

January 25, 2014

To Whom it May Concern:

I am 31 years old, and have been riding horses since I was six years old. I grew up in a family that didn't know anything about horses, but I fell in love with them and have spent all of my time and energy working with them ever since. I feel that I have probably made every mistake that a horse owner and rider can make, and I have worked with many horses and trainers throughout the years. My discipline of choice is Show jumping, and as a persistent and competitive individual, I have been searching the world for books, trainers, videos, and horses that can help me improve. In 2010, at the somewhat late age of 27, I turned professional so that I could dedicate 100% of my time concentrating on my riding. I worked in Wellington, Florida for Olympic Gold Medalist Leslie Howard and International grand prix rider Mollie Ashe Cawley, before moving to Germany for 18 months and working for Olympic Bronze Medalist Karsten Huck.

In 2012 I returned to California and got the privilege to work for Gry McFarlane as her primary rider. Although all of these experiences and trainers had certainly helped me, I still was constantly looking for ways to improve my riding. In March of 2013, I saw one of Shayan's ads in a local tack store and decided to take a lesson, and have been greatly impressed with his knowledge, riding ability, and teaching acumen and have been working with him consistently for the last 10 months.

Shayan's approach to working with horses is universal, meaning that he is not pigeon holed into one particular discipline. Since working with him, I have seen him train professional race horse jockeys, dressage riders, western horses, and of course he has helped me substantially with my jumping. I think Shayan's core beliefs are that the fundamentals of being a successful rider and horseman are the same across all disciplines. Shayan's core skillset is rock solid, therefore it allows him to help riders in all types of situations.

Specifically, I came to Shayan to help with my seat. I had developed into a one sided rider, hunched over, and all of my horses were becoming crooked. Shayan took away my saddle, and I spent hours with a well-schooled and safe lesson horse in a round pen doing bareback exercises with no bridle, or saddle, and with eyes open and closed. After weeks of "balance" lessons, I was able to walk, trot, canter, and halt on Shayan's lesson horse without the use of my hands. Shayan was adamant about me sitting up straight on the horse, and through hours upon hours of correction, I began to finally open my chest, and "SIT LIKE A KING!!!" This achievement alone greatly improved my one sidedness, as well as gave me an enormous amount of control and confidence that carried over to all of my other rides.

The second phase of his program involved "technique." Many consider "dressage" as a separate discipline, but Shayan was adamant in explaining that it only means "to teach in obedience," and that every horse needs to bend correctly at the pole, learn collection, and be sufficient in all types of lateral work in the same way that all

athletes need to go to the gym. I took my newly acquired seat, and began practicing shoulder in, travers, and half pass bareback at the walk trot and canter on the same excellently trained lesson horse that Shayan supplied.

After my balance and flat work technique had reached a certain level, Shayan began working on my jumping. For this, we used my own horse, a seasoned Finnish warmblood that I had imported from Sweden. Shayan was very quick to take the stirrups off of my saddle before each jumping lesson, and I found that with my improved balance and control of the horse made jumping much easier.

I found Shayan's desire to help me with my riding to go way above and beyond what was necessary. His lessons always lasted over an hour, and it was touching how important it was to him that I got it right. His undeniable genius with horses combined with his seemingly never ending desire to help and crystal clear instruction make him indispensable to my training program. I have recommended him extensively to just about everyone who is looking for help with their horses.

Brian Wee
925.788.0411
brianwee@gmail.com