

CONNEMARA NEWS FROM DOWN UNDER JULY 2011

Connemara People in Victoria had a real treat served to them recently when the extremely well know and highly talented Horseman Manola Mandez presented a demonstration of Classical training using Connemara Ponies. Manola's training is extremely interesting as he combines work in-hand, with his deep understanding of Equine Chiropractic methods, to help the rider better communicate with the Horse/pony once under saddle.

Manola Mandez's background is unique. He was one of six founders of the Royal School of Equestrian Art in Jerez, Spain. In 1978 Manola was invited to come to Australia by Ray Williams of R.M. Williams, Stockmen and Horse outfitters, to be a Director and Head Rider at the El Caballo Blanco Equestrian school in Perth, WA. He was later director of El Caballo Sydney.

Those in Australia who can remember will know of his star performer at these establishments was non other than a Connemara Stallion Kemill GHill Spinnaker, bred by the late Alan Longman of Western Australia. I had the pleasure of seeing Spinnaker and Manola perform once when in Adelaide and the manner in which this man was able to establish his routine with Spinnaker has never left my memory.



Manola now lives in Sunbury, Melbourne, Victoria as teaches overseas and throughout Australia. Breed and so the ability of our Connemara ponies to excel in all formats of Equestrian sport and in particular Dressage is something that Connemara owners and Riders all over the world should recognize and ensure that the Connemara is given a broad opportunity to show its latent talents. The continuing development of the Performance Connemara and the results of the varied performances in a broad spectrum of events, including Dressage is there for the Doubting Thomases to see! And repeat!!!



Another item from the scrap book centres on the legendary part bred Connemara "Grasshopper" He started life as "Copper Coin" and competed for Ireland in the 1956 Olympic Games in Stockholm. He had a clear show jumping round but was eliminated for missing a flag. He was sold to Californian interests where his name was changed to "Grasshopper". Ridden by Michael Page he had an excellent career with individual gold in both the 1959 Pan American games in Chicago, and the 1963 Pan American Games in Sao Paulo, Brazil. The career continued to the Rome games in 1960 and the 1964 games in Tokyo where "Grasshopper" was on the silver medal team. This Part Bred Connemara is known as only one of five horses in the sport to have competed in six or more CCIOs.

In glancing through CPBSA action Groups newsletter it is very pleasing to see so many younger riders preparing their ponies and part bred for all aspects of performance competition down under. Dressage, Eventing, Trail, Harness. The Performance Register and its rewards is beginning to be seen with the numbers of new and younger riders preparing their ponies for all facets of Equine participation. Another interesting aspect is the number of Connemara owners and enthusiasts that are now travelling to Clifden to the Show and to tour Connemara. It appears that the Connemara Pony is travelling well "Down Under".

John Tennant, ICCPS Publicity Officer.

Many thanks to Jean Dart, Victoria for information sent!