

Horse Of A Lifetime:

Monsieur



(Mary Phelps Photo)

In the occasional series, Charlotte Bredahl-Baker believes her time with the talented horse who took her to the Olympics was “meant to be.”

Molly Sorge

When she first looked at a gawky, chestnut gelding in Denmark in 1986, Charlotte Bredahl-Baker had no idea she was looking at the horse who would take her to the heights of Grand Prix stardom, and be a valuable friend and partner for two decades.

At that point, Bredahl-Baker was in the market for an investment prospect for herself and a partner.

“It was that he was in the right price range. It wasn’t like I knew he was going to be my Olympic horse. Honestly, it was luck,” she recalled. “He was a nice-moving horse, but at the time, he was very gangly. He was a late-maturing horse. He was a nice horse, but I had no idea he was going to end up being what he became.”

What Monsieur became was a part of the historic bronze-medal U.S. dressage team at the 1992 Barcelona Olympics, the 1994 and 1997 U.S. Dressage Federation Grand Prix Horse of the Year, and a consistent performer

who was competitive at the Grand Prix level for 10 years. And, he was Bredahl-Baker’s treasured companion.

“He did everything for my career. Without him, I wouldn’t have gone to the Olympics, and that really is a huge thing. It gives you a level of credibility that nothing else does. I owe everything to him,” said Bredahl-Baker.

But the relationship went both ways. “With someone else, I don’t think Monsieur would have been the horse he was,” said fellow Grand Prix rider Guenter Seidel. “Charlotte is so patient and intuitive. I remember him to not be the easiest of horses, but Charlotte handled him superbly.”

Monsieur (Lowenbrau—Heidi) was one of those horses whose outright consistency and correctness prevailed. “He had a very powerful extended trot and a powerful passage. His changes were very good. There wasn’t anything he couldn’t do pretty well,” said Bredahl-Baker.

And she believes that Monsieur would still be competitive today, in an era of flashy, extravagant horses. “Every once in a while, I’ll look at our Olympic tape, and I still think he looks really good. To this day, his passage would hold up to anybody’s,” she said.

But perhaps the highest praise comes from trainer and friend Hilda Gurney. “You would get goose bumps watching them. They were that good,” she said.

“He was meant to be my horse,” said Charlotte Bredahl-Baker of her decade-long partnership with Monsieur.

► A Slow Start

But while this story ends with happiness for all, don’t think that Bredahl-Baker didn’t have to endure some setbacks in her path to her Olympic medal. The very first time she got on Monsieur after he shipped from Europe, he bucked her off. And it took a while for her to see glimmers of greatness.

“We had to go slowly in the beginning because he was so gangly and uncoordinated, because he was still growing a lot, even as a 5-year-old,” she said. Monsieur’s looks at this stage earned him his barn-name of “Moose.”

And then Bredahl-Baker discovered the quirk that would haunt Monsieur for his entire career. “When I started taking him to shows, I discovered that he was afraid of everything, so



EuroAmerican

S A D D L E R Y

Perfect Harmony Between Horse & Rider

Hennig

*Exclusively at
Euro-American*

Hennig "Sofa"
with Full Block

Available
Patent
Leather
Trim



Hennig
with
3/4 Block



Furst Fabio (and Cesar Parra) and
their New Hennig Padded Double Bridle



New! MDC Stirrups & Spurs



New! Proper Length Reins
(available in brown & black)

New Florida Location:

12873 Collecting Canal Road, Loxahatchee, FL 33470

1-888-SNAFFLE

www.EuroSaddlery.com



Shop your Favorite Dressage Collections

• F.I.T.S. • Lucky Braids • Anky • MDC Stirrups •

Equestrian Collections features your favorite top equestrian brands all on one convenient website. From Horse to Rider, Dressage to Eventing, Equestrian Collections meets all your equestrian needs.



Shop in Comfort, Ride in Style™

When you factor in what industrialized diets have done to our horses' health over the years, it makes perfect sense.



Loaded with inflammatory Omega-6s, commercial feeds and grains are often the culprit behind arthritis, spookiness, poor hoof quality, reproductive issues, and even that mystifying "performance not living up to genetic potential."

Erase the negative impact of Omega-6 by dramatically increasing your horses' intake of Omega-3, and do it with fish oil, far and away the most potent form.

Ready to see many of your horses' problems – and large supplement bills – melt away?
Visit us online at wellpride.com/ch, or call 866.414.0188.



that was a big challenge that I didn't know we'd have to deal with," she said.

"It took a long time to get him so that he was confident in his surroundings at a show. I'd take him to shows days in advance and do a lot of hand walking, just getting him used to everything. Once he got to be 8, then he really came around in his training, and he started moving along more quickly."

