



HOW TO BUILD YOUR BOOKSHELF

Alexander Grayton

I know it's been said before, but training horses is like building a bookshelf.

When we have a young horse, just ready to be started, it's like looking at the raw materials for our bookshelf. Nothing is built yet, but we hope the pieces at our disposal will make something wonderful one day. If we look at our materials and see we are short key or sizeable pieces, we may wish to look for a new kit of materials before we put the time and effort in only to be dismayed with the outcome – coming to see what we already

knew – the shelf was never going to be sturdy, useful, or magnificent, because it was missing those pieces we noted on first glance.

Sometimes our hardware looks ample, and so off we go building away. We set out to build a tremendous bookshelf, beautiful and hearty, maybe World Class. But then as we are nearly finished, we determine we just don't have all the screws and finer pieces to keep it together under the weight of the books. This awareness may not be realized until our bookshelf is nearly complete – all along progress is promising, the next best bookshelf as it were. And in the end, it could still be a very good bookshelf, perhaps more of an upper level amateur bookshelf. No problem, there's a market for that fine furniture – fancy craftsmanship and content of some sophistication – quite the catch for a lucky amateur to call upon.

The rarest bookshelf of all is of course the one that is beautiful, impressive, can easily carry the load of all the heavy reference books while still having the artistic appeal to house the tomes of Camus, Joyce, or maybe Bukowski even if

that's your thing. This bookshelf will have the longevity required for the reader to make use of all those texts.

In building such a grand bookshelf, there may be a time when one needs some help. Maybe help solidifying the foundation; or finishing touches; or alas, maybe they have this great structure built and they need some help stocking the



shelves to further their education. Sometimes even professionals seek help from a colleague – not necessarily to build their shelf, but rather to rearrange the books in a more useful order. An outside perspective might be just what is needed to recognize that.

There is a whole industry of people who like to start building the bookshelves, carefully putting together the pieces in the way of a true craftsman. The job is to demonstrate the structure in place while showing future capacity. It is in the craftsman's interest to make sure he isn't showing a fragile shelf, prematurely sharing what still has loose screws, or content that reads like Archie Comics rather than the classics the shelves are being built for.

In rare scenarios something might happen, either when a shelf is being tested by a potential buyer, or maybe even when the builder himself is trying to add on more books or adding structure. Maybe a few books wobble off the shelf in an accident, or one of those little pins holding a shelf in place pops out and all of the sudden that one shelf is less stable. A wise craftsman recognizes this,

fixes the minor defects, and carefully puts the books back on the shelves. But if the process is rushed without ever fixing the wobbly shelf, it could spell the end of this one.

It's all pretty simple really:

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make sure you're starting with the right

materials, enlist the help of artful and responsible craftsmen to help you as needed to construct a worthy frame, carefully put the books you may like to read one day on the shelves, rearranging those books as you go based on optimal reading, and remember to stand back every now and then and admire how beautiful a bookshelf you have!

Canadians FEI Ranking

The rankings as of November 1st, 2020

Canada Ranking	World Ranking	Rider
1	24	Eric Lamaze
2	53	Mario Deslauriers
3	86	Tiffany Foster
4	97	Erynn Ballard
5	226	Amy Millar
6	231	Vanessa Mannix
7	297	Sam Walker
8	303	Ali Ramsay
9	323	Beth Underhill
10	378	Jim Ifko

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TBIRD ONLY FEI IN CANADA 2020

Thunderbird Show Park Brings International Competition Back to Canada at CSI2* Harvest Welcome

By Catie Staszak

Thunderbird Show Park brought FEI competition back to Canada Oct. 14-18 with the CSI2* Harvest Welcome—the first international show jumping event in the country since the global COVID-19 pandemic brought the industry to a temporary halt in March.

Eighty-two athletes representing six countries congregated in Langley, BC, for the opportunity to compete in the two-star division on offer, as well as the first FEI U25 division ever held at the venue. Some of Canada's very best brought out their best horses, from Olympian Tiffany Foster (CAN) to reigning Canadian Champion Beth Underhill.

Recent Canadian transplant Katie Laurie (AUS), who moved her operation from Australia to Calgary in February, was an absolute force,

topping the \$37,000 Artisan Farms Welcome CSI2* with Casebrooke Lomond and the \$37,000 Volvo Canada CSI2*, a spectacular class held under the lights in the Thunderbird Arena, aboard McCaw MVNZ.

At 17 years old, Carly Stevens (CAN) topped the \$10,000 Trademark Stables & Friends U25 Final with Grant and Susie Stevens' VIP des Majuros, securing herself the divisional championship.

Langley native Brian Morton (CAN) is no stranger to Tbird, having grown up in Langley, but the 34-year-old took up a new job as head rider for Spruce Meadows this year, and in his international debut for the operation, he rode Cadillac to the top of the week's feature, the \$73,000 ATCO Cup Grand Prix CSI2*. First to



go in a 10-strong jump-off, the pair simply could not be caught.

"It's kind of cool that I've gotten to see Thunderbird evolve into what's now a really top-class international show jumping venue," he said. "At the same time, I've been on this parallel journey of trying to [work my way] up in international sport. There's something that just seems very fitting."

ADVICE FOR STARTING YOUR BUSINESS

Holly Grayton

If you are a budding professional and are looking at starting an equestrian business, here are some tips I've gathered as food for thought before you begin.

The first piece of advice is to answer the following question: Have you spent a significant amount of time working under the auspices of an accomplished trainer? In other words, have you spent time in an assistant role, or in a role with similar responsibilities, for a sustained amount of time? If the answer is yes, then continue on. If the answer is no, stop here and go to work for someone, or find a position that affords that opportunity to be mentored first.

The reason this is strategic and wise is it expedites learning, saves you from making novice mistakes, and you're earning a living while

you learn. It is difficult advice to follow for young, headstrong and confident riders that want to run their own show, nevertheless it is very, very good advice. To spend a few years learning while earning, biding your time, learning systems and strategies, and being humble.

You are far better to narrow your focus than to go wide. Many people make the mistake of saying "yes" to all business that comes their way, rather than only to the kind of business that suits their model and plan. You can't be all things to all people - if you try you will dilute your essential quality or nature which constitutes the strongest, most resonant aspect of your brand. BE YOU. And do business with people who ALIGN with THAT.

Invest in your own training continuously. It is important to have a hierarchy of learning. By being a lifelong student, you place

yourself within a living history of learning and knowledge. There are unfortunate myths around what constitutes good teachers and mentors for young professionals. Yes, technical knowledge and proficiency is good - it's good that someone can teach you important stuff. But that's not what is most important. What is most important is that someone is supportive and positive about your dream. The most important thing is that you have empowering people around you. This is because passion and drive and heart are more important than technique. It's not that technique doesn't matter, I'm just saying you can do big things with more drive and heart and less technique than you can with all the technique and limited heart.

The economics of running a business don't come naturally to everyone, and so much of financial wisdom is the result of

experience. Do a financial plan and find someone who can advise and mentor you, someone with a good reputation and a sound business of their own. Get some good advice from respected professionals in the business, then start small and enjoy it, letting the business build itself!

Identify your own strengths and goals. These might be vastly different things at the current moment, but it's important to know. Are you a brave, strong, and accurate rider that likes to teach young horses? Do you love kids and ponies? Do you enjoy teaching and watching your students progress and achieve their goals? You can always change your focus over time, but spending time getting clear about your passion is a great place to start.

With all of this in mind, good luck and good commerce!

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