

## NEWS RELEASE

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### **German Horse Center Press Service:**

**Interviews with high-class riders, trainers and breeders from Germany. You may re-publish this text in full or parts thereof freely once you give proper attribution to [www.germanhorsecenter.com](http://www.germanhorsecenter.com) . Please also mention that Helen Langehanenberg can be booked as a trainer through German Horse Center, and that horses trained by her are available for sale through our internet platform.**

On the way to the top!

### **The German dressage rider Helen Langehanenberg and her mare Responsible**

*The dressage rider Helen Langehanenberg and her mare Responsible have been part of the national squad since 2008. She and Responsible were the German reserves at the Olympics in Hong Kong – her greatest career achievement to date.*

Selection of accompanying pictures:



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In the world of dressage, the name Langehanenberg has been known since at least 2005, and has always been associated with Ingrid Klimke, team gold medalist in eventing at the 2008 Olympics. Helen Langehanenberg has ridden at her stables since pony club days, and she also pursued her education as Pferdewirtin there.

When Ingrid Klimke broke her shoulder in 2005 and was out of action, Helen was able to ride the stallion Damon Hill. This was a very good opportunity as Helen won the World Championship for 5-year old dressage horses with him. In 2007 she carried off three national championship titles in a single day in Warendorf and during the winter in early 2008 she

made her breakthrough with Responsible in Grand Prix Sport and was called up to the national squad. The 26-year old was then nominated as the reserve at the Olympic Games in Hong Kong.

Her most recent highlight is the K+K Cup 2009 in Münster, a Grand Prix Special: with her 10-year old mare Responsible from Rohdiamant, Helen achieved a sensational 73.5 percent (2nd place) for her performance: the video can be viewed at [www.germanhorsecenter.com](http://www.germanhorsecenter.com) (under Trainer/Helen Langehanenberg).

This is the story of a talented dressage rider and her successful mare Responsible

### **How did you and Responsible get started together?**

“Resi came to us when as a 5-year old. Things weren’t always straightforward in the beginning. She did not arc through the neck and did not take to the bit properly. In addition, she was always the boss mare and acted very dominantly. It had to invest quite a lot of time in convincing her to do what I told her to do. However, as one can now see, it worked out well in the end.

When is not needed

The real breakthrough came at the national championships when she was a 6-year old. Admittedly we didn’t qualify for the final that time, but it was the first time one could really see her potential. After that, things quickly went from strength to strength. As a 7-year old she won a number of advanced class dressage competitions, including international tests. She qualified for the Nuremberg ‘Burgpokal’ and finished a creditable third in the final there. As an 8-year old I rode her only at three advanced class competitions – she achieved well over 70 percent each time and twice won easily. That year also involved preparing Responsible for Grand Prix competitions.

In January 2008 she took part in her first Grand Prix and Grand Prix Special competitions and immediately achieved a 5<sup>th</sup> and a 4<sup>th</sup> place with 72 percent. And the success continued: Dortmund, Bremen, B-squad, Hagen, Wiesbaden and the German Championships in Balve. Then the call up to the A-squad, CHIO in Aachen and, as a crowning glory, the nomination as reserve for the 2008 Olympics.”

### **How would you describe Responsible’s character?**

“Resi is mostly relaxed and uncomplicated. Fortunately, she remains focused at competitions and enjoys performing in front of large crowds.

She is not so keen on saddling and tacking up, neither is she keen on being groomed under the belly.

She loves grazing and going on rides. She unfortunately doesn't spend time in the open meadows as she would just run around all over the place and get all worked up. For the purposes of relaxation Resi therefore grazes and goes on rides. She is very drawn to people and is always well-behaved. Her owners always say that she is totally fixated on me."

### **How important is communication with horses for you?**

"I try to always adjust to each individual horse, as they all react different. I am consistent but always trusting. A horse should respect me, but should always place its trust in me and not be afraid of me. I also give clear help if the horse does not react correctly, and give her encouragement and praise as soon as I get the desired reaction. The horse therefore understands what I want and doesn't think that I want to punish it."

### **Competitions: How do you feel before a competition? Nervous?**

"I am very fortunate in that I no longer get particularly worked up before competitions. Previously, I always got very agitated and thereby made things difficult for myself. I have changed this by trying to always think of something else as soon as thoughts of the next competition start to consume my mind. This was initially quite difficult to master, but I managed in the end: no agitation anymore, no worries about the next competition! Prior to a competition I prepare myself by ensuring that just before things get going, I am calm and ride through the task at hand in my thoughts. This involves thinking about everything that I want to allow for and I really feel every movement."

### **Is there anything you would like to see changed in dressage sport?**

"I think it would be nice if we could manage to make the sport more interesting for laypeople so that there was more media coverage. I think this is the only way to make this beautiful sport more popular.

I would also like to deal with the preconception that dressage riders are difficult in the way that is so often portrayed. There are of course always exceptions, but most dressage riders are happy and kind sportspeople."

### **Info box 1: Responsible's weekly training schedule**

"I train intensively with Resi 5-6 times every week, depending on if there is a tournament coming up. She also goes out into the field and grazes. She goes out twice a day, sometimes just to take a couple of easy rounds or a ride through the woods. One day each week she

has a walk day. I also go to Klaus Balkenhol for training on a regular basis. He has supported Responsible and me all the way up to Grand Prix level. Without him our success would not have been possible, so I am very grateful to him.”

**Info box 2: My preparation for tournaments**

“The federation has appointed a mental trainer for riders, and I have gladly made use of this service as one can always learn something new and develop oneself further. I think that it is important that riders also give some thought to their own fitness. Due to reasons of time pressure it is not always so easy to fit in as much personal fitness training as one would like. But I go climbing every now and again and also have regular massage sessions.”

Helen Langehanenberg runs a training stable in the German state of North Rhine-Westphalia together with her husband Sebastian. The horses they have trained are available for purchase at [www.germanhorsecenter.com](http://www.germanhorsecenter.com). They can also both be booked as trainers for assignments anywhere in the world via The German Horse Center.

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