



RIDER SPOTLIGHT: DAIJA SAMS



Photo by Chris Quinn Photography

Daija Sams is a familiar face to many competitors at Stable View shows. She is a first-generation equestrian and was first introduced to horses at a summer camp. She shared, "I started out riding mainly Western, and then I was introduced to the Hunter/Equitation world. I rode on and off for years, and have been consistently riding for about 9 years." Daija joined 4-H as a freshman in high school. By the time she went to college, she was hooked and chose to major in Equestrian Studies. While in school she started doing the jumpers.

Now Daija is the assistant trainer at an eventing barn. She works for Shannon Riley at Infinity Sport Horse. She said, "I have been here 2 years now and my job consists of many things from barn management to riding to grooming at horse shows to administrative things. My string of horses typically consists of the green beans/babies and the troublemakers. I very much enjoy the ones that give me a challenge and seeing their progress is very rewarding."

Daija owns her own horse too named Direct Flight "Pilot" who is a five-year-old Appendix. She shared, "I've had him since he was 2 and have done all of his training from the ground up. I originally bought him to be a hunter, as that is what I did at the time, but he decided that wasn't his calling. So, he now events and we are currently competing at Training level. He is also qualified for the Young Event Horse 5-Year-Old Championships this year in Maryland! I acquired him when I attended a 2-year program and he was my colt for my colt training class. I of course realized I did not want to give him back, so I purchased him."

Daija was asked her favorite part about Stable View. She said, "I love competing at Stable View because it gives such a great atmosphere. All the staff and volunteers are so friendly and positive! I also enjoy the wide variety of shows that are hosted from schooling and recognized alike. I especially love the Eventing Academies because they give the feel of a recognized event without the pressure of one. They're my favorite when I need a confidence-boosting run. I also enjoy how Stable View takes care of their competitors by offering snacks and water at shows." Stable View looks forward to seeing Daija and Pilot back on course soon.