

On Course with Tori Corts

By Jan Westmark

Tori Corts grew up in Central Valley, New York and didn't discover riding until six years ago. "I started riding late compared to most riders in this industry," Tori said, adding that her first mount was a very bad pony that she rode for about a year.

Following a year with her naughty pony, Tori's riding career took a turn for the better when she started riding with Todd Minikus. "I pretty much went from crossrails to children's jumpers immediately," she said.

Tori's family owns Falkirk Farm in New York, which features a golf club, equestrian center, restaurant and wedding venue, and Tori has lived there since she was a baby. Her dad built the barn for her when she started riding and for five years Todd was based out of Falkirk and Tori had the opportunity to ride with him every day.

With her junior career behind her, Tori has started riding with trainer Marshall Fields. "It's a big change moving up to the grand prix and Marshall has been a tremendous help in the short period of time we have been working together," Tori said. "My horses have never jumped better and my riding has improved. He has given me confidence and is very committed. So far it has been a lot of fun."

Sidelines: What was your junior career like?

TC: My first horse was Bebe (Quali De Bd) and I moved up to the low junior jumpers with him. We won quite a bit together. I retired him a few years ago and he lives at home on our farm. I also leased an amazing horse named Orkan. I won a great deal with him in the children and low divisions. My biggest accomplishments in my junior career would probably be winning both the Marshall & Sterling Children's Jumper Classic and the NAL Classic the same weekend at the Sussex horse show. It was my first night class so it was pretty exciting.

Sidelines: As an Adult Amateur, what horses are you showing?

TC: I have four incredible horses at the moment -- Ultimo, Rockstar, Bodyguard and Tempo. I show Tempo in the low amateur/owner jumpers and the other three in the highs and grand prix's.

Sidelines: What has been the highlight of your adult career so far?

TC: I was circuit champion last year at WEF with my stallion, Ultimo. It was our first year together. This year I would say doing the Young Riders classes at WEF. It was a great experience for me and my horses.

Sidelines: What are your riding goals?

TC: My goals for now are to continue to compete successfully at the grand prix level and possibly do Young Riders. I would also love to buy a few young horses to bring along.

Sidelines: What are your show plans for the summer?

Tori and her stallion Ultimo compete at the Winter Equestrian Festival

Photo by ManciniPhotos



TC: After WEF my horses headed home for some rest and relaxation. Then we will go to HITS, Lake Placid, The Hampton Classic and a few smaller shows in between.

Sidelines: How much do you ride?

TC: I ride full time and run my farm. I'm taking some college courses online and work at our golf course when I have time.

Sidelines: What do you do when you aren't riding?

TC: I have two brothers and a sister so when I'm not riding I like to spend time with them. I also enjoy hanging out with my friends. As for a hobby, I'll have to say I've never really had time for one.

Sidelines: Do you have a favorite horse?

TC: That's hard to say. My stallion, Ultimo is like a big pony with a huge personality but there's something so sweet about my mare, Rockstar. She tries so hard.

Sidelines: Are you involved in any charities?

TC: I am an ambassador for JustWorld International and competed in both Charity Challenges at WEF. I am also involved, along with my parents, with a therapeutic riding center called Winslow in Warwick, New York. We have sponsored their annual fundraiser at our country club for the last four years.

Sidelines: Describe yourself in 10 words or less.

TC: Competitive, focused, determined, sensitive, kind and sometimes forgetful.



Tori and Rockstar in the International Arena at WEF

Photo by ManciniPhotos