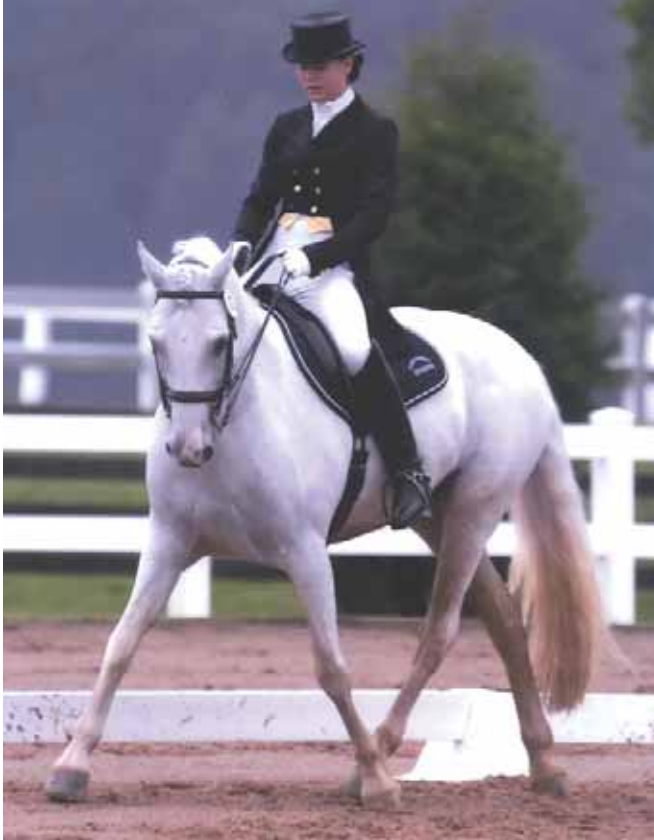


Breed of the Month: Connemara

Hardy workaholics, this breed endears itself to adults and children alike



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BIG THINGS, LITTLE PACKAGE: The Connemara gelding Shammer Jake (by *Ballinaboy Eamonn), owned and ridden by Jr/YR Courtney Yeager (OH)

THE CONNEMARA ORIGINATED IN IRELAND. THE FIRST ponies were imported to the US in the early 1950s. The Connemara, which stands from thirteen to over fifteen hands in North America, is the largest of the native pony breeds and is suitable for both children and adults.

The breed standard is “mannerly and manageable, kind, responsive, possessing good sense and basic intelligence.” The Connemara is expected to have “straight and true movement, both front and rear, with free movement in the shoulders. Connemaras should move underneath themselves and should be surefooted, athletic, and clever, covering a lot of ground.” As a result, it is a natural dressage horse.

The Connemara breed’s motto is “They do it all.” Connemaras have good work ethics, and the average Connemara doesn’t waste energy trying *not* to do his job. He is quick to learn, hardy, and sound.

Connemaras you might know: Probably the most famous Connemaras in dressage were the half-breds *Seldom Seen* and *Last Scene*, both ridden by Lendon Gray. Successful purebreds

include *Shammer Jake*, ridden and trained by Courtney Yeager; and the stallion *Fergus*, ridden and trained by Dorie Addy-Crow and now owned and ridden by Leigh Ellen Roberts (GA). The stallion *Cashel’s Rock of Ages*, owned by Kathy Lucas of Gately Farm (CA), is ridden by several juniors. A junior rider is campaigning the stallion *Ballywhim Ardan Mor*, owned by Lendon Gray, at the FEI levels. A half-bred rising star is *Indecent Proposal*, owned, trained, and ridden by Dawn Weniger (NC).

The organization: The American Connemara Pony Society was founded in 1956, with a mission to register and promote the breed in North America.

All-Breeds awards offered: All categories.

How to participate: Both purebred and half-bred Connemaras are eligible. The owner must be a USDF participating member, and the Connemara must be lifetime-recorded with USDF. The Connemara must be fully registered with the American Connemara Pony Society, and the owner must be an ACPS member.

The American Connemara Pony Society is an approved member of the International Committee of Connemara Pony Breeders Society. As such, Connemaras registered with “sister” societies are eligible for ACPS registration as well.

Organization contact info: *American Connemara Pony Society*: acps.org or (540) 886-2239. ▲

FOR THE BREEDS, BY THE BREEDS

Each month, “All-Breeds Connection” spotlights a USDF All-Breeds awards program participating organization and the breed it represents. Information and photos that appear in this column are furnished by the breed registries.

The All-Breeds program is designed to recognize the accomplishments of specific breeds in dressage. All participating organizations offer “open” year-end awards from Training Level through Grand Prix, and some offer awards in additional categories, such as adult amateur, junior/young rider, and dressage sport-horse breeding. Registry representatives are usually on hand to help bestow awards at the banquet held during each year’s USDF convention.

All-Breeds award eligibility requirements include memberships and horse registrations with both USDF and the participating organization. For details and a list of current participating organizations, visit usdf.org. For more information about All-Breeds awards program participation, send e-mail to allbreeds@usdf.org.