

Craig Thompson and Allison Springer Offer Eventing Camp in Aiken

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Shadow Lane Farm, in Aiken, SC, will offer their first-ever Aiken Eventing Camp on the first week of February. A whole barn-full of talented horseman and well-known professionals will offer their services during this fun week of learning and horsemanship.

Hosted in the middle of Aiken's winter eventing schedule, the camp will blend lessons, demonstrations, lectures and educational activities, culminating in the opportunity to compete at the Sporting Days Horse Trials. Top notch facilities, gourmet meals, and good company will make for a great week.

Work with Top Trainers

Craig Thompson has been involved with event horses all of his professional life, first as a rider, then as a trainer and coach, and most recently as a course designer and horse trials organizer. A gifted rider and trainer, he started the careers of many talented event horses such as Kentucky and Burghley finisher Sloopy, Pan American Games medalist Shared Dreams, and Radnor winner Nicki Henley. Lately, Thompson has enjoyed a great deal of success with his advanced horse, Orion, and several of his young horses as well. Last year, he introduced the Aiken Event Horse Sale to the eventing community—a concept created to bring together event horse sellers and buyers in one convenient, enjoyable setting.

Allison Springer is one of the most successful riders in our country today, finishing out her successful year with her two upper-level partners Arthur and Destination Known as a Top Ten USEA Rider of the Year, rider of the runner-up USEA Horse of the Year (Destination Known), and Reserve Champion Advanced winner of the USEA Adequan Gold Cup Series. Just this year alone, she competed at Red Hills CIC***, The Fork CIC***, Rolex Kentucky, Jersey Fresh, Maui Jim CIC***, Richland Park CIC***, Fair Hill, and even travelled abroad to compete at the FEI World Cup Eventing Finals, and also to England for Blenheim CCI***.

Both Thompson and Springer are active trainers in their area, working with horses and riders of all ages and levels to ensure a safe, fun, and educational eventing experience. Both of these riders' classic position and strong fundamentals highlight their talent, poise, and partnership with their horses.

Listen to Intriguing Lectures

Several valuable lectures will take place over the week, including a talk on sports psychology with Abigail Lufkin, a four-star rider who started her career with multiple medals at the North American Young Rider Championship, won top ten finishes at international events, medalled at the Pan American Games, competed at the World Championships, and was selected for a team spot on the 2000 Olympic Games. Lufkin began using sports psychology to enhance her own performance in 1996 and worked with several Olympic caliber sports psychologists. She also has a Masters degree in clinical psychotherapy and currently has a sports psychology consulting practice in California.

Amy McElroy will share some great tips on judging dressage, and give you the opportunity to practice your new “judging skills” during some demo rides. McElroy is a USEF R judge, qualified to

officiate at any USEF-recognized show at all national dressage levels. She rides, trains and teaches at Fair Lane Farm in Aiken and judges about a dozen dressage shows and events each year.

Be sure to check out the lecture on equine massage and acupressure with Katylou Gray—your horse will thank you. You definitely don't want to miss Canadian Equestrian Team's vet Dr. Christiana Ober, DVM's, talk on event horse soundness. Some other fun topics that will be covered include show turnout, how to jog your horse, and walking courses. Also chat with the riders and vets about international travel, and be sure to ask Springer about her wet weekend at Blenheim!

Camp Details

The camp is open to all levels—from beginner novice to advanced. There is a minimum age of 13. Students under age 18 must be accompanied by a parent/guardian. Have an eventing parent who would like to come learn as well? Participants may bring one guest to audit lessons and presentations (for free). Tickets are available for purchase to attend group dinners.

And speaking of dinners—two group dinners are included in the camp. Check out everything that's included in this package: stabling and bedding, breakfast and lunch daily, cross-country schooling fees, educational presentations, two group dinners and coaching at Sporting Days Farm Horse Trials on February 7 (entry fees to this horse trials are not included). The cost of the six-day camp is \$1,350—a great deal for all the perks included in this educational camp.

Springer and Thompson will teach participants on the flat and over fences, including dressage, cross-country and show jumping. Lessons will be a combination of privates, semi-privates and groups.

Want some more details on the facility, meals, directions, local attractions, and lodging? Download a PDF for more information at

www.craigthompstoneventing.com/aikeneventingcamp/CampDetails.pdf. Check out this camp itinerary—rider evaluations, photo critiques, semi-private jumping and dressage lessons, learn how to score dressage tests, cross-country schooling, and more! Download a PDF at www.craigthompstoneventing.com/aikeneventingcamp/CampItinerary.pdf for more information on the itinerary.

"Allison and I look forward bringing the skills, techniques, and thinking that make us successful at the upper levels to bear on the needs of all the students who attend the camp, no matter what level of competition they are preparing to tackle. This means not just the skills in the tack that make seeing a distance or riding a dressage test easier, but also the elements that are so essential out of the tack. That's why we're so excited to have a top vet, Christiana Ober, a top sports psychologist, Ab Lufkin, and a top equine massage therapist, Katylou Gray, and a top groom, all here during the same week. We feel confident it will be a great learning experience for everyone," said Thompson.

For more information, contact Sarah Heffron at aikeneventingcamp@gmail.com or (631) 252-4892 before 7:00 p.m. and visit the Aiken Eventing Camp website at www.craigthompstoneventing.com/aikeneventingcamp/ for more details and forms.