



Hays Unwraps A Gift At Holiday On Horse

This amateur rider has waited a long time to get her dream horse.

Molly Sorge

CHRISTMAS CAME A little bit early for Lauren Hays this year.

Hays had been riding Numero Uno, the kind of horse she's dreamed of owning her whole life, but she thought that purchasing him was unrealistic for her.

"Uno" was a sales horse belonging to Hays' friend, Sharer Dale. Dale let Hays show him in the Holiday On Horse dressage show in Aiken, S.C., on Dec. 5-6, and Hays took full advantage of the opportunity, riding Uno to blue ribbons in both her training level, test 4, classes and claiming the high score on the first day of the show with a 74.80 percent.

"I knew I wanted him, but to get those kind of scores just reiterated it," Hays said. "My husband called me after I got my score on Saturday, and I was crying. He asked me what was wrong, and I could just barely get out that I was so excited to win. I was so overwhelmed. He called me after the show and asked, 'What do you want to do about Uno?' and I said, 'I'd love to buy him, but things have been tough.'"

Hays and her husband, Chris, are trying to sell a home in Florida and working on building a farm in their new home of Aiken, so she didn't think she could swing buying Uno. But after she got home from the show, her husband told her to go ahead and do it.

"This is a dream come true for me. My highest score ever was around a 68, so to not only score in the 70s, but also to get a 74, and then for my husband to say I can get Uno—it was like a Christmas miracle," Hays said.

"My whole life, since I was 6 or 7, I've always wanted to see an envelope under the tree that I could open and it would say I'm getting a pony! I remember being a kid and looking under the tree for that envelope. I was very lucky that my parents did get me a horse when I was 14, but I've never had a fancy show horse," she added. "That's why this is like my dream finally

come true—to have a really nice show horse I can go out and be competitive with."

► Finally Her Dream Horse

Hays, 51, has ridden her whole life, but showing has always been a luxury.

"I've always had the Thoroughbred and never the fancy show pony. That's why this is so exciting to get my first real show horse. I'm 51, so my parents kept saying, 'Oh, you'll outgrow it when you're 16,' and I never did. Here I am 51, and it's still my passion," she said.

Hays used to show in the hunters but switched to dressage 15 years ago. "I never was a big show person, because I never really had the horse to do it with. And I never had a trailer. Raising kids was really the other reason I never had time to show. There were about six years that I didn't have horses at all because I was busy running my kids all across the state playing soccer. In the last three years, I got the trailer, and we're building the farm, and it's like everything's in place now."

Hays had a career as a trauma nurse but has retired and attended school to become a clinical esthetician. She now

teaches skin care in the evenings. She and her husband moved from Florida to Aiken in 2007, after their oldest child graduated from high school.

Since Hays' husband is a yacht captain and travels a lot for work, they could move anywhere. "I just knew that I love the atmosphere and the horse life in Aiken. This is kind of my time, and I've been able to really start showing," she said.

But Hays has had to spend a lot of time traveling back and forth between South Carolina and Florida, trying to get the Florida property sold. She took her former show horse, an off-the-track-Thoroughbred named Rikki Tikki Tavi, to Florida to ride while she's there.

Hays has shown Rikki Tikki Tavi, who she's had for four years, through first level and is schooling second level on him.

"He was a horse who was standing in a field starving, and a friend of mine picked him up. I took him on and brought him back from the dead, pretty much. He's been a really great horse. He was a very expensive race horse bred in Kentucky, but after he bowed a tendon, he just got lost in the shuffle, like so many of them do. But he's had a second chance at life and has done very well," she said.

Lauren Hays finally got the dream horse that she always wanted for Christmas after she rode Numero Uno to two training level wins at Holiday On Horse.



(WMC Photography Photo)



"My whole life, since I was 6 or 7, I've always wanted to see an envelope under the tree that I could open and it would say I'm getting a pony!"

—Lauren Hays

While she's in South Carolina, she's been riding Uno for Dale.

"I came back up to Aiken on Tuesday before the show, had two lessons on him and took him to the show. I haven't been riding him consistently, but I got really lucky, and all my hard work paid off," she said. "I had been working really hard on my seat and my balance, so when it came time for the show, even though I hadn't ridden him much, everything went well."

► Master Of All Trades

Uno, an 8-year-old Dutch Warmblood gelding, was earning his living as an adult jumper before Hays came along, and he had also shown in the hunter ring.

"He's just got such a big heart," Hays said. "He tries anything and wants to please."

