

ISSUE 1 | 2018

# THE Iberian HORSE

DEDICATED TO THE SPANISH AND PORTUGUESE HORSE

*Saltador ORO, son of the "Lion of Spain", who is immortalized in his progeny!*

*Foundation Introduces  
Indiano XVIII  
Dressage Cup*

Saltador ORO  
son of Indiano XVIII

A JOINT PUBLICATION OF  
The Foundation for the Pure Spanish Horse and the International Andalusian and Lusitano Horse Association

Dedicated to the Spanish and Portuguese Horse

## COVER

ON THE



Photographer Barbara Ponder immortalizes Saltador ORO, highly decorated son of Indiano XVIII, represented by "Rancho del Lago." In 2004, Rancho Del Lago doubled down on Indiano XVIII and the results were spectacular. Saltador ORO and Dardano RDL, by Indiano XVIII are out of Guardiola mares from the lines of Centella V, Champion of Spain.

Each stallion is a USDF under saddle Champion and Grand Champion Dressage Sport Horse in Hand; is a multiple USDF All Breeds Award winner, and carries many IALHA National Champion titles in multiple categories under both USEF and Spanish judges); holds an IALHA Life Merit Award, and has many championship awards at regional shows; and each stallion has in their own right sired multiple National Champions. Learn more at:

<http://ranchodellago.net>

Be sure to visit page 24 to read about the Foundation's Newest Dressage Award!

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The **CARRIAGES** and  
*Driving Horses*  
at the Royal Andalusian School of  
Equestrian Art **IN SPAIN...**



*Written and photographed by Diane E. Barber*

## An Interview with Manuel Marquez

The Royal Andalusian School of Equestrian Art in Jerez, Spain is not only home to an exquisite P.R.E. herd of dressage show horses. It also boasts a prestigious carriage museum and teams of exceptionally trained carriage driving horses that perform in the school's world-renowned performance "How the Andalusian Horses Dance".

The museum was officially established in 2002 by the Junta de Andalucía (regional government) to honor and preserve the tradition of horse-drawn carriages, which coincided with the World Equestrian Games held in Jerez that year. It is located in a 19th-century building that was formerly a winery across the street from the main grounds of the Royal School. Twelve of the original carriages and harnesses acquired by the school from the Domecq family in the 1980s are on display in the main room of the museum and are equipped with interactive touch screens for visitors to access information about their origin and history. The carriage horses are stabled there among the immaculate collection of carriages, harnesses and costumes.

At the helm of the day-to-day management of the entire carriage department is Manuel Marquez, Manager of Carriages and Coachmen, who has meticulously overseen every detail for the past 20 years. The museum, horse training, staff management, teaching students, and everything related to the shows at the school, outside exhibitions and competitions are under his watchful eye with tremendous pride at the heart of his passion.

Several years ago, I participated in private classes with Manuel as a part of an intensive training program at the Royal School. My experience with the reins of a single-horse carriage in my hands forever altered my perception of horse drawn carriages and it provided a newfound appreciation for the similarities between riding and driving. As a naive bystander, driving had always looked fairly easy to me. That certainly changed when I found myself in the driver's seat for the first time. Initially, having all of the horse's energy and power in front of me was disconcerting. But, with Manuel's careful coaching, I tapped into my riding experience and I discovered tremendous commonalities shared by both disciplines.

First and foremost I learned that, as with work under saddle, clear communications to establish a solid trusting connection with the horse was paramount. I also quickly discovered that sensitive hands, timing, use of my voice and reward were also key, as well as engaging core muscles with great posture for balance.

The short time spent training with Manuel left me with a lingering fascination and respect for driving. Years later I still yearned to learn more about the behind-the-scenes world of the carriage department at the Royal School. When I returned to Andalucía for my annual trip last fall, I had the good fortune of spending another day with the master with a notebook and camera in hand.