In his 8-year-old year, Moose competed in his first big competition, the 1990 U.S. Olympic Dressage Festival in Oklahoma City, Okla. There, he finished 10th in the National Intermediaire I Championship.

Moose started Grand Prix that fall, and things really came together for them. "One of our turning points was at a judges' forum with Edgar Hotz, just when Monsieur was starting Grand Prix. And Edgar went crazy about him, how much he liked him, and I think that's one of the first times I realized I had a really great horse," Bredahl-Baker said.

"Once he really got into it, and got into doing the Grand Prix, he really had a lot of heart. He came to know when it really mattered, and he'd try hard. We had a really great partnership."

Bredahl-Baker's patience and persistence in bringing Moose along from a gawky, fearful youngster began to pay off.

"Charlotte trains very kindly and brings horses along very systematically. She's never so ambitious that she would sacrifice the welfare of the horse or rush them in any way. She's a very sympathetic rider," said Gurney, who helped Bredahl-Baker with Moose in their early days.

In 1990—just their first year at Grand Prix—Bredahl-Baker and Moose won all the West Coast USET qualifying competitions and earned a trip to Gladstone, N.J., to compete at the Miller's/USET National Championships which were also the selection trials for the World Equestrian Games that year. They placed third at the trials, but the selectors chose not to put the young horse on the WEG team—a decision Bredahl-Baker agreed with wholeheartedly.

The next year, they repeated third place in the national championships and earned a grant to train and compete in Europe for five months. She rode with Herbert Rehbein, and Monsieur continued to improve.

► The International Stage

Little did Bredahl-Baker realize that 1992 would bring moments to eclipse even that—Olympic moments. She and Moose started the year winning everything on the West Coast again and qualifying for the Olympic selection trials in Florida. There, they finished sixth—good enough to compete in Europe for final team selection.

The subsequent trip to Europe brought Bredahl-Baker one of her most memorable wins. "I got permission to show at the CDI

TERESA BUTTA-STANTON and UNITAS



Good Luck representing the U.S. at the
World Championship for Young Horses in
VERDEN, GERMANY!!

We are proud of you.
MIKE and WOUT

Michael Ann Norwood
LITTLE CREEK LTD.
WWW.DUTCHHORSES.COM
410-913-9666

Wout van den Brink
HORSE SALES INTERNATIONAL
WWW.WOUTVANDENBRINK.COM
011 31 651 711 989



(Lyndee Kemmet Photo)

Monsieur, now 24, is happily enjoying retirement with Charlotte Bredahl-Baker (center) and her husband, Joel Baker at their Solvang, Calif., ranch.

backed him all the way down the long side of the ring and then went into the ring," she said. Her cool thinking paid off when she and Moose turned in a good test—their Grand Prix score was essential for the U.S. team's eventual bronze medal.

Monsieur's Grand Prix career continued after the Olympics just as it had

World Cup show in Copenhagen [Denmark]," she recalled.

For Bredahl-Baker, this was returning home, since she was born and raised in Denmark and only moved to the United States in 1979. "The show was in front of this wonderful castle. My entire family from Denmark was there, and they'd never seen me compete before at any level. And they all came, and old friends, and I had probably one of the best rides of my life in the freestyle, and I won it.

Having everyone there, it was just such an awesome experience."

A good Grand Prix performance at Wiesbaden (Germany) clinched her berth on the U.S. team for the Barcelona Olympics. But on the world stage, Moose's nerves got the best of him again.

"At the Olympics, we went around the arena, and people started clapping, and he headed for the out-gate. The one thing I always knew I could do was back him, so I literally

begun—with wins. The 1994 USDF Grand Prix Horse of the Year title was his first, and Bredahl-Baker had him aimed for the selection trials for the 1996 Atlanta Olympics. But Moose injured himself while turned out, and Bredahl-Baker opted to give him a vacation instead. They came back with a vengeance in 1997, earning his second USDF Horse of the Year award at the ripe age of 16.

Bredahl-Baker continued to compete Moose until he was 18, and she then retired

Positioned to win.

Positioned for comfort.

Peter Menet's attention to detail now extends beyond his renowned Amerigo saddle to the highly popular Italian saddle: Vega. With standardized tree sizes, flap and seat options, Vega is easy to fit and very correct. With a host of distinctive design features – including the handsome monoflap – Vega's dressage and jumping saddles could be a perfect fit for you.

vega
by Amerigo

Brought to you exclusively by World Equestrian Brands, a division of Equibrand. To learn more about the full line of Vega products or to locate a retailer near you, call 888-6EQUINE.



