

U.S.'s Dressage Coach Calls it Quits

A mutual agreement signals the end of Klaus Balkenhol's tenure as USEF National Dressage Coach.

October 17, 2008

Klaus Balkenhol rides Goldstern at the 1996 Olympic Games in Atlanta. A mutual decision has been made not to renew the contract of United States Equestrian Federation (USEF) National Dressage Coach Klaus Balkenhol, which expires at the end of 2008. The decision between Balkenhol and the USEF's High Performance Dressage Committee means that his role as Chef d'Equipe, National Dressage Coach and Technical Advisor to the Committee will end December 31, 2008.

In recognition of Balkenhol's service to the USEF over the past eight years, the High Performance Dressage Committee has said it "looks forward to further discussions about his future role with the USEF and the support he can lend to our international riders both in the U.S. and in Europe."

Balkenhol, 68, has guided the U.S. Dressage Team to a number of Team medals during his tenure, including Gold at both the 2003 and 2007 Pan American Games, Silver at the 2002 World Equestrian Games and Bronze at the 2004 Olympic Games and 2006 World Equestrian Games.

Hailing from Germany, Balkenhol's dressage career is also highlighted by his success as a formidable rider. He has won three Olympic medals for Germany, including Team Gold in dressage during both the 1992 Barcelona Games and the 1996 Atlanta Games. During the Barcelona Games, he also claimed the Individual Bronze in dressage.

Details about the appointment of a new coach for the period leading up to the 2012 Olympic Games will be discussed at a Dressage Athletes' Forum in November 2008. Riders who are on the 2008 USEF Long List for Training will be invited to meet with members of the USEF Dressage Active Athletes Committee to discuss a wide range of topics relating to the Dressage High Performance Strategic Plan for the next quadrenium, including the coaching requirements for Young Riders, Developing Riders and Elite Riders.