

A CONVERSATION

Karin Reid Offield has been involved with horses her entire life. She was born and raised in Aspen, Colorado and began riding at an early age. Her first love was jumpers and equitation and she traveled around the country competing at the highest level of shows. During her junior years she relocated to schools in Arizona and California, enabling her to ride throughout the winter months and also providing her access to top coaching. Among her early mounts was Iron Warrior, who earned many tri-colors at prestigious shows, including Cow Palace, Bakersfield and the Santa Barbara National. Legendary horseman Ronnie Mutch was among Karin's coaches. With his help, Karin finished in the Top Ten at the AHSA Medal Finals in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

Throughout her riding career, Karin has always looked for ways to help promote horses to non-riders as well as young children. After stints working in New York and North Carolina, Karin returned to Aspen to run a ranch where she not only rode horses, but also helped organize the youth program.

Eventually her love of international competition won out and she returned to the show circuit in Wellington, Florida and began a long association with Carl Knee. During these years Karin competed from Canada to Florida and even galloped racehorses. With her exposure to the best sport in the country, Karin began to think in terms of sports promotion and founded Equestrian Reels, a production company dedicated to equestrian sports. Among their projects was a behind the scenes look at show jumping in the United States.

Karin took this interest in promoting equestrian activities further when she co-founded El Rojo Grande Ranch in Sedona, Arizona. This was the culmination of a project that began in college when she designed an equestrian center as a course requirement.



El Rojo Grande Ranch was an international-quality equestrian facility that was designed for the community. With a dude string, authentic stagecoaches that were built on the ranch, and facilities for special events, El Rojo Grande Ranch became a model for how a synergistic partnership can be created within and by the local community.

Karin developed a variety of projects to encourage children to spend time with horses, including lessons, vaulting and demonstrations. Karin's own career with horses took a new direction when she became intrigued with the classical traditions of international dressage. With lessons from a local dressage trainer, Karin and a pretty black horse from her dude string advanced through first level at the Arizona Dressage Association shows. Karin soon committed herself to understanding the intricacies and nuances of dressage.

Trainer Michael Etherly came highly recommended from U.S. Olympian Steffen Peters. Michael relocated to Arizona and the rest is history. With Michael's help Karin progressed steadily up the levels and began competing in California. In addition to her first black trail horse, Karin successfully campaigned several Quarter Horses until she received the warmblood stallion Alla C'zar as a gift. This was the beginning of an impressive string of mounts that have been carefully selected not only for their quality of movement, but their impressive characters.

Over the years Karin and Michael expanded their training program to

Europe where they have worked with many classical trainers, including Master Egon von Neindorff and Olympic coach Jean Bemelmans. Karin has earned numerous USDF year-end awards from training level to FEI and has won four USDF Regional Championships at the FEI level. Karin has recently expanded her training program to include coaching by six-time Olympian Robert Dover. In 2005, she qualified for the USDF Regional Championships at grand prix and will continue to show Hexagon's Louisville and Tiamo Trocadero at CDIs on the east coast.



Throughout her dressage education Karin has worked to bring the sport to a wider audience, first by hosting dressage demonstrations in Arizona as well as by supporting a variety of educational programs, including the Dressage Foundation's Advanced Young Riders Olympic Dreams European tour. After selling El Rojo Grande Ranch and moving to Michigan, Karin formed Brek N Ridge Dressage, which was recently rebranded Offield Farms. Sponsorship of the 2005 FEI World Cup Dressage Final, Presented By Offield Farms is simply the next chapter in the story of one woman's effort to make a difference in the advancement and promotion of the horse sports generally, and now dressage specifically.

2005 also marked the Karin's CDI debut. CDI is a French term meaning, Concours de Dressage International—international dressage horse show. The CDI division at dressage shows is among the highest international rating by the international governing body of equestrian sport, the FEI. Very few riders in the world compete at the CDI level. With Hexagon's Louisville, Karin competed at the CDI Ox Ridge Show in August of 2005 and earned a second place in the CDI Grand Prix Freestyle. Her results in 2005 and early 2006

garnered her an invitation to compete at the 2006 USEF National Grand Prix Freestyle Championships. Only the 10 best riders in the country are invited to compete not only for the national title, but also for the chance to represent the United States at the World Cup Final. Karin placed sixth and eighth in the grand prix and the grand prix freestyle, respectively.

