

NC DRESSAGE

NATALIE CIAPPARA

- FEI Dressage Rider
- EA Dressage Coach
- EA Dressage Judge

Natalie brings over ten years of world class European training right to the front doorstep of the Australian dressage community. Having ventured overseas immediately after graduating High School in her hometown of the Gold Coast in Queensland, it's fair to say that Natalie set out on a mission to associate herself with only the very best the dressage world could offer at the time.

Natalie spent her early days as a working student at Schwartze Hof in Verden, the epicentre of Hanoverian breeding. Natalie was immersed in the German equine industry from every possible angle. Her involvement included foal shows, mare performance testing, stallion licensing, auction selections, breaking in and every age and level of horse up to and including Grand Prix. This experience is priceless and one that only very few dressage trainers in Australia can claim.

After this invaluable experience Natalie turned her focus to dressage on an elite international level and became an apprentice rider for German based American competitor Catherine Haddad. This was the beginning of the transformation from rider to trainer and under Catherine's close guidance and further assistance from Catherine's trainer Morten Thomsen, Natalie was able to produce her own chestnut mare Waika 76 (known as Glory at home) from a very green rising 6yo to a competitive small tour horse only two years later. Natalie also gained invaluable experience receiving training on Catherine's international Grand Prix horses as well as competing some of the younger horses in the stables. Then in 2010, Catherine decided her time in Germany should come to an end and returned to her homeland of America and it was again time for Natalie to begin another chapter.

Forever the curious Equestrian, Natalie ventured over the border to Holland for a short period of time and gained insight into systems that vastly differed from her solid German foundations. It was this experience that taught Natalie, albeit many years later, that there is no set path when training horses, that the end goal can look different for everyone and that the real art of dressage lies in creating a masterpiece according to one's own taste and style.



After the colourful Dutch adventure Natalie was fortunate enough to be offered the position of assistant rider just across the border with Belgian team rider, Jeroen Devroe and Carmen de Bondt. With Jeroen and Carmen, the training was consistent and always focused on suppleness. Jeroen set the standard very high and there was no exception for any other rider to do otherwise. Carmen was involved with the Belgian pony team and when the children were expected to produce 75%+ tests at Elementary level on competitions, it was Natalie's responsibility to ensure the ponies were schooled in their basics to perfection.

Three years of intensive training passed in Belgium and Natalie decided it was time to focus on her own international competition goals and this led her full circle back to Bremen, Germany to ride for Grand Prix trainer and FN (Warendorf) educator Birgit Wellhausen. Birgit was exactly the trainer Natalie needed and within months of arriving at her stables Natalie was placing in S-Dressur classes with scores around 70%. Natalie also rode a team of young horses from 4 to 6yo to many wins and placings under the guidance of Birgit. An enthusiastic trainer, Birgit proved a wonderful mentor and incredibly skilled horsewoman who gave Natalie more confidence in her own abilities than any other trainer before.

This set Natalie up on the path of Selbständigkeit or 'self employment', initially in Germany which allowed Natalie to fulfil her goal of riding internationally which she did so at Hagen: Horses & Dreams meets Australia and finished the Inter I under the top 12 riders, with the field including many up and coming superstar combinations.

A decade had passed since first arriving in Deutschland and Natalie finally began to feel her homeland Down Under calling. So in 2016 Natalie flew herself and her mare to Australia and established her business NCDressage in Brisbane which consisted of coaching, training and horse sales. After no time at all, Natalie made her mark on the National competition scene by producing the 4yo mare Esteem by Prestige VDL to win the Brisbane CDI Young Horse championship and since went on to produce the mare to FEI level and placing at the Australian Dressage Championships at Advanced level in 2022.

Life in Queensland proved very different for Natalie than what she was used to in Germany, where the equestrian industry is buzzing all year round and one only has to look next door for inspiration. For exactly this reason when a job opportunity at Canberra Performance Horses arose Natalie jumped enthusiastically into the role of rider/trainer under Nina Boyd amongst a wonderful team of grooms and clients. Natalie also had the great fortune of earning the ride on the beautiful rising 5yo imported Benicio mare, Benicia. Another tall, strong willed, intelligent chestnut mare was exactly what Natalie ordered and with much support and encouragement from Nina, Natalie was able to compete Benicia through the ranks from Preliminary to Prix St George in as little as two years. At the doorstep of FEI, Nina gratefully took over the ride on Benicia and has enjoyed much success on the mare since.



Whilst at CPH, Natalie gained valuable insight into the Australian equine market and valued the high level of professionalism set by CPH to present horses for sale in such a way that the client feels valued and respected. Natalie firmly believes these tactics are essential to the culture of Equestrian sport in Australia and it is Natalie's intention to maintain these professional standards at all times. The two years Natalie spent in Canberra proved a valuable transition from Europe to Australia and equipped Natalie with the understanding and confidence needed to better establish herself as an independent dressage trainer in Australia.

Natalie currently finds herself back in the Sunshine State of Queensland and is excited about the future. Having completed her EA Introductory Coaching accreditation and is actively working through her Level 1 Coaching as well as becoming an EA G Level Judge eligible for Fast Track to E Level Judging. By gaining these valuable EA qualifications Natalie's intends to contribute her knowledge and experience to the dressage community from grass roots through to FEI whilst encouraging everyone to raise their bar that little bit higher, for the good of the sport and above all, the welfare of the horse.



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