



DANCING WITH HORSES

On September 16th and 17th at Cactus Creek Ranch in Pueblo two Fox Trotters joined seven Canon City Dressage Association members in a two day freestyle dressage clinic. Debby Hughes and her beautiful MFT mare danced to the music in western style. Marcy Wadlington and her MFT mare danced to the music in English style.

The clinician Simone Windeler of RMDS is someone that everyone would enjoy learning from. Simone is one of the top freestyle dressage riders in the nation. Saturday morning each person and their horse performed individually, maneuvering through all their gaits. In the afternoon Simone matched up three horses each, forming three individual groups. Each group rode for 30 minutes doing circles, serpentines and figure eights, etc. while listening to dozens of sound tracks.

Sunday we all performed individually to 45 minutes of non stop music and 45 minutes of non stop riding. Simone had made a CD for each person with music that complimented their horses' gaits and movements. It was up to each individual to create a performance based on the music and their horses' capabilities.

Debbie and I were the only two that had gaited horses. We were received with many accolades from high level dressage riders. They were impressed with all our gaits and believe me Debbie and I used all the gears, dog walk, flat foot walk, running walk, amble, foxtrot and canter. We even threw in a few flying lead changes. Debbie received the ultimate compliment, "you have a nice set"!

If you ever have the opportunity to attend such a clinic I highly recommend it. Not only will you enjoy finding the rhythm and the beat of your horse's gaits in the music ...your horse may enjoy it more than you.

Marcy Wadlington
Canon City

Debbie Hughes and Marcy Wadlington are members of the Mountain States Fox Trotter Association.