing out. There won't be another go round at that. His performances are bound to be slightly less. It is a little like going into a gymnastics competition with a 75 year old man but you know he will always do himself, and us, proud.

From a National point of view tonight's freestyle will probably be his last one?

You know Earle, I'm very loath to say that, but I would think realistically, that's a very serious possibility. Yep.

From a point of view what has Regardez Moi meant to you over the years?

Yeah well, you know I mean, you can have horses that are good horses, and you can have just occasionally, once in your life, if you are really, really lucky, a champion, and Regardez Moi has done that. I have ridden for Australia, Internationally on him, I've won the Australia Grand Prix, tittle on 4 different occasions. He is just a wonderful horse. I think he has won over 60 Grand Prix tests, certainly 40 big Grand Prix titles. You know, most horses won't have 40 wins to their credit in their whole life. That includes their preliminary level, through to novice level, through to elementary. Put them all together they won't of won 40. Well Regardez Moi has won about 60 Grand Prix tests. You know which is an amazing performance. He is also well known through his progeny. I am riding a horse called Utopian Cardinal now, who is a young gelding by Regardez Moi now competing successfully at Grand Prix. And you know, there are some fantastic Regardez Moi offspring, out there in the sport in Grand Prix, I think its quite possible he is the only stallion in the world who is actually competing against his offspring at the top level. That's such an unusual phenomenon. He also has successful offspring competing at the top in Eventing. What a contribution he has made. He is a fantastic horse. Yeah, for me, I don't know if he will ever be replaced.

This Evening's freestyle will be something special for both of you?

You know what Earle, we always go in and do our very best, and you know he is pretty good at freestyles. He has won the freestyle here something like, I don't know, I think something like 8 times or 9 times here at the CDI, which is amazing. The others will be watching him like a hawk, if we get in there just right, we definitely can upset the apple cart. Again. You know, we really enjoy that. Lol

Whatever the result is tonight Heath and Regardez Moi will be having fun together in their freestyle test as always. "The Entertainers"

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