

The "Busy" Life of a Retired Dressage Legend

By Angelique Fawns, correspondent

What happens to a horse after climbing to the top of the dressage world? Well, in the case of retired Pan Am Silver Medalist Busy Beaumarchais, it's a pretty nice life.

The gelding rules over Kim Goodyear's barn in Uxbridge with a watchful eye, opinionated whiney and massive sense of equine humor. Goodyear says, "He hasn't changed a bit, handling him at a show was as much work as handling four horses! That's why his name is Busy. He is always Busy."

Busy's home is a picturesque boarding stable painted New England red with a commanding view of the rolling hills of Uxbridge. There really is no way to miss the dressage superstar after climbing the long driveway to the Goodyear farm.

An enormous dark bay horse (with a muzzle liberally sprinkled with grey) stands bright eyed in the first paddock, and often greets guests by picking up his front gate and loudly pounding it up and down on the ground.

One of his favorite tricks is to remove all of his paddock boots and fling them over the fence.

It is also easy to tell which stall holds Busy in the spacious immaculate barn. Only one stall has a big gym mat on the wall, no door (a chain is the only closure) and a bar-less window.

Busy will kick the wall for attention (therefore the mat) and needs the "open concept" design so he can keep a close eye on everything that goes on. Busy spends his days grazing in the paddock and resting in his stall at night, but he makes sure that everyone keeps to the schedule or a ruckus is raised!

Goodyear laughs when talking about some of his past escapades, "I remember when Tom Dvorak asked me to keep Busy here for a break because he needed a rest from him. Within the first few hours here he had taken his stall play ball, thrust it down into his automatic waterer,

and flooded the entire barn. I sent Busy right back to Tom's."

Canadian Dressage team member Tom Dvorak and Beaumarchais competed for 10 years together, and Dvorak says, "It took a long time when he was a young horse to get him to focus because he is so busy in the head. Sometimes his brain is working a lot faster than it should."

On July 13, 2007 Busy Beaumarchais carried Tom Dvorak to the silver medal at the Pan Am Games in Rio de Janeiro Brazil. Performing to music from the film "The Blues Brothers", the lively performance entertained both the crowd and the judges. Goodyear says, "His freestyle was ridden to the Blues Brothers music because he was equally a very cool guy."

The exceptional trouble maker is a Hanoverian Warmblood and he was imported from Germany at the age of three by Augustine Welsh of W. Charlotte Farms and purchased by Susan Holden from Downsview. The purchase was completed on Christmas Eve.

Holden has owned Busy his entire career, and has used Kim Goodyear as a coach, board provider and mentor through the entire journey. Holden is still a big part of Busy's life and visits him every weekend at the Uxbridge farm.

Goodyear says, "Busy's original name was Warlord after his father Warkant, but we (Tom Dvorak, Sue Holden and I) thought that was too tough a name so we were looking to change it.

Warlord was always busy, busy, busy, creating havoc, playing with things, eating all his blankets and boots, and creating trouble. Sue was reading a magazine and saw a story about a gentleman named Busy Beaumarchais - his real name was Augustine - and he was a lady's man, a play write, an excellent swordsman, very athletic and extremely intelligent. He was a spy for the Queen.

That described our very busy horse to a "t" and we purchased him from a gentleman named Augustine, so of course we changed his name!"



Susan Holden has owned 20 year old retired dressage legend Busy Beaumarchais ever since he was imported to Canada at the age of three from Germany. She comes to visit him every weekend, and is still entertained by his hijinks and mischief. PHOTO /ANGELIQUE FAWNS

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