



# USMMA JOURNAL

Fall Journal from the U.S. Mangalarga Marchador Association

December 2012

## Dance with the horse

**Editor's note:** In May, Kindle McCauley traveled to Brazil for a one month internship at Haras Capim Fino, the breeder and trainer of Brazil's 2012 National Champion, Epico Capim Fino, and number two ranked ABCCMM breeder in 2011.

The internship was to fulfill the requirements for her degree in Natural Horsemanship at Montana Western College. Kindle, an accomplished horsewoman and a trainer of the La Cense method of natural horsemanship, had ridden and trained Marchadors at Montana Marchadors but wanted to expand her education on setting and riding the gait of Marchadors. Here is a short interview with Kindle about her experiences in Brazil. You can reach Kindle at [kinmcc@hotmail.com](mailto:kinmcc@hotmail.com) or 406-202-1826.

**Q.** In Brazil you were a guest at Haras Capim Fino. What are their horses like?

**A.** They flat-out cook! They were very fast in their march. They were forward, hot, shiny, gorgeous! Their show-march movement was very up and down, very prancy, but they were well-disciplined.

Capim Fino breeds horses for show-ring competitions and wins. They are winning because they have changed both the march and the confirmation of the horse. They have changed the confirmation of the horse to have a different angle at the shoulder to make their horses move more up and down, flashy. They are breeding for a more upright headset on their horses and a shorter neck.



Capim Fino winning team.

In their barn, they had 20 horses in training at a time, half and half between sexes, ages two to five. They had approximately 60 brood mares and five or six key stallions that get shown. They do all of their breeding with AI with stallions from their farm and others. They feature the JB bloodline. Ello Kafe da Nova, 2005 Grand National Champion of the Race, was one of the main stallions they used for AI.

**Q.** What were some of your most memorable rides?

**A.** I had so many great rides! One time Toninho, one of the main trainers, and I were out riding. He was on a pinto and I was on

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President : Susan Gabriel

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Ella, a four-year-old mare. We took a really long ride through the jungle and hills and came out by a distillery. Then we marched the whole way home. Started with the slow march, then an average march—then the Marcha Longa, as fast as we could go without breaking into a canter. We were flying! It felt like you had a train underneath you, smooth, but with all this power. I remember looking at the shadows of the horses on the banks. We had to be moving 15 miles an hour, maybe more. The best part was all you had to do was sit hard and vertically collect and they would slow down. They came back to you really nice. To get them into this, had to leg them, give them head, let them go, then collect.

I remember Marcio, the top trainer and manager of Capim Fino, and I were riding. He was on a little chestnut stallion and I was on a black JB stallion called Schatz. It was one of my first rides and Marcio wanted to see how I could handle a horse. Went out in the forest, marching, marching, turned around for home and we went “hell-bent for leather” up hills, down hills. I remember looking back at Marcio and he was laughing. Generally Schatz was lazy but he was flat-out rolling and keeping ahead of Marcio on the younger stallion. After that ride, Marcio put me on everything, while at first, they only put me on safe mares.

**Q.** How does the gait of the Capim Fino horses differ from the Marchadors you have ridden in the U.S.?

**A.** They are more forward, more of a prance, much more up and down movement while the U.S. horses are more lengthy in their march and glide. It takes a while to get into the rhythm of this more pounding gait.

It was actually Getulio Tadeu Vieira, the ABCCMM inspector I previously knew from U.S. visits, who verbalized it best to me. He was at Capim Fino for an inspection and said to me, “The horse will teach you how to dance. Just let yourself go. Dance with the horse!”

Once you get the rhythm it was as smooth as U.S. Before his advice, I had my hips locked up. You are just supposed to let them roll with the horse. You can go all day in this march.

**Q.** In 2012, Capim Fino produced the National Champion of the Mangalarga Marchador Race, Epico Capim Fino. You rode Epico when you were there. What was it like to ride the Champion Marchador of Brazil? Describe the ride.

**A.** I rode Epico two times.

He was the first horse I got on when I was in Brazil. I was a little nervous. Everyone on the farm was watching me ride. I felt like I had a horse in my hand that had all the power in the world, but I had no way to stop him. Very heavy on his mouth. Still it was a VERY cool ride, smooth, up and down. Pounded the ground. Best of the best.

This first ride was early in the game and I was ignorant on the way they ride, contact, leg movement. Week three, I rode him again, after I knew how to ride the horses.

