

# Nature, Nurture and Horses: A Journal of Four Dressage Horses in Training—From Birth through the First Year of Training

Paul Belasik

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Follow along as four young horses—Corsana, Kara, Elsa, and Escarpa—leave their babyhood behind and begin their training for future careers as sport horses, well schooled in the art of classical dressage.

Renowned rider, trainer, author, and equestrian philosopher Paul Belasik shares the daily schedule, weekly events, and his own musings over each horse's character, physicality, athletic ability, and training as the months and seasons pass. Belasik's honest and enlightened journal entries give the reader an inside look at training horses according to the classical system he has used for almost 40 years. His style of writing allows the reader to "live" the experiences as he did—in the moment, and without the benefit of hindsight. The result is a true account, both thoughtful and thought provoking, and by turns tender and efficiently practical.

While many horsemen may have the opportunity to train a young horse in the course of their life, it is only he who both breeds and trains who benefits from working with full and half siblings, horses both closely related and distant. Training horses that share bloodlines, birthplace, and breaking-in techniques enables one to witness the power of nature and the influence of nurture on the eventual result—a "finished" riding horse. Whether that horse is a pleasure to work with and ride, or dull and dispassionate, or worse—a danger to himself and others—is ultimately dependent on the right mixture of nature and nurture, and a sensitive knowledgeable hand to offer lessons in fair and yet effective measures.

It is this that we witness, in words and photos, in the pages within. Paul Belasik opens his farm and his experience to us all, in the hope that his continuing education in the realm of horsemanship can be our own.



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