



2016 LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD CARA WHITHAM



The Lifetime Achievement Award is given to an individual whose contributions to the Canadian equestrian community are considered exceptional by their peers and whose long-term service and dedication have contributed directly to the ongoing growth and development of Canadian equestrian sport and industry.

Cara Whitham from Stoney Creek, ON is the 2016 recipient. Cara's remarkable career in the equestrian industry has spanned everything from high performance dressage rider and certified coach to world-renowned judge and industry leader and volunteer. A little known fact about Cara is that she was the first woman in Canada to go for her jockey's licence.

During her riding career, Cara was named to the Canadian Dressage Team short list numerous times, and earned many Canadian and Provincial Grand Prix and Grand Prix Freestyle Championship titles. She has also had a remarkable impact on dressage within Canada and around the world as a certified High



Performance Coach and Coach Evaluator, and FEI Course Director, conducting clinics in Asia, Australia, the Baltics, England, New Zealand, North America, South Africa, and South America.

First appointed Chef d'Équipe for the Canadian Dressage Team during the four-year European tour leading into the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics, Cara is also renowned for her input into the high performance plan that produced Canada's only Olympic Team Medal in Dressage to date – the Team Bronze Medal at the 1988 Seoul Olympics. In addition, she was the Chef d'Équipe for the Costa Rican Dressage Team, helping them bring home the Team Gold Medal from the 2013 Central American Games. Subsequently, Costa Rica qualified for the Pan American Games for the first time in their history, attending the 2015 Games in Toronto, where Cara once again stepped in as Chef d'Équipe.

Cara has also had a celebrated career as a judge, and continues to be in high demand today, while also mentoring many judges in Canada and around the world. She has held the record of being the only official to obtain FEI 5* judging credentials for both Dressage and Eventing. Plus, she received FEI status as a Dressage Technical Delegate, Eventing Steward, and Dressage Course Director. She was recently appointed Technical Delegate of Dressage for the 2018 FEI World Equestrian Games in Tryon, NC.

Cara's judging career has taken her around the world and to the very top of the sport. She was appointed to the Dressage Ground Jury for the 2003 and 2011 Pan American Games, the 2005 European Dressage Championships and the 2010 FEI World Equestrian Games (WEG). On the eventing side, Cara was appointed to the Eventing Ground Jury for the 1998 and 2002 WEG, as well as the 2004 Athens Olympic Games.

Recognized internationally for her knowledge and insight into equestrian sport, Cara was hired as a television commentator for the 2007 WEG, as well as the 2004, 2008 and 2012 Olympic Games.

In addition, Cara has been instrumental to the competition system in Canada. She has organized over 200 national and 30 international competitions, and held the position of Technical Advisor for the Coup des Ameriques in Blainville, QC – which was the first FEI Dressage Team competition held within North and South America. Cara also founded the Canadian FEI Youth Championships and was a leader in introducing the Event and Dressage Young Horse classes in Canada.

A former Manager and Director of Dressage for EC, Cara has given back to the organization throughout her long and illustrious career, providing invaluable service through various volunteer roles, including Chair of the former Dressage Canada Committee. Cara continues to donate her time and knowledge toward the betterment of Canada's equestrian industry today, and is a current EC Category A Member, as well as current Chair of the Officials' Task Force.



Cara's contributions to equestrian sport and industry are immeasurable, and Canada is fortunate to benefit from her dynamic and world-class talent, bottomless commitment and invaluable experience. EC is honoured to add Cara to the list of esteemed recipients of the Lifetime Achievement Award.