Completely in the palm of my hand. Marched him out in the jungle and back from the brewery. Smooth, calm, fast. Well-trained

USMMA Fall Journal

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and mannered horse. While I was there, he was exclusively handled by Toninho.



Kindle and Epico.

**Q. What does it take to produce a champion?**

**A.** I would say breeding is number one, athletic ability number two, and training number three. Toninho would say, "Trabalho. Trabalho. Trabalho." ("Work. Work. Work.")

**Q. Who were your teachers at Capim Fino?**

**A.** I rode with four different people: Marcio Ribeiro, the principle trainer, the manager of Capim Fin, Toninho de Silva, and the two barn boys Joven and Felipe.

My principal instructor Marcio is known as one of the best trainers in Brazil. He even does demonstrations of horsemanship in dressage (Spanish Walk Piaffe) at the National Show in Belo Horizonte. He is awesome. Soft hands, not forceful. Really understands the horse. He knows when discipline is needed but waits to see if he really needs to discipline. We communicated over Google Translate at end of day with drinks and conversation. He told me he wished more people would think like the horse and engage in natural horsemanship. Toninho was more

forceful, spurs to the gut, reprimands the horses tough.

**Q. What was a typical day like at Capim Fino?**

**A.** I had breakfast at 8 o'clock and then went down to the barn to ride two or three horses in the morning. It would vary where we rode. If it was nice out, in the mountains. If crappy or the horse needed it, in the Picadero, an outdoor arena with a hibiscus hedge.

We broke about 1 o'clock for lunch. Then we would ride two or three more horses. Originally Marcio thought I wanted to ride all day long so I would start at 8 and be handed off from guy to guy and would stop working/riding 10 at night. I was exhausted. My hands were actually blistered.

Marcio asked me if I was happy with the schedule. I said, "Just work me into your average day. Enough. I don't even ride this much at home!"

**Q. Eduardo Saad, the owner of Capim Fino, was your host. You were lucky enough to meet him and have conversations with him. What were the memorable points of your conversations about his horses?**

**A.** We talked about the gaits. He says he prefers Batida over Picada because he believes Batida-gear horses have a better sense of their footing in the mountains and the jungle than Picada horses do. He says he only keeps Batida horses because of their athletic ability, and thinks they are much more flashy, although Picada horses on the flat and in the arena can be a smooth, enjoyable ride. He talked about breeding. He really set out to change his breeding program and type of Marchador. The key maneuver that switched him over was working with AI. He would trade some of his

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mares' embryos for a stallion's semen that he liked the confirmation. Through AI and embryo transplant, he got good and bad, highs and lows but whittled it all out. Made very good equine decisions, smart, very smart. He approached breeding in a business fashion. He could for see the type of horse he wanted and made the business decision of going a new way when people were not doing this.

Ello Kafe da Nova was a key stallion in this evolution. I told him I had just taken an Equine Reproduction Class and a course in AI and was very interested, collecting stallions and stuff. I quizzed him, able to talk with him scholar to scholar.

**Q. Finally, who was your favourite Marchador at Capim Fino? Why?**

**A. J.B. Xote.** He was the J.B. line that got them all started. Then Ello was next and Xote took a back seat. But I LOVED Xote. Big personality. Big black stallion, tries to push you around, bite you. Puts on a front big and bad. But as soon as you loved on him: totally yours. Go in like any normal horse and treat him like a horse.

He was a freight train. HUGE. ROLLED. Could get him to move fast. Up and Down. Completely, always, in your hands.



Kindle and J.B. Xote.

## Finding a new discipline with Western Dressage

Rox Rogers

*Editor's note: Rox Rogers of Montana's Cayuse Farms is the owner of three Marchadors. She has traveled to Brazil and trained at Desempenho, an internationally known Brazilian Marchador Equestrian school. She enjoys trail riding and trains and works her Marchadors in several different disciplines; reining, jumping, and most recently in Western Dressage. Notably, though she has just started to compete in Western Dressage, her Marchadors have taken two First Places in competition against other breeds. You can reach Rox at [highcountrycowgirl@centurylink.net](mailto:highcountrycowgirl@centurylink.net) or 406-862-0005.*

Last winter, I decided I needed a new challenge for my Marchadors. Northwest Montana winters are a bit long so I wondered what else I could add to my riding repertoire. I had heard that Western Dressage classes were being offered during the Winter Series Hunter/Jumper shows in Kalispell, Montana. I jumped on the opportunity to dive in and show my two Marchador "boys." I had never competed in Dressage, let alone Western Dressage, but I was encouraged by some friends to take the challenge.

