

## Just Let a Smile (and a Roof) be Your Umbrella

It's been just a day since I was last at TIEC and I am already suffering WEG withdrawal. Yes, I am very tired, as are all those from our area helping at WEG, but it is an amazing experience to have an event of this magnitude happening right in our backyard. It's more than cool to go to the grocery store and get a smile and nod from an equestrian hero I've admired for years because I am still in my volunteer garb. There is a prolonged Facebook page now about "equestrian celebrity sightings" at Ingles and abroad, and even some non-equestrian celebrities.

About those blue shirts, you may be able to pick one up very inexpensively at a local thrift store next week. I have no intention of keeping mine. They don't breathe. At all. We may have a group bonfire next week to dispose of them – or maybe not, because I suspect they would melt rather than burn. Since the seasons are changing now (well, not until WEG is over unfortunately) they would work much better for Fall than for Summer.

As you can see from the photo above, I was writing this from home yesterday rather than from the WEG press center at TIEC, which was closed. The only "event" that occurred Sunday was the jog for eventing, which occurs the day after cross-country, and I wasn't about to brave the wind and rain to see it. The final stadium jumping phase for eventing was moved from Sunday until Monday, which was original scheduled to an off day with no competition but with the grounds open. (Update, Great Britain won the team eventing medal Monday. Don't forget that if you can't get to the venue, you can see it on the NBC Olympic sports channel, 624 on Direct TV here.)

The dressage freestyle competition for Sunday was cancelled. Unlike the eventing, which can't award medals until after the final jumping phase, dressage had already awarded team and individual medals. The freestyle is a separate medal competition and a highlight for spectators, but a variety of factors compounded by the weather conspired against it.

The heat and the humidity that cancelled the endurance event Wednesday and the torrents that messed up all our WEG plans Sunday can only be blamed on Mother Nature. Whether the weather is good or awful always colors our opinion of a horse show, from a local schooling show to the biggest major competition. This is mostly an outdoor sport, although it's far from playing football in Michigan in the winter. I did laugh to see a video of an Irish jumper giving his horse "light exercise" on Sunday during the deluge. That's the way they roll in Ireland.

The forecast for this week is great. It will be an adventure to see how the acres of open clay and pasture parking recover from Sunday's rain. And whether the horses that were due to arrive by airlift to Greenville/Spartanburg all get here in time. I'm looking forward this week to enjoying sports I don't normally see, including driving and vaulting.