*Manuel Marquez, Manager of Carriages and Coachmen, and assistant.*

### A CONVERSATION WITH MANUEL MARQUEZ (MM) AND DIANE BARBER (DB)

**DB:** *How many P.R.E.s do you currently have in the carriage department and were they bred at the Royal School?*

**MM:** *At the present time, we have 22 horses working as carriage horses. Twelve of the horses were either purchased or given to the school from different breeders and ten are stallions from our own FREAAE stock, which have proven to be excellent for this discipline.*



*Warming up for the weekly performance of "How The Andalusian Horses' Dance".*

**DB:** *How many of them are trained to perform in the show "How the Andalusian Horses Dance" and how many horses and carriages are driven in each show?*

**MM:** All of the horses are trained to perform. Ten or more horses usually participate in the show with up to four carriages.

**DB:** *What qualities must a horse have to be good at pulling carriages? What is special about the horses you choose to lead the teams of horses?*

**MM:** Carriage horses must have a good character, good conformation and good movement, which all of our P.R.E.s have. The most expressive horses are generally used as the carriage guides (leaders).

**DB:** *How old are the horses when they start training and how long does it typically take to train them to be ready for the performances at the school?*

**MM:** The horses are started around the age of three. For a horse to participate in a show it needs approximately two years of training, depending upon the evolution of the animal during the training period.

**DB:** *How many carriages are in the museum and how old are they?*

**MM:** The museum has approximately 40 vintage carriages. The oldest one is the Carretela, circa 1800. The most modern one is from the end of the 20th century.

**DB:** *How many of the carriages do you use for training and for the shows? Do you use any of the vintage carriages for special performances?*

**MM:** We use seven carriages for training to teach and perform different types of driving. For the show we use an average of 10 carriages. Because it is a living museum, every carriage can be used.

**DB:** *How many people care for the horses, equipment and carriages?*

**MM:** There are six staff members under my direction – a coachman, a foreman and four stable workers. There are also six students in training.

**DB:** *Are the horse and driver costumes historical? What is the significance of the bells and the tassels that are a part of some of the horses' costumes? Are the tassels made at the school?*

## An Interview with Manuel Marquez

**MM:** The dress is specific to the carriage and harness category that we are presenting. The bells are an element of the Calasera harnesses, which are traditional harnesses from our land. The tassels are also traditional. They are made by local artisans, not at the school.

**DB:** *Is any of the leather equipment made in the saddlery at the school?*

**MM:** Yes, our saddlery department does much of the leather work.

**DB:** *How many horses are in the largest team at the school?*

**MM:** The largest team is six. More than that would be difficult because of the size of our show arena.

**DB:** *How do you stop a team of horses in an emergency?*

**MM:** I talk to them softly, take the brake and pick up the reins continuously until the horses calm down.



*Performing a difficult perfect circle in the Royal School's colesium (below).*





Historic costume display (above).



Manuel Marquez students driving behind the Royal School palace.

**DB:** What are the most important pieces of equipment on the horses and why? Why do they wear blinders on their eyes? What kind of bits and shoes are used?

**MM:** In general, all of the pieces are necessary to perform their functions in the hitch, without some of them it would be impossible. The horses wear blinders so they do not see the carriage behind them and so they do not get scared. Special bits specifically for carriage horses are used (not double bits like the dressage horses). Usually the shoes are not special shoes, unless there are circumstances that require them to avoid slipping.

**DB:** Tell me about the carriage wheels please.

**MM:** The wheels are made of wood or iron, depending upon the coaches. The wooden ones are made by hand and are for vintage coaches to preserve tradition and their originality. Iron wheels are used on coaches for competitions because they are lighter and capable of a lot of speed and better maneuvers.

**DB:** What are the most difficult maneuvers to make with a team of horses?

**MM:** Getting the correct curvatures in a circle, serpentine, backing and, of course, straightness.

**DB:** Do you have a favorite horse?

**MM:** For me, they are all my favorites. But, I have a new horse named Baluarte, which is very special. Although he has more dressage training, he has very good movements, great character, good conformation and is showing a very good attitude with a lot of potential.

❖TIH

*Diane E. Barber lives in Los Angeles and is a lifestyle writer, interior designer and equestrian with an affinity for Spain and P.R.E.s. She travels to Andalucia regularly to train with Rafael Soto and to visit her friends at the Royal Andalusian School of Equestrian Art. For more information visit: [www.realescuela.org](http://www.realescuela.org)*

