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Debbie Aynsough (now Maas) and Ed Mass have recently arrived in Scotland and are busy setting up a training and competition yard near Colinsburgh, Fife. Debbie and Ed have spent years training and competing on the continent and hope to be able to share their experience and expertise with riders of all levels.

Cumbrian lass Debbie was brought up with ponies and did all the things children do, riding her mother's Fells. One of the Fell ponies, Sanja Ebony, bred by Debbie's mother from her own Heltondale Dolly, went to Her Majesty The Queen and was a regular member of HRH The Duke of Edinburgh's driving team for a number of years.

When Debbie left school she started work in the local veterinary practice as a practice nurse. After she got the opportunity to train for a year in Canada specializing in equine clinics near Toronto. After completing exams on Montreal she returned to the UK for a short time before working in France for 4 months.



"Then came the big opportunity", says Debbie, "to work ride and train in Bavaria where I spent a year competing and in full-time training with Sissi Veit who was regional champion in both show jumping and dressage.

"The day was varied, riding horses from the breaking stage through to Grade A show jumpers and Grand Prix dressage stallions. Sometimes I rode up to 14 horses a day.

"It was at this time that I met Ed Maas. He had come to Germany to work on the yard as

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Written by Administrator

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rider/groom and was mainly involved in the retraining of problem horses and breaking and schooling youngsters. Ed had only been riding for 6 years when he joined the yard in Bavaria. He is one of the lucky few who found it easy to take up the sport. He had had many successes in Holland in the Carousel representing his country along with his team members and being placed both times in the two years he was in the team. The carousel is a musical form of dressage performed in a normal dressage arena with up to 18 horses. Ed also regularly competed in mainstream dressage for the yard where he worked.

"We enjoyed a very good year winning on Sissi's grade A show jumpers Winzerin and Specialist, who is now in Italy.

There was a short spell back in England when we instructed at two local Pony Clubs as well as individual pupils at various levels. Then in late 1993 we were offered jobs together as traveling international/Competition Rider for up and coming Christoph Butzler, well know and respected on the continent. Christoph's trainer had been Sonke Sonken, Bronze Medallist at the Montreal Olympics and now one of Germany's national trainers.

"Our new jobs involved a very varied week. Ed's weekends were spent on The Big Tour from Thursday night to late Sunday night. I was based at the yard and competed daily in show jumping and dressage competitions up to Grand Prix level. I also rode the rest of the team of horses at home with the help of an instructor/groom and two students.



Christoph's yard had a very successful 4½ years while we were both there with wins including the Volvo World Cup Qualifiers at Manheim and Kaiserslauteren.

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In two years Christoph won 11 Puissants clearing 2.35m on his very good horse Der Senaat, ranked in the top 5 in Germany. In one season Christoph's stallion, Diamondo B was the top winning 4-year-old and completed the 100-day Performance Test, placed second overall.

"During our time in Rheinland Pälz, Germany, Ed and I completed our German riding exams and bought our two horses Pole Position (KWPN) and Freeman (Holsteiner). We enjoyed our time teaching, riding and competing and the whole experience was part of The Big Tour.

"Now we have moved to Scotland due to family ill health and are fortunate to have been given horses to produce and compete from the very well know and respected Crackenthorpe Stud, home of some the best bloodlines in Europe. The stud's founder stallion Pentagon was the first stallion to be awarded the elite title from the Anglo European Stud Book.

"Present day stars include Celtic Laurus, and 8-year-old Grade B show jumping stallion and Crackenthorpe Formula One. Another horse from the Crackenthorpe stable is the well-known advanced eventer, The Tops, produced by the owner's daughter Claire Chapelhow, a very promising up and coming rider, having already competed at Burghley and Badminton CCI**** events as well as at Wembley.

"We are busy at the moment developing our yard and training facilities and looking forward to competing top quality horses in show jumping and dressage for the Crackenthorpe Stud in Cumbria, as well as to being able to offer training based on our continental experience to individuals and groups of riders of all levels.

"We look forward to what the future will bring for us in Scotland"