

Hilda Gurney  
by: Lorraine Britton

Hilda Gurney, mentor to many accomplished equestrians and a greatly admired Olympian herself, is an example of the commitment and tenacity that it takes to have success. She is a respected FEI International judge who volunteers her time in committees as well as influences and writes the rules and tests of Dressage. Throughout my time learning my way through the sport of Dressage, I have always regarded Hilda with great admiration and seen her as a remarkable equestrian whom I've always aspired to learn from. I see her as a genuine, sincere woman who greatly cares about the quality of the sport, cares about the continuation and strength of the sport, and encourages youth through her hard work and perseverance. As an inductee to the hall of fame of USDF in 2007, one can learn a lot from her if they are open and willing to learn. She is an example of personal strength, with an air of professionalism about her, she believes in and does the right thing for people and horses. I personally met Hilda at an educational seminar when she came to Texas from her hometown of Moorpark, California. As a young rider I saw her as a mentor, providing insight into how Dressage should be ridden. This past summer I had the unique opportunity to travel to her stables in California and train with Hilda for nearly two weeks. Throughout this time I learned more not only about the sport but about crucial objectives in life that I could pursue, about tenacity, strength, and humility. The integrity and strength of being with Hilda can be converted to not only the interest and success of Dressage, but realized and used to empower other aspects of life and career as well. I was taught about the ability and strength that it takes to overcome setbacks, as there are many in this sport and in life situations. One can not control all the setbacks such as a ruptured appendix and the complications of multiple surgeries necessary to save my life that I have just endured as a senior in high school.

The strength and tenacity of being in the Olympics is an excellent example to keep in mind when one is finding personal strength to get through difficult times. Hilda has always been an wonderful



on my life.

example to learn from in the importance of what can be learned from setbacks, and how to persevere to achieve and appreciate each and every opportunity. This philosophy has kept with me as I went through my own personal setbacks such as my time in the hospital as result of my ruptured appendix and the time as a child when my mother was hit by a suburban while she was a pedestrian. It is important to understand the acknowledgement of humility to embellish each and every moment of life and make it the best possible. As in Dressage, and in life, humility is also a necessary trait. I see Hilda Gurney as an inspirational woman who has been an influence and made an impact