



PERISCOPE ON ROLF-GORAN BENGTSSON

COUNTRY: SWEDEN
DATE OF BIRTH: 2 JUNE 1962
STAR SIGN: GEMINI

By HT Staff

A CALM INDIVIDUAL WITH BOTH FEET ON THE GROUND AS HE HAS MENTIONED. WHEN YOU READ THROUGH HIM AND HIS BUOYANT VOICE, AND ANALYSE HIS WINS, YOU REALISE HIS ENORMOUS CAPACITY OF MENTAL TOUGHNESS. A SIMPLE HUMAN BEING WITH A VERY CLEAR VISION OF LIFE; WHAT MAKES HIM HAPPY AND MAKES HIM SAD. THE ONLY THING HE FEELS HE LACKS IS PROBABLY A LITTLE BIT OF VICIOUSNESS WHEN IT COMES TO GRABBING AND ACQUIRING WHAT HE WANTS IN THIS WORLD.

THIS IS A BIT OF ROLF-GORAN BENGTSSON WHO WAS FIRST COACHED BY HIS FATHER SVEN-ERIK BENGTSSON AT A VERY YOUNG AGE AND GREW UP TO STUDY MECHANICAL ENGINEERING.

CURRENTLY RESIDING IN GERMANY SO AS TO BE IN THE CENTRE OF EUROPE WHERE COMPETITIONS ARE MAINLY HELD, ROLF IS FOCUSING ON MAINLY ONE THING IN LIFE; RIDING. ACHIEVEMENTS OF ROLF INCLUDE MEMORABLE WINS SUCH AS THE BRONZE INDIVIDUAL MEDAL AND TEAM SILVER MEDAL IN THE 2001 EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIPS IN ARNHEM, NETHERLANDS, AND THE SILVER TEAM MEDAL AT THE 2004 ATHENS OLYMPIC GAMES. WHEN HE WON HIS SILVER MEDAL AT THE 2008 BEIJING OLYMPICS, IT WAS THE FIRST OLYMPIC INDIVIDUAL MEDAL FOR SWEDEN SINCE CLARENCE VON ROSEN WON BRONZE AT LOS ANGELES IN 1932.

Education, family support & children:

When I started to ride of course I went to school, and my parents supported me very much by keeping ponies and horses at home. My father trained me for many years and he has had the most influence on me. Really, he was the one to build the base of my riding career. My mother on the other hand was there for me all the time – she has spent a lot of time with me. After school I got into the business of land machinery and mechanics, so I worked in the day and rode my horses after work. I do not have any children, but would love to have some of course (smiling).

Riding, knowing a horse & techniques:

At about 10 years old, I started to ride at home in a farm where I lived with my parents. My father was a rider himself, so he helped me a lot during my first riding ladder. To learn much about my horse, I try to determine his temperament and then I try to ride him in a way I would see best for him. Horses are very much like chalk and cheese, very different creatures, so sometimes you have to change the way of riding from what you initially thought would be best just so as to proceed.

Stall Bengtsson & Kristoffersen, training & keeping fit:



On training others, I do very little of that; the training of our students is 95% done by my partner Bo Kristoffersen. I concentrate on the shows, a factor our whole team tries to support. Bo and I have been managing matters and the training stable here in Breitenburg, Germany since 2003; we also do some horse sales, but most of our business is the showing and training of other riders who come here for a short or long period to be an element of our concept. On my training, all the competition horses in our stable are taken out 2 to 3 times a day; we ride them, they go in the walker and/or on the paddock. To keep them in good mood, we also take them to our cantering course or for a walk in the woods.

Trainer & sponsorship:

I normally train on my own or sometimes with Bo Kristoffersen. My main sponsor is the Mexican stud Club Hipico La Silla and its owner, Alfonso Romo. Mr. Romo puts some very good horses at my disposal, and we always have 8 to 10 horses of his in our stable; some of them are top show horses, and some of them are younger horses of his own breed, which sometimes are also for sale.

Favourite horses:

The most important horses in my riding career are Paradiso, Roofs, Pialotta, MacKinley, Tepic la Silla, Quintero la Silla, Casall la Silla and Ninja la Silla. As you can see, all these horses were/are my favourite horses!

National & international completions - happiness & disappointments:

I like CHIO Aachen very much, and I really would like to win the Grand Prix there. This year it was pretty close; I was clear in the first round and also clear in the second, but not fast enough I am afraid, and so that was a little disappointing. I also like CSI Monterrey, Mexico which is an impressive show with a very pleasant set up. I have been there several times, and it is really nice. Actually, the sea side of Monterrey is one of my favourite destinations.

Future aspirations:

The next big goal is to participate at the 2010 World Equestrian Games in Kentucky. I never won a medal at a World Championship, so this is what I am aiming for. It is a long process to prepare for such a big event; you start 9 to 10 months ahead of time to pick out the important shows for your championship horse, and then you try to reach the peak at the right time, and so I am trying my best in preparations. More to the point, I hope to keep on riding good horses and go to exciting and interesting shows.

Participating in FEI World Cup Arab League shows:

I did once participate with my horse MacKinley at CSI Dubai held under the patronage of HRH Princess Haya bint Al Hussein back in 2006 I think; it was very nice, and certainly, I would love to visit and participate at shows held in Egypt and the Arab region. I spoke once to Andre Sakakini about participating on borrowed horses, however I do not think it would serve the purpose for my sponsor, wouldn't you agree?!

More about Rolf:

I like to do a bit of skiing in the winter time, but generally I have very little time to do other things besides riding. I try to meet with friends now and then in the evening, but really, going on a holiday hardly ever happens (smiling). I love to drink sparkling apple juice when thirsty, and surely would appreciate a glass of good red wine. I am not a fan of country music, boogie, or blues, but a fan of good music in general. I am also not really a follower of other sports besides show jumping, but a supporter of Sweden in football, skiing, ice hockey and a little bit of Formula 1. If I do something good to others and see them well happy and appreciative to what I did, is what makes me happy – and doing something and having it end up going the opposite way I planned it to go, is what makes me sad. **HT**

