

Hot Day for Dressage at WEG

I am picturing this scene around the Silo bar Thursday night at TIEC, where many of the athletes – the human ones – have been gathering during WEG. The dressage team medals were decided Thursday, and Sweden lost out on the medal podium by the tiniest of margins, .2%, behind Germany, the U.S. and Great Britain. Surely the Swedes will be drowning their sorrows somewhere in the area, if not at the Silo. Of course, the Germans may get there ahead of them.

The Tryon crowd was ecstatic with the U.S. result, but they were knowledgeable and gracious in cheering wildly for all the top performances. They were also loudly partisan when local favorite Julio Cesar Mendoza Loor, who competes for Ecuador, rode his test. He finished 58th in a field of 77 riders with a very respectable score of 65.9% on Chardonnay. While most of the competitors here arrived in Greenville by airplane, Julio lives close enough to TIEC to ride his horse over if need be.

It was another hot sticky day, but at least it didn't rain like it did on Wednesday. Even if this is a world championship competition, it's also a horse show – horse people know to come prepared to any horse show with solid shoes, rain gear and sun block. I fully expect to need polar fleece by the end of next week.

I am also trying hard to mentally aim Hurricane Florence away from Tryon, which declared a state of emergency starting Friday and running for a week. Tryon is being very sensible in its preparations, given the horrible mudslides here this spring. It seems incredible that the biggest news story here this week may not be the largest sporting competition in the U.S. this year but rather the biggest storm.

Tryon-area dressage trainer Julio Cesar Mendoza Loor with his horse Chardonnay at WEG before the competition started.

