

## **Michael Beining**

Michael Beining's comprehensive approach to teaching dressage has made him one of the most sought after German clinicians. His clinic series are conducted regularly in Germany, Great Britain, and the United States since 1985.

In Germany, Michael received his degree of "Pferdewirt". In 1986 he organized a 3-week training program in the Midwest with legendary German and Canadian Olympic Coach, WILLI SCHULTHEIS. The following year, Schultheis suggested for the next years to have his Bereiter and best student, RUDOLF ZEILINGER (trainer of Michelle Gibson and Olympic Coach of the Danish Team since 1997) conduct the program in the US, so Michael brought Rudolf Zeilinger to the Midwest in 1989 and has been training with him, before he was internationally well known.

In 1992 Michael moved to Warendorf, Germany to train with Willi Schultheis and Rudolf Zeilinger. With each trainer he rode a youngster that he had bred out of a Westphalian State Elite mare. This mare came from a line bred since 100 years by the SCHULTE-VARENDORFF-family. Michael not only started to train their horses but also their children for many years.

Now they themselves have become bereiters for German Olympic Team Member, HUBERTUS SCHMIDT and for Juergen Koschel (former Olympic trainer for the Dutch and the Swiss Team). See their web-site:  
[www.dressurpferde-sv.de](http://www.dressurpferde-sv.de)

Michael says, "I personally measure my success with my students not by their wins in the competition arena but rather by the decisions of world-class trainers, who hire them. Not even many Grand Prix riders would be accepted as bereiters for the likes of RUDOLF ZEILINGER, HUBERTUS SCHMIDT, JUERGEN KOSCHEL or in England CARL HESTER."

While trained classically in equestrian sport, Michael refers to a fact that most rider's are not aware of and can only comprehend, when they have seen it: The Mecca of dressage: WARENDORF!

"When you live for 15 years in Warendorf you "breath" dressage from morning to evening, 12 months a year! You have the "Deutsche Reitschule" there - that's the place, where most of the German Bereiter (official term is: Pferdewirt) do their testing. (he gave seminars there about MENTAL TRAINING for the professionals).

The DOKR is also in Warendorf, (you could compare it a little bit with Gladstone), all year around, international trainers' give clinics there. Also every September is the BUNDESCHAMPIONAT - the federal championship for the 3 to 6 year old horses (5- and 6-y-o have to qualify with a score of 80%; Michael, as a breeder had 2 horses there last year, one ridden by his former student, qualified with 90%) The Westfalian Stud Farm stands close to 100 stallions, so they have the 30- and 70-day-tests several times a year.

And around Warendorf (not more than a one hour drive away) rider/trainer's like Klimke, Theodorescu, Balkenhol, Schultheis, Zeilinger, Koschel and Hubertus Schmidt are/were located there.

To be around the best in the world changes your standards! "

But this has not changed Michael's enthusiasm and drive for teaching rider and horses at any level - IF : their attitude is right !

‘ Respect and love for the horse, willing to work on our own short-comings and not let the horse suffer for them, patience and motivation ! ‘

Asked how he can be in the 12<sup>th</sup> or sometimes, even 15<sup>th</sup> lesson of the day and still be as motivated even if that rider/horse is not the most talented, he answered:

“ I see myself in the first place as a teacher , that means, that I am driven by the challenge in front of me, how can I help this rider with this horse in this given moment ! Then every situation ,every pair, is interesting ,because the challenge for me, is to find a way to lead them to a lasting result - as long as the student's attitude is right ! “

So years before anybody in dressage in Germany had ever worked or heard about fields like Mental Training, Body Awareness, Feldenkrais, Alexander Technique and Eutonie or the benefits of certain exercises common in the Martial Arts, Michael had studied those disciplines in the late 70's and early 80's. He developed his approach to teaching riding from his background in the Martial Arts of Kinomochi (Ai-ki-do), I-ai-do (Schwert), Zen-Meditation and body-awareness systems like, originally, Eutonie then Feldenkrais and later Alexander Technique .

Michael's holistic approach to riding requires work both on and off the horse; he feels that to be a good rider one must understand how a rider learns and moves AND how the horse learns and moves.

Thus his teaching deals not only with stylistic riding but also sport psychology - sport achievement, increased learning and competition potential, and the human/equine nature.

His work offers four different categories.

### Classical Dressage :

Over 30 years, Michael has developed riders and trainers to Grand Prix in Germany, Great Britain and the USA. Incorporating In-hand-work, lunge and double lunge and Seat- Symposiums.

“ THE SEAT IS THE ENTRANCE INTO YOUR HORSE “ Michael

### Dressage Theory:

The German Scale Of Training ( Video/theory sessions and symposiums with demonstrations of some of his FEI-students ) Already in 1985, Michael lectured about the Scale of training - almost unheard of then in the US and UK. Today, the understanding or more often mis-understanding and its practical use is still shocking.

### Mental Training for Peak Performance:

Psychological and body oriented teaching and training methods. video and audio training techniques to accelerate and enhance motor learning processes in riding.

Ba-shin-do ( Zen in the Art of Riding ) :

Emphasis on inner development of harmony in the rider with and through the horse, dressage-riding seen as “do” = way, path in the spirit of the Martial Arts.(only as work-shops)

Unlike most clinicians, Michael schedules his travels to offer 3 to 5-day intense training sessions. During these extended clinics, he is able to diagnose problems and create a training program that will benefit the horse and rider long after he is gone. While one and two day riders are welcome, students are encouraged to take advantage of the entire 3 or 5-day program.

“ The idea is to confirm a training process or element not only in the mind of the rider ,but also in the “ muscle-memory “ of both the rider and the horse “, something Michael has been teaching for more than two decades - and brain research has proven him right lately .