Hays first showed Uno in dressage in March. She had Rikki Tikki Tavi entered at a show but had to scratch because he was lame. So she called Dale and asked if there were any horses that might want to go to a dressage show. Dale sent her Uno, and they earned ribbons at training level together.

Hays took a lesson on Uno with Grand Prix rider James Koford the day after the show. "He got on Uno and rode him a little bit. When he got off, he handed the reins to me and said, 'I wouldn't be in such a rush to give him back to your friend! He's a nice horse,'" Hays recalled.

Hays rides with dressage trainer Amy McElroy. "Amy loves him, and when she first saw me on him, she said, 'I love you on Uno—he's just the right horse for you.' Everybody who sees him likes the horse. He's trained right. For someone like me, to have an 8-year-old horse who I know will be able to move up with me, is so great. You can do anything with him—I trail ride him. He's just a very solid and steady horse, and I think that's why all my trainers like me on him," Hays said.

Hays also rides with Drasius Arkus, a Lithuanian rider who has done most of the training on Uno. "Drasius does mostly hunters and jumpers, but he's a phenomenal dressage trainer. Like many Europeans, he has such wonderful fundamentals in the basics of dressage. He's the one who trained Uno. Uno is actually schooling some third and fourth level movements.

"Thanks to Amy and Drasius, I've been able to accomplish what I have."

Hays hopes to take Uno to Florida with her after the holidays and get started on her goal of moving up the levels.

"I would really like to try and qualify for first level and then start moving up to second level. I'd love to qualify for regionals and start working toward a bronze medal," she said.

Hays said she couldn't have done any of this without her husband, Chris. "He's been very supportive. I also have a lot of support from friends, too. They help me try and be the best I can," she said.

Hays goes to hunter/jumper shows to watch her friends ride, and they return the favor by being her cheering section at dressage shows. "It's not so much about the ribbons as it is about enjoying the process, and I have to say that the process is a lot more enjoyable with them," she said.

AIKEN, SC—DEC. 5-6.