*Thanks to the
members of
'Team Hoag'
for making our
Florida season
a wonderful
success!*

*—Tami Hoag
& Coco Chanel*

THE *Team*

BETSY STEINER
MICHAEL RIPPLOH
FRAN GOODSSELL
DORTE SORENSEN
DR. JOHN LOCKAMY
DR. SCOTT ANDERSON
JAMES GILCHRIST
JOHNNY ROBB
BARBARA FOOSE
JJ HATHAWAY
MELISSA SPEED
& INSTONE AIR
SERVICES USA

OUR IRON HORSE
RANCH FAMILY
AARON WILSON
JOHN BLACK
ERICA POSELEY
ALFREDO ERNANDEZ
& all the ladies at
Betsy Steiner Dressage



TAMI HOAG
MALIBU, CALIFORNIA

©SusanJStickle.com

Monsieur's retirement ceremony in 1999 was an emotional moment for Charlotte Bredahl-Baker, as her husband, Joel Baker, led "Moose" out of the ring.



Monsieur's powerful passage and extended trots were his strengths, but there wasn't a movement he wasn't good at.

(Sheri Scott Photos)

him in an emotional ceremony during the California Dressage Society Annual Convention in January 1999.

Her last ride on him, however, came a year later. Bredahl-Baker was scheduled to ride an exhibition at the Festival of the Horse in Del Mar, Calif.

"Monsieur was 19 at the time, and I was not planning on riding him; I was planning on riding [her current Grand Prix mount] Lugano," she said.

"At the last minute, something came up with Lugano, and I had to pull Monsieur out. I hadn't ridden him for six months, even though students had been riding him. He was fit, but he hadn't done the hard stuff for ages. I got on him a week before the exhibition, and he was just awesome. That night, the stands were packed, and he got a standing ovation, and no one knew it was my last ride on him but me. It was an unbelievable moment."

Now 24, Monsieur is thoroughly enjoying his retirement on Bredahl-Baker's farm in Solvang, Calif. "He's the king. He's a very strong-minded and spirited horse, and he's the same today as he was 20 years ago. He wants everything just his way," she said.

Meant To Be Mine

Making sure Monsieur has things his way was one of the keys to the partnership between he and Bredahl-Baker.

"The horse was very special—he had so much power and the most incredible passage. He really had a lot of confidence in Charlotte,"

MIKMAR BIT COMPANY

NEW - APPROVED

Loose Ring with Ergöm Lozenge

INTRODUCING CUPREON A NEW MATERIAL CREATED EXCLUSIVELY FOR MIKMAR, SPECIFICALLY FOR HORSES. CUPREON IS A SUPERIOR QUALITY COPPER ALLOY. THIS APPEALING AND HIGHLY PALATABLE FORMULATION PROMOTES SALIVATION AND MOUTHING OF THE BIT. IT IS NON-TOXIC AND NICKEL FREE.

APPROVED for USEF/USDF dressage competitions

The Cupreon Ergöm Lozenge Mouthpiece has a unique center link, ideal in size and shape for effectiveness and comfort. Its design eliminates "nutcracker" action reducing pinching of the tongue with no palate interference. It softens excessive pressure to the outside of the mouth.

Available in: Loose Ring-Loose Ring Eggbutt-D Ring-Full Cheek-Eggbutt

The Tixerant Comfort Dressage Girth

Imported from France and used by top European riders this girth expands in the center, allowing freedom of movement and breathing, without the saddle slipping.

For more info or a Dealer near you:
www.mikmar.com 866-MIKMAR7 (818)-446-0063

"WE FEED **Fluid Action HA**TM DAILY!"

"WE FEED **FLUID ACTION HA**TM

JOINT SUPPLEMENT DAILY
TO ALL OF OUR HORSES AS
AN INTEGRAL PART OF OUR
DAILY PREVENTATIVE
MAINTENANCE PROGRAM.
IT KEEPS OUR HORSES
FEELING LOOSE AND
SUPPLE, WHICH GIVES US
A DEFINITE COMPETITIVE
EDGE IN THE ARENA."

*—Reese and
Lindsay Koffler*



FINISH LINE HORSE PRODUCTS, INC.[®]
800-762-4242
info@finishlinehorse.com
www.finishlinehorse.com
CODE: CHRJune-30

©2006, Finish Line Horse
Products, Inc. All rights reserved.

GUARANTEED TO WORK
OR YOUR MONEY
BACK!



Available through SmartPak
and fine stores nationwide.



Finish Line is an audited
member of the NASC
and is proud to display
the seal of quality.

said Gurney. "He was a very insecure horse, but he had faith in her. Charlotte spent a lot of time with him and gave him the time he needed to be a great horse."

