

Jennifer McIlwraith



**2006 Ontario Equestrian Federation
Coach of the Year**



A 30-year passion

Jennifer climbed onto her first horse at the age of eight at Bar Nine in Oakville and has been stuck to the saddle ever since. Her sense of awe at the physical power and spirit of these willing, intelligent, gentle and kind creatures remains with her. And horses still fill her with amazement, exhilaration & contentment. So captivated was she, she has worked her way up from leading trail-rides, running barns and guest houses to developing her own coaching, training and horse boarding and sales business.

Today, her life revolves around the horse and she's now a well-respected equestrienne, horse trainer, coach and match-maker of horse and rider teams.

She is the first western coach to receive the OEF Coach of the Year award.

A Western woman

Jennifer has taken a road less ridden for Ontario-based horse-people. Most ride English. She rides Western—which she bills as beautiful and exciting to watch and learn. She's a great ambassador for the discipline.

She loves the special challenge and variety of training horses and riders in the Western disciplines which requires self-carriage of the horse and demands precise communication between horse and rider which is achieved through the seat and legs and a *really* slack set of reins. She'll tell you there's nothing on earth as nice as a smooth, slow and collected western pleasure lope.

She's as laid back and humorous as anyone you'd expect to find on a working ranch. But with high standards and expectations for horses and riders, she's an effective motivator, trainer and coach.



Her Philosophy

“Build partnerships. And keep it simple,” she believes.

Jennifer attributes a lot of her coaching success on her focus on creating and nurturing great partnerships between horses and riders. She takes the matching of horse & rider combinations very seriously and believes this helps each member of the team reach their potential.

She enjoys sharing the sense of discovery of both horse & human. Her learning is never done. She is constantly honing her craft so she can share this with her students.

On training horses

Jennifer believes the trainer’s job is to educate and produce a happy & safe mount. She believes we best motivate horses by gaining their trust, respect and understanding. And she thinks we get the best results when we offer our best—patience and consistency.

She starts and develops horses, never “breaks” them. She focuses on communication and encouragement. She believes horses should never be asked to tolerate our frustration & anger. And her barn is a relaxed setting where all can learn and grow.

On coaching riders

Jennifer believes it’s important and vital that riders and horse owners understand safety, respect & seek excellent communication with their horse, knowing those things lead to rider satisfaction. She believes it’s her job to not only bring knowledge and experience to her coaching but also a positive attitude, enthusiasm and a genuine desire to see a horse and rider team succeed.

She works with each and every student to understand their needs, goals and abilities before developing a customized plan. Then, she coaches her students and helps them understand horse training techniques which lead to self-sufficiency and a mentoring of others in her craft. She will never ask a team to engage in an activity that is beyond the team’s physical capabilities.

She feels accomplishment when her students master new skills and feels tremendous pride when her students do well in a show.

For her, the best part of being a coach is when she sees insight come—when she watches the “light bulb” go on and sees a rider understand & experience the true feeling of partnership with their horse.

Her motto: Be the most informed, intelligent rider you can be. Then enjoy!



Her specialties

- Western performance and hunt seat horse & rider teams
- Developing young stock of all disciplines
- Matching horses and riders

Winning Results:

“When I consider my accomplishments, I look to my students and take great pride in how far they have come,” she says. These results include:

- **Samantha Betts**, 2005 and 2006 High Point Youth Western Performance Champion, Western Horse Association of Ontario (WHAO)
- **Maegan Nagy**, 2006 High Point Youth Rider, Rockton Saddle Club & Reserve High Point Rider, Dunville Saddle Club
- **Ashley Orton**, 2006 High Point Novice Rider for Ancaster and Rockton Saddle Clubs & Ancaster's Champion Novice Western Trail Rider

Her personal horsemanship & training results include:

- Reserve Canadian National Champion
- 2006 OEF Coach of the Year
- Co-founded a local riding club east of Peterborough that's still going strong
- Coached horse and rider teams up to national level competition
- Bred, raised and owned a Reserve OQHBF Champion

Community leadership and related passions

- Promoting western horsemanship within the equestrian community and general public
- Promoting the fun, camaraderie and learning of local horseshows
- Promoting the value of Equine Canada's Western certification program for riders and coaches
- Breeding top quality Quarter Horses



Academics & Certifications

- Humber College, Coaching Program, trained under Pat Carter
- Sir Sandford Fleming College: Buying & Selling Horse Mastership
- University of Guelph, Guided Tour of Horse Anatomy
- Equine Canada, certified Level 1 Western Coach
- Equine Canada examiner for rider certification & instructor mentor
- 4H Pony Club Horseshow Judge
- Professional Competition Readiness course

Professional Affiliations

- Ontario Equestrian Federation
- Equine Canada
- Ontario Quarter Horse Association
- American Quarter Horse Association
- 4H

Mentors

- **Pat Carter:** Retired OEF Master Course Conductor and western coach
- **Cary Warren:** National Reining Horse Association Judge
- **Mike Beaver:** QH & Paint trainer & Western Performance Rider, Reserve World Champion, Canadian Champion and trainer of multiple futurity & Congress winners
- And “all others who have passed thru my life with words of wisdom & encouragement!”

About Double J Farms:

- Built, co-owned and run by Jennifer McIlwraith with Canadian national champion Galloway cattleman, John McIlwraith, since 1999.

Services

- Rider coaching (Western and English disciplines)
- Horse training services including starting young horses and ponies, developing green horses, training for sale, finishing for the show ring and for sale
- Breeding & foaling
- Horses for sale, rider & horse matching
- Boarding



Amenities

- Indoor and out-door riding arenas
- Tack room with huge individual lockers
- Heated viewing lounge
- 100 acres for hacking and access to the LaFarge nature trail

Contact Information

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