

***Side trip to Lisa Wilcox' New Location in Switzerland***  
**By Cindy Stys, Director of Athlete Services**

My husband and I have recently returned from our traditional winter visit to his homeland of Switzerland. As you can imagine, coming from an Alpine country it's mandatory to head for the Alps so my husband can get his fill of some splendid down hill skiing and Alpine scenery (both of which you won't find in NJ!). This time we traveled to Zermatt, a charming village with snow covered roads and horse drawn sleighs. As if this isn't enough, it's located at the base of the magnificent Matterhorn; known as "le Cervin" in the French speaking part of the country. To preserve the ambiance, cars are prohibited so tourists are obliged to travel by train from a nearby town. Our three days of skiing included a sampling of almost all the elements in high mountain skiing; blizzard like wind creating poor visibility and whiteouts, freshly fallen snow, glacier skiing, cloud covered mountains and on the last day, clear blue skies revealing awe-inspiring views of Alpine giants including Europe's highest peak of 15,780 feet: Mont Blanc in France.



The Matterhorn, Zermatt, Switzerland (pylons for the ski lift can faintly be seen at the base towards bottom of photo)

After this humbling experience, we made a trip to the town of Oftringen, the new home of US dressage rider, Lisa Wilcox, located in the German speaking part of Switzerland. Athlete Services was the first department of the Federation to assist Lisa when she made her debut onto the European FEI dressage stage so this meeting was long overdue. Upon our arrival we were warmly greeted by Lisa along with several Swiss bred dogs. We followed her into the tidy stable passing a recently washed horse drying under heat lamps. The indoor arena enhanced by special lighting surpassed the traditional European riding hall which is generally superior to most US indoors. Lisa, who has impressively mastered the German language, introduced us to her working student, Laura Hassler, as she was schooling a young horse. We also had the opportunity to meet Lisa's new boss, Dr. Samuel Schatzmann, a highly regarded Swiss horse man very much involved with the sport, an FEI dressage judge we well as a past Olympic and WEG team medalist. Lisa proceeded to give us a tour of the stable which boasted roomy stalls housing obviously content horses; mostly young ones started under saddle. Accompanied by 6 large dogs we made our way to the outdoors continuing the tour up to the other end of the property where a fairytale like cottage, which Lisa now calls home, is nestled. We ended our visit inspired by Lisa's dynamic personality and positive nature. We also were content for her to know she is working in such a lovely and seemingly tranquil environment.



Lisa Wilcox and Cindy Stys