

Official USDF standings will decide the first-, second- and third-place winners of the Dressage Breeders' Futurity.

The futurity award system will recognize three categories of horsepeople: stallion owners and leasees, breeders of sport horse prospects, and owners of young dressage horses. In addition to cash paybacks, futurity management has allocated five percent of the nomination fees to go to breeding clinics and seminars.

Stallion owners or leasees can nominate futurity sires right now by paying a one-time fee. To encourage early nominations, futurity officials have announced a special Charter Stallion rate: \$250 for stallions nominated before March 15.

The U.S. Dressage Breeders' Futurity also will begin accepting nominations for foals, yearlings, two-, three- and four-year-olds. For a free information packet contact, U.S. Dressage Breeders Futurity, Inc., 9000 Brandywine Rd., Hamel, MN 55340, (612) 420-7051.

## American Wins German Award

Referred to in the German press as the "shooting star from the United States," Michelle Gibson, of Roswell, Georgia, earned the coveted "Rider Award" at the Dusseldorf show in mid-October. The honor, awarded by the judges at

the conclusion of many top-level German dressage shows, recognizes the rider who has the "best seat" at an event. In a country that's famous for producing some of the "best seats" in the world, being singled out is quite an honor, no matter where you hail from. The award affirms that the recipient has achieved one of the essential goals of riding. It also carries gifts and prizes and generates media attention.

Although it is not always given to someone in the ribbons, Gibson and Peron, a Trakehner stallion, scored 65.700 percent for third place in the Grand Prix and 66.780 to finish fourth in the Grand Prix Special at the Dusseldorf show. Prior to that competition, Gibson finished seventh in Grand Prix at the invitation-only CDI-Stuttgart show in Stuttgart, Germany, with a 65.95 percent and fifth in the Grand Prix Special with

70.34 percent.

Gibson worked for her riding lessons in her hometown until she met Michael Poulin and moved to Maine as a working student. She stayed for a year and a half and then returned to Georgia to decide her next step. Through a series of fortunate circumstances and many hours of hard work, she earned the opportunity to study under Rudolf Zeilinger in Germany for three years. When she returned to the States, she met Peron's owners, Dr. Carole Meyer and her husband, Russell Webster.

Gibson and Peron honed their communication skills in a field mined with ruts, but eventually ventured to New Jersey for a clinic with Zeilinger. He was so impressed with the team that he invited them both back to Germany. To fund the trip, Gibson applied for an Asmis scholarship and agreed to the long and ar-



Mary Phelps

*Michelle Gibson and Peron are setting records in Germany.*

duous hours of the working student to pay the rest.

Gibson and Peron have trained with Zeilinger near Warendorf, Germany, since April and judging by their performance, it is a good match. Currently, Gibson plans to remain in Germany through June 1995, then return to the United States to try out for the 1996 Olympic Team.—

*Sherry Frank*