

# Praise for

## Jennifer McIlwraith



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



## As a coach

**“A**s the 2006 President of the Western Horse Association of Ontario, I feel honored and pleased to comment on the hard work and dedication of Jennifer Cook-McIlwraith of Puslinch, Ontario who has been chosen by the Ontario Equestrian Federation as OEF’s 2006 Coach of the Year.

Although this prestigious award has been bestowed on a number of Ontario coaches in the past, this is the first time a western riding discipline coach has been recognized as an outstanding mentor within the equestrian arena. Jennifer Cook-McIlwraith has greatly assisted the western riding discipline to achieve an important milestone in the equestrian world, thereby reflecting an increasing understanding of the high level of skill required by western performance horse and rider teams and strengthening the WHAO's commitment to promoting western horsemanship in Ontario.

On a personal note, Cook-McIlwraith has trained many young and aspiring students and horses to high point levels within their respective events, one such student being the 2005 and 2006 High Point Youth Western Performance Champion for the Western Horse Association of Ontario. Examples such as this demonstrate Jennifer's strong belief in giving back to the equine industry by providing consistent guidance and mentoring to her students. ”

**Lori Betts**  
2006 President,  
Western Horse Association of Ontario



“I've known Jennifer McIlwraith for a number of years. We often do Equine Canada Rider Level testing for each other's students. Her students are always exceptionally well prepared and ALWAYS perfect examples of courteous, gracious & polite conduct. It's a great pleasure to know and work with Jennifer & I certainly hope the association continues to grow for many years to come. ”

**Joanne Milton**

Owner of Rustic Meadows

Equine Canada Level 1 Western Coach

International Side Saddle Organization Judge/Instructor

“Jen has taught me that there is more to riding than always wanting my horse to be perfect. She has taught me to **respect my horse's effort and willingness to try**, rather than always wanting her to do everything perfect.

Over these 10 months, not only have I changed, but so has my horse. Now she is a lot more laid back, and waits to be asked what to do instead of rushing into everything.

Every week we cross a new road from lifting my horse's shoulders, to sitting properly in the saddle, to even being more patient in doing things. Jen not only teaches me new things weekly but has the biggest heart ever. She is the first to lend her stuff and her knowledge even if we are not in a lesson. ”

**Maegan Nagy**

2006 High Point Youth Rider, Rockton Saddle Club,

Reserve High Point Rider, Dunville Saddle Club &

Equine Canada Level 2 certified western rider &

Aspiring coach and trainer



“**J**ennifer has been my riding coach for a little over a year and in that time I have seen a **great improvement** in my riding. Before being coached by Jennifer I had had another coach for around four years and in the year that I’ve been coached by Jennifer I’ve seen more improvement in my riding and in the **results** that I get at shows than in the previous four years with another coach. A winter of lessons with Jennifer prepared me for this show season and in turn I had a fantastic year. For the most part, every show resulted in a ribbon from each class, and the ribbons often consisted of first, second and third places. ”

**Ashley Orton**

2006 High Point Novice Rider, Ancaster Saddle Club

2006 High Point Novice Rider, Rockton Saddle Club

Equine Canada Level 2 certified western rider

“**J**en she is **dedicated** to both me and my horse. Like at a horse how I get really nervous and she really calms us down and we always walk out with a ribbon. Also when she teaches she really focuses on you and your horse to make the best of your lesson (i.e. what you need to **improve on as a team**) and it really works! ”

**Meghan Charest**

2006 Showmanship Champion, Ancaster Saddle Club

Equine Canada Level 2 certified western rider



“**J**ennifer has positively influenced both riding skills and the horse’s skill development. A Level 3 Dressage rider commented that my riding skills are of superior quality, with quiet seat & hands, and noted that I’ve obviously taken instruction from an experienced and **highly competent trainer.**”

**Samantha Betts**

2005 and 2006 High Point Youth Western Performance Champion for the Western Horse Association of Ontario.

2006 High Point Performance Horse-Ontario Saddle Club Youth Team Tournament

Equine Canada level 2 certified western rider & aspiring coach

“**T**en days before my Level 3 rider certification test, my horse went lame. Jen immediately started coaching me on her green 3-year-old mare so that I was able to successfully pass my Level Three exam.

