



KC MONTGOMERY

Despite their relatively young ages, Alisa Bernhard and Fleetstreet Max have already accumulated a lifetime-worth of awards, including nine world titles earned in 2006.

Talk to Alisa Bernhard, and you'll get a sense of humbleness for the success she's had with her 1997 sorrel overo gelding Fleetstreet Max—not something you would necessarily expect from a rider who has had numerous accomplishments in the show pen. In contrast, Bernhard is a gracious winner who says that her goal in 2006 was to have performances of which she could be proud.

"My goal was to have a good World Show, and to just do my personal best in all of my classes," the Germantown, Wisconsin, equestrienne said.

Bernhard planned to take "Max" to several shows early in 2006, to help them prepare for the World Show. And although she was not specifically aiming to win the Number 1 spot on the Amateur (19-44) Top 20 list, Bernhard knew that accumulating useful scores would be beneficial.

"I got some good scores," she said, "and after each show, I knew what I needed to work on or improve so I could have a better World Show."

Bernhard and Max traveled to six shows during spring 2006, an amount that Bernhard says was just right for the duo.

"I showed just enough to have a good plan of attack and good strategies for how to prepare for all of my classes," she said.

Leading up to the World Show, Bernhard and Max worked on all of their events, but especially focused on Western horsemanship and Western riding—two events that the duo has had trouble with at previous World Show competitions.

Apparently, the team's hard work and preparation paid off at the World Show, as Bernhard and Max won nine world titles. Netting world championships in Amateur hunt-seat equitation (19-44), Amateur horsemanship (19-44), Amateur working hunter, Amateur hunter hack, Amateur Western riding, Senior trail and Senior working hunter, they also claimed reserve world champion honors in Amateur trail (19-44) and Senior hunter hack.

Their World Show victories were made sweeter by also winning the



KC MONTGOMERY

Bernhard and Max became the first duo to win both the All-Around Amateur and the All-Around Horse titles in a single World Show.

show's all-around Amateur, all-around horse and super gelding titles. Bernhard and Max became the first horse-and-rider combination to net both all-around titles at a single World Show.

An instrumental factor in earning the Number 1 Amateur title was Bernhard's partner, Max. Over the years, the gelding—who was bred by Susan Bernhard, and is trained by Alisa—has settled into his role as the consummate show horse.

"He's gotten so broke," Bernhard said about Max. "I can go into a class with hardly any warm-up, and he'll be fine. He really likes showing."

And Max's "look at me" attitude doesn't hurt the duo in the show ring, either.

"He's got an ego about himself, so he likes showing off," said Bernhard. "He knows he's really cool, and thinks everyone should watch him. That's why he's so cut out to be a show horse."

After the World Show, Bernhard and Max competed at two additional shows. During 2006, the Wisconsin team earned 573 qualifying points—55 points more than the Number 2 Amateur, and more than 200 points above the third-place finisher—to become the division's clear-cut winner.

Beyond their success in 2006, Bernhard and Max's lifetime accomplishments are also astonishing—they have accumulated nearly 7,000 Youth, Amateur and Open points, 15 world championships and five reserve world championships. Like fine wine, it seems this duo keeps getting better with age.

Ultimately, Bernhard's goals extend beyond ribbons and prizes to encompass a greater goal of personal satisfaction—a concept that proves the 22-year-old equestrienne is wise beyond her years.

"Judges' placings can be so different at every show," Bernhard said. "It's more about putting out my personal best, not necessarily how I place. I just want to be satisfied with the effort I put in." P

#### Alisa Bernhard's YEAR AT A GLANCE

Trainer: Self

Horse: Fleetstreet Max, a 1997 sorrel overo gelding sired by Fleet Machine and out of Cash Bar Maiden AQHA

Qualifying points earned: 573

Awards earned: 2006 World Show All-Around Amateur, All-Around Horse and Super Gelding; 2006 World Show placings included seven 2006 world championships—in Amateur hunt-seat equitation (19-44), Amateur horsemanship (19-44), Amateur working hunter, Amateur Western riding, Amateur hunter hack, Senior trail and Senior working hunter—two reserve world championships—in Amateur trail (19-44) and Senior hunter hack—third place in Amateur Senior hunter under saddle (19-44), fifth place in Amateur Senior Western pleasure (19-44) and eighth place in Amateur showmanship at halter (19-44)