

CHRISTAN & CON: A MOVIE IN THE MAKING

by Bonnie "Skater" Snow



FIRST SCENE: New Jersey about ten years ago. P. Wynne Norman of Sportponies Unlimited breeds 16.2 hand Thoroughbred stallion Theodore to a 13.0 hand Thoroughbred-Arabian-Shetland mare. And voila! – a 14.2 hand sportpony, Theodore O'Connor, is born. Sportponies are American warmbloods that move and perform like horses, and Theodore O'Connor couldn't be a more perfect example.

SECOND SCENE: North Carolina about ten years ago. Christan Trainor is about fourteen years old, really, really cute, and riding horses and ponies. She goes to schooling shows, but her true love is eventing. FLASHBACK showing Christan being born in North Carolina, but growing up in the Virgin Islands, where she ride wild ponies for fun and kicks and quickly develops her very unique and special ability to connect with these little equines.

THIRD SCENE: February 2004 in North Carolina. Sportponies Unlimited is now located in North Carolina. Horse broker Lisa Reed urges owner P. Wynne Norman to find a special rider for Theodore O'Connor, someone who will develop and hone his obvious eventing prowess. At the same time, eventing great, Jimmy Wofford tells Christan about Sportponies Unlimited and Theodore O'Connor.

* * *

Sound like a movie? You bet. And we want this little movie clip to have a happy ending. So, what's the plot?

In February 2004, Christan becomes Theodore O'Connor's ("Con" for short) rider, and the two subsequently begin training and eventing in North Carolina. By the end of Spring 2004, Con moves to the intermediate level (3'9"). This is a major accomplishment for a horse, let alone a pony! Both pony and rider are natural talents.

In October 2004, Christan and Con move to Middleburg, Virginia in order to train with David and Karen O'Connor. They winter in Ocala where they compete in Intermediate level warm-up competitions, and then move up to the advanced level.

Now we cut to the present. The high point of Con's Spring 2005 season was to be Jersey Fresh, a CCI 2-star 3-day event (intermediate level). However, Christan has changed her mind about taking him there. "I'm glad I did..... because one of the jumps wasn't made to specifications. It caused quite a bit of trouble for several riders, and eventually, the jump was removed from the course." Fairhill, a CCI 3-star 3-day event (advanced level) is planned for Fall 2005. Christan's and Con's plans, however, don't stop there.

"We want to go to Rolex in Spring 2006,"



Continued on page 33

Continued from page 22

says Christan. "He can do it." What she means is that, she believes -- no, she knows that he will place. And after that, Badminton and Burghley, both 3-day events in England. All three: Rolex, Badminton and Burghley, are 4-star events, meaning that they are Olympic-level events. When I (naively, of course) ask about the 2008 Olympics, she answers, that were it not for selector's prejudice, this pony could probably make it!

So, what's the dilemma? I thought you'd never ask. Money, of course. Sportponies Unlimited helps to subsidize Con's career. So does Christan. But it's not enough. Not nearly enough. Christan and Con need help, and they are hoping to find partners for a syndicate.

Are they deserving? Uh, dumb question!!! A pony that looks like a Thoroughbred and jumps like one, too! A rider that, at eighteen years old, was longlisted for the 2000 Olympic Eventing Team. What better chances of success!

And if you don't believe me, check out the pictures of Christan and Con at <http://www.sportponiesunlimited.com/TC.html>. Or, call Christan yourself. She is a sweet, unassuming, energetic, and passionate person – aside from being exceptionally pretty and petite.

This movie has a great plot, great actors, a pretty leading lady, animal appeal, great directors....now we need some Hollywood-type executive producers with lots of pockets! You



know who you are. People with big dreams and the wherewithal to make them happen. Yoo-hoo...you with the suits...you know who you can contact:

Christan Trainor
2722 Burland Lane
The Plains, VA 20198
(Tel) 919-423-1397
(Fax) 919-401-2381
(Email) ctrain2000@hotmail.com

Th-th-th—that's all, folks!!!!

CONNOR'S FAVE TREATS: Nickers
CHRISTAN'S FAVE TREATS: Cheesecake

CONNOR'S FAVE CLOTHES: his custom wool cooler
CHRISTAN'S FAVE CLOTHES: jeans and a T-shirt....no, make that flip-flops (in the summer)

CONNOR'S FAVE EXERCISE (besides eventing):
rolling in the mud at 10:00 AM in the morn (off-season, of course)

CHRISTAN'S FAVE EXERCISE(besides riding Connor):
riding the tractor

OTHER CUTSIES....

says Christan, "When he's in the paddock, he comes when you call..."

"When you bursh his saddle area, he paws with his right leg..."

"He's my best friend..."