

Andrew and Numero Uno at the Nationals 2006. Photo by David Charles.

Andrew was ranked 5th in the British Dressage Small Tour Rankings 2006 and has already won three national titles. He has been a member of the World Class Potential Squad, a lottery funded programme providing exceptional training opportunities to future potential British Olympic team members. Editor Sue Porter caught up with this Los Clothing sponsored rider to chat about his aims for his future.





Posing on a Los Clothing photo shoot.



Bolney, West Sussex, where beautiful countryside and gorgeous horses happily surround Andrew, his lovely wife Polly, their two young sons, Oliver and Louis and Addy, the terrier. From here Polly and Andrew run their successful business, Priory Dressage, where they offer full facilities for training, clinics and liveryes.

Andrew started riding as an eight-year-old, sharing a Shetland pony called 'Miss Ellie' with his brother and cousins. "We all fell off her at some time or another," he admits, "but I was the only one who continued riding. I was also a member of the Bisley Hunt Pony Club and Chobham Riding Club, so I was kept busy. I think I took after my mum and auntie, they were keen riders but didn't compete."

Schooldays for Andrew were spent in Twickenham at the Old Orleans School. He admits to not gaining any academic qualifications except a 'C' in art and he left home at 15 years old to work with horses. "However, I wouldn't advise this route," he says, "it's much better to have some qualifications to fall back on.

"I will teach my sons to ride when they're ready, but I certainly won't encourage them to become professional riders. No, I'd like them to become professional footballers – they'll earn more money. Although like all parents, if equestrianism is what they really want to do, I will support them all the way."

Sport seems to play a big part in Andrew's life and I asked him if he'd ever thought about taking a different career path.

"Oh, I'd love to have been a top footballer, what a life they lead. I'm quite passionate about the game and am a supporter of Liverpool FC. But if not football, then definitely some other sort of sportsman. I can't say I really chose dressage as a career – I more or less fell into it by working at a yard that had a top rider.

"But on the whole, I'm happy with my life as it is. I enjoy spending time with Polly and the boys and my family. My ambition is to breed horses and continue to train riders."

Do you train any riders at the moment; I asked.



In pensive mood, prior to competition.

"Yes, I do," he answers, "at lots of levels from Pony Club to advanced event riders and through to Grand Prix."

With nine horses on the yard at present, which he prefers to buy from the Netherlands as 3-5 year olds, it is inevitable that Andrew, like many riders, has secured himself some help from sponsors. He is one of the top riders to be involved with Los Clothing and will shortly be seen wearing their clothing later on this year. He also receives sponsorship from Baileys Horse Feeds, Prestige Saddles and Beth Butler Sports Massage.

What products could you not live without on your yard? I asked him.

"I feed Baileys horse feeds which I find fantastic and their team are always on hand to offer me feeding advice whenever I need it. I also feed hay or haylage, depending on the horse. I couldn't live without my Prestige saddles or my MacWet gloves though," he replies.

Most riders tend to have a favourite horse, so I asked Andrew to name his, both past and present.

"My 'past' favourites are Koffee Break and Numero Uno," he replied, "and my current favourite is Korenbloem Quercus (Acorn). However, if I could own any horse it would have to be Salinero (Anky van Grunsven's well-known dressage horse)".

Andrew's first major win was the 1997 Young Rider Selection Trial at Windsor, which he admits to being quite delighted about. But his ambition lies with the National Championship at Grand Prix level, which I'm sure he'll attain sooner rather than later. However when asked what was his biggest achievement in life

With Oliver on his 1st birthday.



so far, I was pleasantly surprised when he answered that it was getting married to Polly, buying a house and having two wonderful kids. Although if he was really honest I suspect that winning the Bronze medal at the Young Riders Europeans in 2000 and also taking two national titles in 2006 at the Winter Championships wouldn't be too far behind in his list of priorities!

Most riders have falls at some time or another, so I asked Andrew if he'd ever had any serious injuries. He replied: "Oh yes! A horse fell on me and damaged my lung, and I have also been kicked in the chest! In addition I once had a pitchfork go right through my arm when I was having a muck fight – I don't recommend that one."

And finally, I asked him about his aims for the forthcoming season. "I want to bring out some of my new horses and continue on the youngsters' training."

For further information on Andrew's sponsor, Los Clothing, please call 01482 679949 or visit www.losclothing.com

Andrew & Polly at Priory Dressage - Tel: 07747 621025 www.andrewgould.com



Above: Competing on Koffee Break



Stop Press:

On Thursday 1st May, Andrew won the Medium 68 Qualifier at Hickstead riding Ultra Jazz, scoring over 69%. This now completes their qualification for the Summer Regional Championships. Andrew is now looking forward to moving Ultra Jazz up to Advanced Medium level.

Ten Quick Questions:

- 1: Q - Favourite holiday destination?
A - The Maldives.
- 2: Q - How do you wind down after a competition?
A - Watch a DVD.
- 3: Q - Favourite TV show/programme?
A - Match of the Day, of course! I also like Waking The Dead and Most Haunted.
- 4: Q - Favourite meal and drink?
A - Steak and chips, with coke to drink.
- 5: Q - Do you enjoy reading and what was the last book you read?
A - Don't do much reading but I have just finished a book called 'Gangs of London'.
- 6: Q - What is the last film you saw at the cinema?
A - Pirates of the Caribbean 2.
- 7: Q - What are your hobbies and interests outside of equestrianism?
A - I play six-a-side football with other riders and vets once a week and enjoy going out with friends for dinner when I get some free time.
- 8: Q - What sort of music do you like?
A - My favourite singer is James Blunt and I also enjoy listening to '80s music.
- 9: Q - Do you have a favourite competition?
A - Dressage at Hickstead.
- 10: Q - Are you happy with the way equestrianism is portrayed in the UK?
A - No. We need far more coverage on TV and in the media, and more top level sponsorships and funding. Dressage is the discipline that misses out the most.