

# Features



## Brehmer Rides Toward Her Dreams

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*By Annabeth Miller, SMT Editor*

CAPE GIRARDEAU - Meagan Brehmer has been around animals all her life. In fact, this fall she ended a successful career as a 4H showman at the Stoddard County Fair where she has proudly shown her animals since she was a young girl.

But now, as a student at Southeast Missouri State University, Brehmer has embarked on a new adventure as a member of the university's Equestrian Team. At least a couple of times each week her friends on Facebook have been treated to her stories about working with the horses, the team, and her successes at shows this fall.

The Southeast Equestrian Team include nine young women from all walks of life and various riding skill levels.

The team rides English – a form of riding that is seen throughout the world. English style uses a flat English saddle western saddles. Generally, English riders do not wear spurs, and wear a shirt with some of tie, jodhpurs, equestrian helmet and a jacket. Riding includes classical dressage to jumping and racing. English riding is an equestrian discipline with many different styles, however, at the most basic level, most versions require riders to use both hands on the reins, rather than just one hand, as is seen in western.

The SEMO teams works out of Fox Run Staples and the coach is SuAnne Remley. Remley studied equestrian science at William Woods University in Fulton, the first college or university in the country to offer a four-year degree in Equestrian Science.

Brehmer and the team recently returned from a show hosted by Northern Illinois University at Fox Creek Staples near Chicago. And Dexter's Brehmer came home from her first major equestrian show sporting the ribbons for her efforts. Brehmer competed in the Walk/Trot Equitation division. To save costs, the host staples provides the horses, and riders draw for their ride during the show.

"I pulled a small bay pony named Haley the first day, and a small elderly black pony named Ebony on the second," the feisty Brehmer said. "Our competitions are two days, with a new judge each day. I usually draw ponies rather than horses because of my small size. On Friday I placed first in my division! On Saturday I placed fifth out of nine riders. I made a pretty big mistake that I didn't realize until halfway though-woops!"

Riding horses is nothing new for farm-girl Brehmer, but the style is different.

"I had never ridden English before I attended SEMO, I had plenty of Western riding experience however," she commented. She is so smitten with the riding experience that she has a goal – a big goal.

I'm currently shopping around for my own English horse to board in Cape and to take to barn shows with Fox Run," she says. "I participate in competitions outside of the collegiate level ones as well. It's my dream to be an Olympic rider-but, we will see about that! Most Olympians are in their 50's!!"

The young women on the team might come from different backgrounds, but Brehmer says they have become close friends.

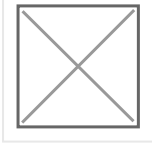
“I love all the girls on my team, we are one huge family. Sadly our team gets little support from the college. We pay for everything out of pocket,” she said.

Fox Run Stables hosts our team. The lovely barn owner, Tricia LaFoe, provides the horses and arenas for us to practice in. She is a blessing to us!”

This fall Bremer received third place in Walk/Trot Equitation at a show Illinois State University in Bloomington, fourth in fifth in the same division at a show at Southern Illinois University in Carbondale. In schooling shows this fall she has placed third in Walk/Trot/Canter Equitation and fifth in Crossrails class in Madanda, Ill.

Southeast Missouri State Equestrian Team will be hosting its first show on March 10 and 11 at Fox Run Stables in Cape Girardeau.

“We encourage anyone interested in attending SEMO or anyone who loves horses to attend,” Brehmer said.



*Photo Above: The Southeast Missouri State University Equestrian Team. Team member Meagan Brehmer of Dexter is third from the right, next to Coach SuAnne Remley. (photos provided)*

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