

# The 1.40m Level 9 Riders New To This Level

By Lynn

ABSJ magazine hopes to help foster a sense of community for learning and to bring support for Alberta's competitors. With this in mind, ABSJ invited 9 newly minted 1.40m competitors to share their experiences and motivating influences while they are still fresh and just lived. Their candid answers show how these riders crossed this threshold, and we hope their willingness to share will benefit many.

done to develop your skills."

So what makes a person want to jump at this level? When Robyn Walker was younger she watched the Grand Prix's and thought it would be incredible to compete in one and after reaching some of her goals she and Benjamin set their sights on the 1.40m level. Shoshana Weiss said once she started to feel competitive in the 1.20m she began thinking the 1.40m could be in the future for her and Mercedes.



Rylee Carron



Emma Edwardson



Sasha Fiorino

The 1.40m is captivating, the air changes, the course changes, the size of the crowd changes, in fact the number of competitors changes. Telling signs that you're about to watch a different test. You can see the consequences even when the ring is empty, the jumps are bigger, the turns sharper, the overall scene is more foreboding until you witness the first clear round or a rider's superior navigation or startling inside turn – you see someone make it look easy and you're in awe! At this level you can't just be fast or just be brave, you need a skill set to execute. I heard a clinician say once as she took her riders over the 4' threshold, "now we'll see your flaws, where you've cut corners, or rushed your training... and that's a good thing, that's how we'll see what needs to be



Paige McDougall



Shoshana Weiss





# .40m: Level Share the Experience

the Burns

For Holly Grayton the 1.30m was her long time goal but her horse Baron Ginus gave her a lot of confidence and made it so fun they tried for more.

From their comments there's no question these riders have experienced 'critical moments' where the learning was intense, they obviously value that and are working constantly to create quality. Consider though what's not being said, I'm sure they've all had bad warm ups, been confused by something a

trainer said that threw them at the in-gate, or the course presents a new fear.

That brings us to the question that brought the most fascinating responses. It's one thing to ask a professional about managing nerves but hear these young competitors' responses to the age old question, how did you do it!

•Paige McDougall told herself, "You can always try



Jade Fowler



Holly Grayton



Tayah Sobie



Robyn Walker

again if it goes badly."

•Rylee Carron said once she was over the first jump all her nerves were gone.

•Emma Edwardson's father's words "Take a deep breath" came to her during the course walk and in the ring to help calm her.

•Natasha Fiorino also reminds herself to take a deep breath, she visualizes and stays focused on her plan and what her track is.

•Tayah Sobie said, "The biggest thing was to stick to the plan we made in the course walk. Almost every time I deviate from the plan it doesn't work out in my favour!"

•Jade Fowler said, "That was the first time I

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## 1.40m Riders

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experienced such aggressive nerves – the adrenaline helped me to stay that much sharper, I kept focus, cutting everything else out, I visualized going through the course and how it would feel and what I needed to stay on top of. I tried to create the same feeling in the warm up ring making sure all the aids I would use on course were sharp.”

•Holly Grayton kept telling herself, “There’s no better horse in the world for you to do this on, he will never quit.”

•Robyn Walker held these reminders in her head, “I work to control my mind, reassure myself, I make sure my horse is in front of my leg and work to make every jump a quality jump.”


•Shoshana Weiss said, “I trust my horse and my trainers’ decisions.” She tries to stay in the zone rather than thinking about what could/could not happen. She continued, “If you understand how your stress manifests it’s much easier to recognize and redirect your thoughts into a productive and positive mindset.”

Each one finds trust in their horse and their training and each one spoke of the support and encouragement that’s been inherent in this progression too. They explained how grateful they are for their trainers, friends and family who may not know how much of an impact their presence or words have made. Rest assured, they take you with them to the horse show and they take you with them in their thoughts for the moments when they’re alone in competition.

How did these horses come into their lives? In as many ways as you can imagine; gift, purchase, luck, passed down from someone else – whatever the circumstance these horses found their way into their lives, they don’t waste time doubting or explaining,

validating or brushing off why, they make the most of their circumstances.

Congratulations to everyone getting to this level , it’s an achievement of skill, bravery and dedication. Particular recognition to Jade Folwer and Julie who won their first time in the 1.40m division, and Tayah Sobie on Brise CR who won the Grand Prix of their first week in the 1.40m division!! Well done ladies.

First time 1.40m competitors and contributors: Shoshana Weiss and Mercedes; Tayah Sobie and Brise CR; Paige McDougall and Larimo van de Berghoeve; Emma Edwardson and Apart; Natasha Fiorino and Liscalgot; Jade Fowler and Julie; Holly Grayton and Baron Ginus; Rylee Carron and CSE Caletto Z; Robyn Walker and Benjamin. 



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