Western Dressage is a new discipline that is growing in popularity across the country. Founded in 2010 by Eitan Beth-Halachmy and Jack Brainard, the Western Dressage Association of America (WDAA) introduces a discipline that combines traditional Western riding and attire with classical Dressage and good horsemanship. By blending both disciplines and taking the best from both, the rider becomes more educated, patient, and understanding, allowing for the partnership between horse and rider to blossom. The goal of Western Dressage is to have a strong,

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balanced horse who responds happily to the rider's cues, with lightness both in rider and mount. Similar to Dressage, Western Dressage aims to create a better horse and rider with the use of structure and levels and is performed at designated letters in a 20 meter by 40 meter arena. The Western Dressage horse will have a shorter stride than a Dressage horse and is asked to walk, jog, and lope as opposed to walk, trot, canter.



Rox Rogers with La Paz Jivago.

Throughout the year I entered five Western Dressage competitions in conjunction with the Flathead Combined Training Association. The Marchadors excelled at the competitions and seemed to enjoy the lightness required to execute the maneuvers. Both of my horses are Batida and I find the gait very versatile in performing the required movements of the various dressage tests. With my centered riding, Western Dressage has been an excellent discipline to exhibit my Marchadors to their full potential.

In October 2012, I attended the first Western Dressage Train the Trainer course in Colorado to further learn the discipline from WDAA board members. If you are interested in pursuing Western Dressage in your area, you can read more about it on the Western Dressage website, [www.westerndressageassociation.org](http://www.westerndressageassociation.org). The WDAA currently has 18 state affiliates. All breeds and all levels of horses and riders are invited to participate.

## From human to horse in concert

Alessandra Deerinck

*Editor's note: Alessandra Deerinck, U.S. Marchador owner, was born in Milan, Italy and now lives with her family in Escondido, California. She is a Doctor in Veterinary Medicine and works as a horse trainer and clinician at Human to Horse, H2H Sensing. For four years she was a clinician in the Caroline Resnick Method. In a thirty year equestrian life, she has ridden, competed, and trained horses in various equestrian disciplines, her most recent being Endurance riding with Marchadors. You can reach Alessandra at [www.HumantoHorse.com](http://www.HumantoHorse.com) or 760-715-1554.*

Horsemanship happens by how a human and a horse perceive the situation they live, have lived, and will live together. Between the two, the leader is the one that has the whole plan in his mind. In "real life" information from what surrounds us is received through the senses (sight, hearing, touch, smell, and taste), a part of an individual that never gets shut down. The same information is processed through the nervous system and everyone express himself by the way of behavior. Not counting the variables that personality adds to the equation, how a relationship evolves has its base in the quality of communication between the individuals involved. The leader is the most aware and the one who creates the circumstances of the conversation. A communication geared towards the future can transform how situations occur to the individuals involved, and the leader is always open to the future and watches over it. From every interaction, both individuals build memories that will inevitably affect their future.

Have you ever spent time with a horse that is not on a line? Giving a horse the choice

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to freely move, while he is with us, is giving him permission to express himself, since movement and body language are the horse's way of talking. Knowing how to properly dialogue with a horse without having to tie him on a rope is pleasant and rewarding for both human and horse and a positive support (not a substitute!) for the training and practice of any equestrian discipline, where fitness and specific skills are required. Safety is the most important and difficult element to learn for this kind of work. While we know a lot about natural horse behavior, not so much has been written about the human to horse relationship when both individuals are free to interact. Working without tack requires time to learn how to properly move around a free horse and understand his behavior without doubt. It is certainly not something to try by guessing how from an article.

Humans and horses are naturally social beings. Differently than us, in order to survive, horses are extremely able to adapt and freedom is one of their strongest tendencies. Regardless of genetics, physical ability and training, only a horse that likes what he does can be a real champion. The others can just manage to do the job quite well. Having worked and competed with horses of many different breeds and in various disciplines, I found that a solution for this problem is working with a horse's natural inclination rather than trying to bend them to ours is a great way to motivate them to do what we want together.

