

Eventing WITH BOYD MARTIN

In January, you were awarded the Whitney Stone Cup by the USET Foundation. This award is given to “an active competitor who displays consistent excellence in international competition, as well as exemplifying high standards of sportsmanlike conduct, while serving as an ambassador for the United States and equestrian sport.” Can you discuss what it was like to receive this award?

The award was presented at a gala in Wellington, Florida, where Bruce Springsteen was playing and a lot of supporters of horse sports were in attendance. It was a fun occasion and really an honor. Winning this award is one of my proudest achievements. To be recognized alongside some of the past winners is truly a humbling feeling.



Boyd was awarded the Whitney Stone Cup by the USET Foundation.
Photo by Jump Media

The USET Foundation has given me every chance and every opportunity to allow me to be the best I can be and to achieve all the success I had in 2019: finishing second with Christine Turner's Tsetserleg at the Land Rover Kentucky Three-Day Event and winning the USEF CCI5*-L National Championship, then winning team and individual gold medals at the Pan Am Games in Lima, Peru, and securing

the Tokyo Olympics qualification for the U.S. Eventing Team.

I was injured at the end of 2019, but I've been following doctors' orders to make sure I'm in good shape to compete in 2020. I really feel like I'm starting to hit top gear coming into in the new competition season, and I'm so proud to be an American, representing the stars and stripes. I can't wait to get out there and see what this year brings.

You recently lost one of your owners, Stephen Blauner, when he died unexpectedly. What did he mean to you?

I first met Steve in about 2009, when I taught him in a few clinics. He had this horse Joey: Steve pointed Joey at anything that looked like a jump, and Joey would always find a way to jump it. They didn't have much style, but they got the job done. Usually at these clinics there was a Saturday night dinner and I would always find myself finishing the night having a drink with Steve. Little did I know at that time that this guy would ultimately change my life and jump-start my career.

Throughout my years in America, one thing has been true about Steve: He absolutely loved helping out the underdog that needed a leg up. In 2010, Steve saw something in my riding and decided to back me. When Steve came up with an idea, he followed through with it. He has always been a guy that put his money where his mouth is.

Not only did he back me, he rallied up all of his New York friends and encouraged them to get involved. It's been an amazing run of horses over the last few years. Steve bankrolled all of the syndicates and trusted me to pay him back. He also was the first to jump into a young horse without even seeing a video. He was the ultimate supporter.

Over the years, he was a part of: Neville Bardos (WEG Kentucky 2010); Otis Barbotiere

(London Olympics 2012); Trading Aces (WEG Normandy 2014); Shamwari (WEG Normandy 2014); Pancho Villa (Pan Am Games Toronto 2015); Blackfoot Mystery (Rio Olympics 2016); Master Frisky (Kentucky 2015); Bonito (Bromont 2017); Ray Price (Bromont 2019); Long Island T (Fair Hill 2018); and Luke 140, Carlsberg and Mr. Mitchell.

Steve really didn't worry what anyone else thought of him. He was larger than life. I will never be able to repay what Steve did to help me get started; I have often wondered where I'd be if he didn't believe in me all those years ago. He was a great example of a real character that had a heart of gold, and he will truly be missed.

Before you started riding for the U.S.A., you represented your native Australia in international competition. The recent bush fires in Australia have caused massive devastation; can you suggest a way for horse people to support recovery efforts for fellow equestrians affected by the fires?

I'm an ambassador for the Equestrian Fire Relief Fund Australia, organized to provide fire relief and aid to equestrians affected by the horrendous bush fires of 2019-2020. International and national donations can be made on their website.

Thanks to my mother, Toy Dorgan Martin, who's an American citizen, I grew up with dual citizenship. Growing up in Australia was a magical experience as a child, jumping on my pony and galloping around with my friends after school. We're fortunate that our family farm wasn't affected by the fires, but many were not so lucky.

Silva and I have firsthand experience with a barn fire, having lost six horses in the fire at True Prospect Farm in 2011. I can tell you it's an absolutely horrific experience, and can really destroy the spirit. Knowing that you have both financial support and moral support makes a big difference. We are forever grateful to the equestrian community for the financial aid and moral support provided after this tragedy, and we hope to extend the same welfare to those in need. I urge anyone to contribute to this heartfelt fund. **SI**

To donate, visit
www.equestrianfirerelief.com.au/donate



Boyd Martin riding Kyra Photo by Amber Heintzberger

Well known for both his fun-loving approach to life and his indefatigable work ethic, Boyd Martin has represented the U.S.A. in three-day eventing at two Olympic Games and two World Championships, and was on the gold-medal-winning Pan Am Games team in 2015. Boyd's wife, Silva Martin, is a grand prix dressage rider and they have two sons, Nox and Leo. Boyd and Silva train out of their own farm, Windurra USA in Cochranville, Pennsylvania, and spend winters at Stable View in Aiken, South Carolina.

Do you have a question you want Boyd to answer? Send questions to editor@sidelinesmagazine.com.