▲ **Trg., T. 1** - 1. Fable, S. Myers, 70.43%; 2. Dragon's Lair Hurricane, C. Pourlos, 66.52; 3. SF After Hours, M. Mitchell, 66.52. ▲ **Trg., T. 3** - 1. Laugallen, C. Von Asten, 71.60; 2. Dragon's Lair Hurricane, 62.00; 3. Winnifred, C. Floyd, 60.40. ▲ **Trg., T. 4** - 1. Numero Uno, L. Hays, 74.80; 2. Laugallen, 72.80; 3. Versailles, L. Wagner, 68.80. ▲ **1st Level, T. 1** - 1. Mika FFF, M. Mitchell, 67.66; 2. Rhodium, L. Bissell, 63.66; 3. Simply Duchess, L. Wagner, 63.00. ▲ **1st Level, T. 3** - 1. Angie, J. Davis, 50.00. ▲ **1st Level, T. 4** - 1. Yze Fan Vels, J. Van Mill, 67.36; 2. Peaches, M. Mitchell, 63.94; 3. Simply Duchess, 57.63. ▲ **2nd Level, T. 1** - 1. My Maxwell, M.D. Paris, 63.68; 2. Yze Fan Vels, 60.78; 3. True Grit, D. Myers, 57.63. ▲ **2nd Level, T. 3** - 1. Duchess Of Daence, J. Burdge, 62.32; 2. Dulcimer, J. Stone, 59.07. ▲ **2nd Level, T. 4** - 1. Dancing On Air, S. Oliver, 60.71; 2. Dulcimer, 59.76; 3. Dreamaster, J. Tucker, 59.52. ▲ **3rd Level, T. 1** - 1. Artistic, M. Duff, 61.79; 2. Dukat, H. Neubauer, 58.46. ▲ **3rd Level, T. 2** - 1. Cosmic Confidant, R. Vick, 59.74; 2. Piper EF, J. Ford, 56.92. ▲ **3rd Level, T. 3** - 1. Artistic, 60.69; 2. Westbound Kid, J. Koford, 60.23; 3. Cosmic Confidant, 58.60. ▲ **4th Level, T. 1** - 1. Farlight, A. Bresky, 63.25; 2. Personality, V. Swygert, 61.62; 3. Westbound Kid, 61.16. ▲ **4th Level, T. 2** - 1. Ladylike, E.C. Moore, 60.00; 2. Duelligan, L. Tomlinson, 59.31. ▲ **4th Level, T. 3** - 1. Grafenwohl, D. Brunson, 61.95. ▲ **PSG - 1.** Rigo, S. Harding, 67.36; 2. Tyberius, T.T. Trent, 53.15. ▲ **Int. II - 1.** Rhett, J. Koford, 61.05; 2. Oyente, E. Schobel, 57.36. ▲ **Grand Prix - 1.** Come On Ill, S. Harding, 68.93; 2. Ivan, S. Cunningham, 52.34; 3. Mondschaten, E.C. Moore, 49.36. ▲ **USDF Freestyle TOC - 1.** My Maxwell, 69.37; 2. Freedom, J. McDevitt, 64.16. ▲ **FEI Freestyle TOC - 1.** Daverden, K. Blythe, 65.25. ▲ **Trg., T. 2** - 1. Fable, 67.85; 2. Zamona, J. Roberts, 67.85; 3. Dragon's Lair Hurricane, 67.14. ▲ **Trg., T. 3** - 1. Laugallen, 67.60; 2. Winnifred, 65.60; 3. Versailles, 62.80. ▲ **Trg., T. 4** - 1. Numero Uno, 72.80; 2. Vulcan's Odyssey, V. Swygert, 68.80; 3. Versailles, 68.40. ▲ **1st Level, T. 2** - 1. Rhodium, 61.11; 2. For Pete's Sake, M. Jones, 56.38; 3. Hut Et Luc, J. Danelski, 52.22. ▲ **1st Level, T. 3** - 1. Ruth Anne, C. Derr, 64.00; 2. Hut Et Luc, 56.57. ▲ **1st Level, T. 4** - 1. Simply Duchess, 61.31. ▲ **2nd Level, T. 2** - 1. My Maxwell, 71.89; 2. Dreamaster, 67.83; 3. True Grit, 65.40. ▲ **Dover Medal A/A 2nd Level, T. 3** - 1. Prince Brego, J. Burdge, 62.09; 2. Dulcimer, 61.39. ▲ **2nd Level, T. 4** - 1. True Grit, 64.76; 2. Prince Brego, 59.52. ▲ **3rd Level, T. 1** - 1. Dukat, 60.76; 2. Artistic, 60.00. ▲ **3rd Level, T. 2** - 1. Cosmic Confidant, 64.61; 2. Piper EF, 62.05. ▲ **3rd Level, T. 3** - 1. Cosmic Confidant, 63.48; 2. Artistic, 62.79; 3. Rubens Baricello, A. Daly, 60.46. ▲ **4th Level, T. 1** - 1. Farlight, 64.18; 2. Westbound Kid, 63.02; 3. Personality, 62.79. ▲ **4th Level, T. 2** - 1. Duelligan, 59.54. ▲ **4th Level, T. 3** - 1. Ladylike, 56.09. ▲ **PSG - 1.** Tyberius, 57.63; 2. Jonson, C. Wiener, 56.31; 3. Daverden, 55.26. ▲ **Int. II - 1.** Rhett, 62.10. ▲ **Grand Prix - 1.** Oyente, 57.23; 2. Ivan, 55.10; 3. Mondschaten, 50.21. ▲ **Opp. Trg., T. 3** - 1. Dragon's Lair Dramboui, A. Paris, 62.80. ▲ **Opp. Trg., T. 2** - 1. Dragon's Lair Dramboui, 60.35.

Dressage At Lamplight August I & II

WAYNE, IL—AUG. 21-23.

JUDGES: Maryal Barnett, Fran Dearing, Hilda Gurney, Jeanne McDonald, Gary Rockwell, Beverly Rogers, Linda Zang.