Working "off line" allows us to exercise all of the horse's body and mind, moving in a way he could not do with a rider on his back, and communicating with him as immediately as we do with our friends. Having a clear communication with horses is what I always aim to do and what I love teaching. The horses I work with show immediate improvement in their behavior with people. This change lasts if the people around them

take the time to learn how to properly communicate with horses. My students tell me that my approach is extremely simple, very valuable and easy to achieve and they never want to go back to their old way. I called it H2H Sensing. It happens without tack or constraints, therefore using the natural horse's attitude for freedom. In our interactions we choose the most appropriate sense for reaching the horse, in contexts and with subjects that horses understand without the need of being taught through conditioning. Going through spontaneous interactions rather than just through trained behavior, whether we just met a horse or we are old friends, we can immediately connect to him. We can also take in consideration every aspect of the human to horse relationship (aka Horsemanship), including feelings normally left out. They are usually considered a weakness on our part and often are the cause for things to go wrong.



Allesandra with Allegría de Los Cielos.

Another very handy advantage of working without touching a horse is being able to purposefully settle from the ground issues that could be more difficult and dangerous when faced from the saddle. In fact, the only way to truly solve a problem is to have an effective and purposeful communication, like a dialogue where we can ask a question and get the desired response, not a reaction, which is a response with related feelings attached to it (read this as: Bucking, rearing, going forward crooked etc.).

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An example of how I take care of the horse's feelings is dealing with boredom that horses often manifest by acquiring stable vices. In the direct relationship with us, they show it by defying our requests when we practice too often something that does not make sense for them like a pattern, a dressage test or a jumping course. Ideally, whether I am training a horse's body or his mind, I always like to have an element of interest for the horse in anything we do together, whether it being a physical or mental reward or the variety of things we do together. One of the ways I keep the time spent with a horse interesting for both of us is to explore different equestrian disciplines. Recently I trained and competed in endurance with Alegria de Los Cielos, a six-year-old Mangalarga Marchador mare, who lived in a pasture until 42 days before her first ride. During the athletic preparation for the ride, I introduced her to H2H Sensing. Two weeks before the date, Alegria and I took part in a dressage clinic given by Juan Manuel Munoz Diaz, an Olympic rider from Spain. In the end, we were able to finish 32nd out of 82 starters in the AERC Manzanita Ride Limited Distance (25 miles) 2012.

Working with the Mangalarga Marchador horses, aside from the incredibly smooth ride, I found that their mind is the aspect I like best. They are naturally "in sync" with people. This was not true just for one horse or two, since I have been working with Jacob Martinez and Teresa Longo's horses at Rancho de Los Cielos for the past two years. The time I spend working with a horse "off line" has always an aspect of immediate interest, which invites a horse to join us in the action. The motivation could also be a reward, but is never a bribe; otherwise we would lose our leadership. Any "off line" action that flows is an indication that the horse is willing to work by his own choice, giving immediate feedback on how effective the training is. In

fact, if the horse does not like it, he would just stay away and not interact with us. Most people fear this fact, and always keep a line on a horse until they consider him "trained."

Some activities are similar to what horses would do between horses, like spending time in the same space or moving side by side at all the different gaits and speeds. Other activities promote cooperation between individuals, like going through an obstacle course together or playing with a ball.



Allesandra with Rio de Los Cielos.

Horses are naturally "in sync" with people when they understand us. I was able to capture on film the best examples of what I am talking about in working the first few times with Zorro de Los Cielos, a seven year old Mangalarga Marchador stallion (Youtube – Alessandra Deerinck - Beginning Liberty Work with Zorro de Los Cielos. Part 1, 2 and 3). Zorro has a dominant personality that can be difficult to lead, but when I asked him to perform things like playing with a ball, coming to me, or laying down, he followed my lead and was very enthusiastic about it. Amazingly, this was accomplished in just three sessions, a very minimal time compared to what is required to train a horse to do any one of those things alone. This is the unbelievable power that working "off line" gives us in the relationship with a horse.

## USMMA 2013 Montana Mangalarga Marchador Clinic



**Come ride with us in Montana.** USMMA Mangalarga Marchador Clinic, Helena, Montana, on September 6,7,8 of 2013. Reserve those dates now! For more information contact Tresa Smith at [MontanaMarchador@gmail.com](mailto:MontanaMarchador@gmail.com) and Lori Silcher at [silcher@montana.com](mailto:silcher@montana.com)

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