At the end of 2006 Karin and Louisville were the best in the country in two divisions. They earned the 2006 USDF Adult Amateur Grand Prix Horse of the Year and the 2006 USDF All Breeds Award (KWPN-NA) Adult Amateur Grand Prix Horse of the Year with a score of 65.204%. In November 2006, Karin welcomed superstar Lingham to Offield Farms. The impressive bay stallion has a legion of fans worldwide. In 2005, the charismatic champion wowed American dressage fans with his second place finish at the World Cup Finals in Las Vegas. While Karin has successfully ridden several stallions in her career, she has worked hard to develop a true connection and partnership with Lingham.

In late 2007 Karin and Lingham returned to the United States with the goal of competing at the CDIs in Florida. The pair kicked off the Florida season with top five placings in the Grand Prix Special at the Gold Coast Opener, a qualifying event for the Selection Trials for the 2008 Olympic Games in Hong Kong. The duo competed at one other CDI before the close of the Florida circuit. With the goal of gaining additional experience and exposure, Karin and Lingham returned to the Netherlands to ride at Anky's. As a young horse with Edward Gal in the saddle, Lingham learned to piaffe and passage under Anky's guidance. This long history has proven invaluable to Karin and Lingham.

During the summer Lingham had an injury that stemmed from the stable accident in Florida. He went into a rehabilitation program and improved each month. In addition, the summer was an excellent opportunity to observe all the nuances of the Dutch Team preparing for the Olympic Games. Four years earlier, Karin watched the Spanish Team prepare for Athens. As icing on the cake, Anky brought home the Gold Medal from Hong Kong, so there were many celebrations! With its strong dressage traditions, Europe continues to provide an ideal environment for Karin to learn from great riders, horses and teachers.

Over the summer she attended international competitions, including Aachen and Flyinge. In the fall of 2008, Karin and Lingh worked together to get fit. Lingh becoming stronger every day and Karin enjoying every minute with him. It was in November 2008, that Lingh moved to Flyinge, the Swedish Stud established in 1661. He began his breeding career in earnest. While Karin continued to ride in Holland at Anky's , his rider during this time Swedish rider Mattias Jansson making sure Lingh gets as strong as possible with track work, trail rides and good exercise. His groom, Matts, was amazing...going for long walks thru the village. They are becoming quite famous in Flyinge. In April 2009, Karin returned to America to spend time with her father and return to Northern Michigan. Over the summer, between trips to Florida, Karin's Michigan Brek-n-Ridge Farm filled with Dressage horses and activity. In September 2009, Karin's father passed away. "It's been a wonderful experience, life with Dad. I am honored to have shared this life." "Now, I have to move along."

Karin continues "When I arrived in Sweden my time with Lingh and riding was what I looked forward to. I was finally back in my saddle and learning. I spent my time with a young 6 year old mare, taking lessons and learning to longline with teacher Bo Jena and working with Lingh, spending time with him. I love him ! We had a great winter, traveling back and forth a couple times from America.

For the winter of 2010 I spent it mainly in my hometown in Aspen, Colorado. Since both my parents passed away, I felt it was important that I return home and establish my friendships with my peers and their families. My second week on the ski mountain I was hit by a fellow skier and I spent the remaining months in Aspen going to physical therapy and healing a crushed calf muscle. The experience proved to me that I had been right about not skiing during my Olympic journey years with Lingh....too risky !

In April of 2010 I returned home to Harbor Springs and opened my Brek-n-Ridge Farm year round for boarders, students and horses-in-training. You can see our website www.breknridgefarm.com and learn about our goals and dreams. The summer was a remarkable experience and we entered into our first winter in Northern Michigan with some trepidation. No worries !!!!! It was great ! It's never windy in the indoor arena, we dressed for the cold and the horses

loved it. The stable - a metal utilitarian Morton Building - was cozy and if someone said it was like a meat locker I always laughed and said " really ? I never noticed !!"

In December 2010 I headed to Sweden and the excitement for this trip was in Stockholm at the International Show at the Globe. Bo Jena and Lingh were incredible. The video of their performance is posted on the home page. My time spent at Flyinge this winter was extra special too. Meeting friends and colleagues and many adventures. The Christmas Flyinge Gala was superb ! Lingh the King ! Thank you to Matts, Mattias, Karl-Henrik, and all the beautiful Swedish girlfriends that work at Flyinge and take care of Lingh.....



Lingh at Christmas in Flyinge. Loved !

In early January 2011, I received a phone call from Europe from a small town south of Stuttgart. On the telephone was Thomas Casper, of Gestut Birkhof, a well respected breeder in Southern Germany. He asked me if I would consider bringing Lingh to Germany from Sweden. Many reasons led me to the decision to say yes and within 2 weeks, Lingh was on his way. I have now traveled several times to Gestut Birkhof and am satisfied that my breeding goals are being met.

Lingh is stabled with a fine family and we are all happy.



Thomas and Nicole Casper