Bredahl-Baker claimed that her time with Monsieur taught her "the idea of always trying to have a real partnership, not just having the horse submissive to you," she said. "Because they're really going to try for you if they have that relationship. Having him be a top Grand Prix horse for 10 years also really taught me about the fine line of having a horse happy in work and fit, and yet stay sound. I gave him lots of breaks—he had at least one or two months off completely each year—and I think that's one of the reasons he kept going for so long. He never got burned out, mentally or physically."

Bredahl-Baker's long partnership with Moose is all the more remarkable because he was originally a sales prospect, and he was on the market almost the entire time she competed him. In the early days, before Moose started showing, various riders tried him.

"But people came up with different reasons they didn't like him—his gaits weren't good enough, or they didn't like his canter. Nobody thought he was anything special. I think it was just meant to be that he would be mine," she said.

Bredahl-Baker's original partner had

The Biggest Hurdle

While Monsieur developed into a consistent contender and competed at the biggest shows in the world, he never completely lost the innate fear of his surroundings that made his start in the show ring so difficult.

"For sure, I learned a lot of patience, especially with him being so fearful of everything. That took years, and it was really the biggest hurdle to overcome for him to become a top horse. He taught me how to be very cool in the show ring, because you never knew what was going to happen," said Charlotte Bredahl-Baker.

Dealing with Monsieur's fears made Bredahl-Baker very quick at thinking on her feet. "One year, we were at the World Cup League Final at Washington [D.C.], and in that ring, people are right on top of you. You can't get away from the audience," she said. "When I came in for my freestyle, I was passaging around the arena, and when my music started, he just passaged right out the gate. I had to quickly get it back together and get him into the arena before it was too late with the music."

"He got so much better, but I always had to be very prepared for anything. He really got to the point where once he was in the arena that was his security blanket—I just had to get in the arena. Nine out of 10 times, he was very reliable."

But Moose's nerves came into play in awards ceremonies. Bredahl-Baker would cajole judges to avoid riding Monsieur for the awards. "But for the Olympic trials, I knew I couldn't get out of the awards," she said.

Bredahl-Baker was dreading entering the ring on an explosive Moose. But Anne Gribbons came to her rescue.

"Suddenly, Anne comes waltzing over with a horse tacked up and ready to go and tells me to get off Monsieur and get on hers. She knew it was like suicide to go in there on him. That was one of the nicest things anyone had done for me," she said.

Gribbons, Hilda Gurney, and many other fellow Grand Prix riders helped Bredahl-Baker with loaned horses for awards ceremonies for many years.



Kilkenny Insurance Agency

*Choose Only The Best For Your Equine Partner...
Because You Invest Your Heart In A Horse.*



"Halbgott"
Marco Bernal

Proud Sponsor of the
\$60,000 WEF Kilkenny/ICH
2006 Internationale Cup
&
A/O & 3'3" Adult Amateur
Hunter Divisions

Unsurpassed Excellence
& Personal Service
for all your
Equine Insurance Needs



11th Year Official Equine Insurance Provider for WEF

Laura & Michael Whitlow ~ 561-795-5481

funded Monsieur's purchase, but she had been the one footing all the bills since he was imported. When their Olympic bid looked possible in 1991, they took Moose off the market, so she'd have him for the Barcelona Olympics. After that, however, he was back for sale.

Moose, however, took care of that possibility. All of the top riders had seen one of Moose's unusual antics during the USET training sessions.

"Everyone that got on him, like Klaus Balkenhol and Harry Boldt—he would put on a show where the minute they picked up the canter, all he would do was one-tempis. I have no idea why, but it was very embarrassing. Every time someone new got on him, all the other riders would line up to watch, because they knew what was going to happen. That never changed. They only rode him once and then gave him back to me," Bredahl-Baker said.

The tactic might have embarrassed Bredahl-Baker briefly, but it ensured that Monsieur would stay with her, since no one wanted to try and ride him.

"Obviously, it didn't work out the way it was planned. We would have sold him if someone had made a good offer, but really nobody wanted him," she said.

That chapter ended in 1997, when Bredahl-Baker's then-fiancé, Joel Baker, helped her buy Moose outright once and for all. "He was meant to be my horse somehow," she said.

STAY SHARP.

NEXT LEVEL GIVES YOU THE EDGE.



Highly concentrated joint fluid preferred by top trainers

Exclusive liquid formula contains high levels of

- Glucosamine
- Shark Cartilage
- Perna Mussel
- Ester C®
- MSM



Farnam Horse Products

©2005 Farnam Companies, Inc.
05-2132

Ester C® is a registered trademark of Zila Nutraceuticals, Inc.
and manufactured under U.S. Patents 4,822,816, 5,070,085 and 6,197,815



1-800-234-2269

farnamhorse.com