Through all the years that Jennifer has been my coach, she had always maintained a friendly and **professional** attitude. Her patience is endless and she is always looking for new ways to present her material and keep the lessons fun and interesting. She has brought me a long way and that is really something considering that I am 55 years old.

Jennifer makes it clear to all boarders and students alike that in her barn, safety comes first and that is something she stresses not only in lessons but by example, in her barn, on a daily basis. Her love of horses and passion for her chosen profession is obvious and infectious. Her people skills are enviable.”

**Deborah Scott**

2005 First Place rider in Jack Benny Western Pleasure Class, Reserve Beginner Trail, Reserve Beginner Western Pleasure, Reserve Beginner Horsemanship at Rockton Saddle Club.

2005 Reserve High Point Novice Horsemanship and Reserve High Point Open Command at Ancaster Saddle Club.

Equine Canada, Level 3 certified western rider



“**J**ennifer is a **skilled coach who gets results...**with riders and horses at *all* levels of development. Goal-oriented learners thrive under Jen’s high—yet realistic—expectations. Most **students advance very quickly** with Jennifer as their coach, whether they are building or reconstructing skills. A quick and deft diagnostician, Jennifer is able to customize her approach for each individual, whether human and equine. She has a knack for pinpointing the 20% that will deliver the 80% benefit. Consequently students and horses don’t struggle for long before they acquire new skills. In private or group training settings, all have their learning needs met.

She shows devotion to her students with a **personal touch**. She makes **every student feel important**, whether through the tireless hunt for the right horse for a rider, the best saddle for the money or other forms of time-consuming support. Each rider KNOWS Jennifer is looking out for their best interests and horsemanship.

**Jennifer models and rewards good sportsmanship** among all her riders. Despite having very high expectations for all athletes, she knows—and communicates—when learning is more important than winning.

**She puts safety first.** She ensures the use of helmets by youth riders. And never has this old girl feel lessened when I strap on my brain bucket! ”

**Toni Ritchie**  
Equine Canada Level 2 certified western rider &  
aspiring western coach



## As a horse & rider match-maker

“**E**ven though I had a love for horses and owned them before Jen it was actually her that got me where I am today in the horse industry.

Before coming to Double J I had obtained my rider level 1 & 2 at school. It was Jen who wanted to help me achieve my level one coaching certificate and helped me get there. She gave me the needed encouragement to keep pushing to get there as well as gave me the learning tools to get there. I rode Jen's horses as I didn't really have my own at the time. Along with the horses she employed me at Double J where the learning was available on a daily basis.

She talked me into buying My Speedy Valentine (Val) and she was the one that helped me through my rider 4 and Coaching exams. She was also the horse to take me to my first and then all of my AQHA shows where we did actually place in the top 10 in Horsemanship. Val was also the mare that got me my first large trophy at Rockton Saddle Club for Horsemanship and Showmanship.

After Val, Jen persuaded me to move on to younger horse, Romeo. As you know we have done quite well with 3 trophies last season.

Along with me buying 2 great horses with her help I have gained so much in ways of better riding habits, horse handling and, overall. she has made me the horse woman I am today. **That has taken me above and beyond what I would have ever dreamed and I will always appreciate her for that.**

With Jen having an honest approach to equine horse sales, it made me realize the impact equine sales have on the industry and wanted to be a part of it.

Jen's sales approach is honest and there needs to be more like her to change the attitude of the horse trading world. She thinks of the horse first then who she sells to. Jen also thinks of the new owner and will not just sell a horse to just sell a horse. You can see that by the number of horses that keep staying at our barn. ”

### **Nadine Ilett**

Equine Canada, Level 1 Certified Western Coach  
Equine Sports Massage Therapist &  
Veterinary Assistant



## As a coach mentor

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Many thanks to Jennifer for providing incredible learning opportunities for all levels of riders at Double J. As a western coach hopeful, Jennifer has provided me with the encouragement and support to progress as both an instructor and a rider. She has a number of very safe and sweet schooling horses available that allow students to learn to ride. Jennifer is always available to answer questions and give suggestions if I hit a stumbling block with a horse or student. She has proven to be both a great mentor and coach.

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**Mandy MacDonald**  
Western Rider 4  
Aspiring western coach

### Contact Information

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