▲ **A/A Intro, Level, T. A** - 1. American Beauty, K. Currier, 71.50%. ▲ **A/A Intro, Level, T. B** - 1. American Beauty, 79.00. ▲ **A/A Trg., T. 1** - 1. Rubin Magic, M. Black, 62.60. ▲ **Jr./Y.R. Trg., T. 1** - 1. Bella Luna GP, K. Barreau, 77.39; 2. Aragon, J. Valenti, 74.34; 3. Isis, K. Zierwick, 66.08. ▲ **Open Trg., T. 1** - 1. The Muffin, D. MacDonald, 73.91; 2. Ultra Sonic, J. Starck, 72.17. ▲ **A/A Trg., T. 2** - 1. Orion, N. Potts, 71.07; 2. Xtreme, T. Vandestreek, 69.28. ▲ **Jr./Y.R. Trg., T. 2** - 1. Isis, 70.71; 2. Gisela, L. Drummond, 63.57. ▲ **Open Trg., T. 2** - 1. The Muffin, 75.71; 2. GP Juri Van Der M, Y. Barreau, 63.57. ▲ **A/A Trg., T. 3** - 1. Likely Suspect, T. Haslitt, 65.20. ▲ **A/A Trg., T. 4** - 1. Gucci, C. Marsch, 69.60; 2. Clancy's Charm, J. Moskal, 68.80; 3. Donnerreich, C. Shanks-Bongiorno, 68.40. ▲ **Jr./Y.R. Trg., T. 4** - 1. Aragon, 69.60; 2. Tebaldo, A. Gerlt, 59.20. ▲ **Open Trg., T. 4** - 1. Benise, J. Kelly, 80.40; 2. Sasha, E. Ots, 79.20; 3. Ultra Sonic, 69.60. ▲ **A/A 1st Level, T. 1** - 1. Marius, B. Jensen, 66.66; 2. Gucci, 63.66; 3. Shamrock Willie, L. Wyss, 56.66. ▲ **Jr./Y.R. 1st Level, T. 1** - 1. Bella Luna GP, 73.66; 2. Gabriel, J. Valenti, 72.66; 3. GP Super Crusader, K. Barreau, 67.66. ▲ **Open 1st Level, T. 1** - 1. Wagner, A. Walker-Basak, 69.00; 2. Hennessey B, E. Ots, 66.33; 3. Future Favorite, D. MacDonald, 64.33. ▲ **A/A 1st Level, T. 2** - 1. Roxy, P. McGann, 58.61; 2. Prestige, K. Plum, 57.77. ▲ **Open 1st Level, T. 3** - 1. Future Favorite, 63.71. ▲ **A/A 1st Level, T. 4** - 1. Clancy's Charm, 64.73; 2. Marius, 60.26; 3. Ate Van Der M, M. Allen, 59.73. ▲ **Jr./Y.R. 1st Level, T. 4** - 1. Gabriel, 75.00; 2. Drum It Up Twice, K. Barreau, 63.68; 3. Henry, S. Sedky, 60.00. ▲ **Open 1st Level, T. 4** - 1. Benise, 74.47; 2. Gylano, G. Shelepev, 70.00; 3. Clementina, K. Barreau, 68.68. ▲ **A/A 2nd Level, T. 1** - 1. Seratoga, T. Haslitt, 62.10; 2. Sonitas Last Peppy, P. Combs, 61.05. ▲ **Jr./Y.R. 2nd Level, T. 1** - 1. GP Super Crusader, 67.89. ▲ **Open 2nd Level, T. 1** - 1. Dabadu Blue, A. Stuhr, 67.89; 2. Heroe Mac, M. Contreras, 56.31. ▲ **A/A 2nd Level, T. 2** - 1. Seratoga, 58.10. ▲ **Open 2nd Level, T. 2** - 1. Woodstock, B. Steiner, 65.13. ▲ **A/A 2nd Level, T. 3** - 1. Sonitas Last Peppy, 62.55; 2. Odyssee, V. Wyss, 61.86. ▲ **Jr./Y.R. 2nd Level, T. 3** - 1. Nycaro, G. Angelico, 58.60. ▲ **A/A 2nd Level, T. 4** - 1. Tiernan, N.K. Reckamp, 71.42; 2. Odyssee, 57.14. ▲ **Jr./Y.R. 2nd Level, T. 4** - 1. Something Fishy, S. Timmerman, 70.95; 2. Kroonprijs, S. Roney, 63.09; 3. AM Power Raid, A. Schierbeck, 55.00. ▲ **Open 2nd Level, T. 4** - 1. Wagner, 69.04. ▲ **A/A 3rd Level, T. 1** - 1. Castle Master, T. Schnoll, 58.20. ▲ **Jr./Y.R. 3rd Level, T. 1** - 1. Franat's Fantom, K. Lawrence, 54.35. ▲ **Open 3rd Level, T. 2** - 1. Dabadu Blue, 65.64. ▲ **A/A 