



For Immediate Release

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Follow the Foal Part II: Dressage at Devon 2014 -- Damascus

Devon, PA (August 12, 2014) – Since our last glimpse of Damascus (Don Principe x Raureif), he has proven to be quite a star, winning the Hanovarian inspection in a field of 19. He took it all in stride but his owner, Catherine Haddad Staller, was probably a bit more excited. “I am thrilled,” she said. “He showed very well.”

But for Damascus, life remains uncomplicated, spending most of his time in the pasture, playing and resting and staying close to mom. But for those responsible for his care, and the care of many others, there's a lot more to think about.

"Our babies tend to live outside full time so he is out in a large field with other babies and broodmares until after Devon. Living as a herd is very natural for them," explained Natalie DiBerardinis, General Manager and Breeding Manager for Hilltop Farm, Inc. (Colora, MD).

"But they do have a schedule. Damascus (and the others) are brought in two times a day to eat, in an individual feed stall (he is even separated from mom so there is no competition for food!). This schedule has contributed to his weight gain of more than 300 pounds in his first three months since his birth on April 15. Of course, mom helped too! His first meal is at 7:30 am and the second is at 3 pm.

Weighing a horse may be easier than it sounds. When they are little, breeders use a weight tape to estimate their heft. “As they grow, we are fortunate that our local feed supplier – the Mill of Bel Air – comes out with a scale,” says Natalie.

While he spends most of his day luxuriating with his mom and playmates, during the day, says

DiBeradinis, there is a lot of "hands on" attention for all the babies. This includes activities such as grooming with rub rags, curry combs and brushes, picking his feet, a little bit of in hand work and, of course, lots of just plain petting. "Our goal is to teach the babies to respect humans and to be confident around them." Damascus is learning his lessons well, with a curious nature and confidence in his surroundings.

On September 22nd, Damascus and about 20 other foals and horses from Hilltop will arrive at Devon. Since he will still be very young, Damascus will be traveling and showing with his mom. But she'll be busy too, showing on Wednesday in the Broodmares 4 years and older class.

As for Damascus, he will strut his stuff in "Colts of the Current Year" with the possibility of moving on to a championship class.

Look for additional updates on the Dressage at Devon website (www.dressageatdevon.org) as the show draws near.

Dressage at Devon 2014 will take place September 23 through September 28, 2014. Reserved seating is available online for Dressage at Devon 2014 at www.dressageatdevon.org. Box seats are in demand so, for information as to availability or for group sales, please contact Robbie Kankus at boxseats@dressageatdevon.org, tickets@dressageatdevon.org or 610-358-1919.

About Dressage at Devon

Dressage at Devon (www.dressageatdevon.org) has been the premier North American Equestrian event since its founding by the Delaware Valley Combined Training Association in 1975, and became a separate organization in 2006. It combines world-class dressage competition and the world's largest open breed show with the international Fall Festival show and special activities for the entire family. The six-day event attracts hundreds of horses from around the world and thousands of spectators. Dressage at Devon is a 501(c) (3) PA non-profit organization, benefitting equine education.

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