3rd Level, T. 3** - 1. Lancieux, J. Cook, 61.74; 2. Phantom, T. Cooper, 61.51; 3. Tiernan, 59.65. ▲ **Jr./Y.R. 3rd Level, T. 3** - 1. Franat's Fantom, 60.93. ▲ **Open 3rd Level, T. 3** - 1. Cleopatra, G. Williams, 71.27; 2. Volontaire, K. Barreau, 68.02; 3. Sarasanna GP, Y. Barreau, 66.74. ▲ **A/A 4th Level, T. 1** - 1. Radcliffe, A. Leach, 60.69. ▲ **Jr./Y.R. 4th Level, T. 1** - 1. GP Delano, K. Barreau, 70.69. ▲ **Open 4th Level, T. 1** - 1. Caranza Z, R. Yap, 66.27. ▲ **A/A 4th Level, T. 2** - 1. Piaget, K. Ayres, 65.45; 2. Rembrandt, N. Blake, 57.50. ▲ **A/A 4th Level, T. 3** - 1. Phoebe, M. Hanneman, 58.04; 2. HSA Haley's Comet, B. Noteman, 55.00. ▲ **Jr./Y.R. 4th Level, T. 3** - 1. GP Delano, 69.51; 2. Sacramento, K. Foster, 66.22. ▲ **A/A PSG - 1.** D-Niro, S. Harris, 60.92; 2. Abend, R. McKinley, 60.52; 3. Andante, L. Wittkop, 56.57. ▲ **Jr./Y.R. PSG - 1.** GP Raymeister, K. Barreau, 69.34. ▲ **Open PSG - 1.** Cabana Boy, C. Hickey, 73.15; 2. Toscano, Y. Barreau, 69.34; 3. Don Bailey, G. Williams, 68.68. ▲ **Open Int. I** - 1. Daina, M. Allen, 62.76; 2. Seville, J. Tuck, 62.10; 3. Jashmir, A. Garrett, 56.44. ▲ **Grand Prix - 1.** World Fire, K. Priest, 62.66. ▲ **A/A Intro, Level, T. A** - 1. American Beauty, 68.50. ▲ **Jr./Y.R. Intro, Level, T. A** - 1. Dunham, K. Allen, 62.00. ▲ **A/A Intro, Level, T. B** - 1. American Beauty, 69.00; 2. Patina, J. Moskal, 63.50; 3. Winston, S. Gleason, 63.00. ▲ **A/A Trg., T. 1** - 1. Rubin Magic, 65.21. ▲ **A/A Trg., T. 2** - 1. Orion, 58.92. ▲ **Jr./Y.R. Trg., T. 2** - 1. Bella Luna GP, 72.85; 2. Rubin Magic, K. Barreau, 70.35; 3. Isis, 65.71. ▲ **Open Trg., T. 2** - 1. Ultra Sonic, 70.71; 2. The Muffin, 68.92. ▲ **A/A Trg., T. 3** - 1. Likely Suspect, 65.20. ▲ **Open Trg., T. 3** - 1. The Muffin, 65.20. ▲ **A/A Trg., T. 4** - 1. Wellington, K. Cooper, 69.20; 2. Clancy's Charm, 67.60; 3. Likely Suspect, 66.00. ▲ **Jr./Y.R. Trg., T. 4** - 1. Tebaldo, 65.20; 2. Mercedes Storm, K. Barreau, 63.60; 3. Aragon, 63.20. ▲ **Open Trg., T. 4** - 1. Sasha, 75.20; 2. Ultra Sonic, 72.00; 3. Thalia, A. Reucka, 68.00. ▲ **A/A 1st Level, T. 1** - 1. Sonitas Last Peppy, 68.00; 2. Marius, 63.00; 3. Estrella, J. Novak, 62.66. ▲ **Jr./Y.R. 1st Level, T. 1** - 1. Tebaldo, 66.00; 2. Aragon, 62.00; 3. Shirefox Seraz, K. Pannier, 60.33. ▲ **Open 1st Level, T. 1** - 1. Hennessey B, 71.33; 2. Donnerreich, H. Schrant, 65.33. ▲ **A/A 1st Level, T. 2** - 1. Roxy, 57.36. ▲ **Jr./Y.R. 1st Level, T. 2** - 1. GP Super Crusader, 74.58; 2. Gabriel, 70.27; 3. Henry, 65.97. ▲ **Open 1st Level, T. 2** - 1. Future Favorite, 65.55. ▲ **A/A 1st Level, T. 3** - 1. Estrella, 64.42; 2. Giori, P. Smith, 59.28; 3. Prestige, 54.57. ▲ **Open 1st Level, T. 3** - 1. Future Favorite, 67.00. ▲ **A/A 1st Level, T. 4** - 1. Marius, 61.31; 2. Giori, 60.00; 3. Capone, T. Rock, 59.73. ▲ **Jr./Y.R. 1st Level, T. 4** - 1.