

Amanda Starbuck



University of Vermont

What was your riding experience before joining IHSA?

My riding experience before joining IHSA was quite extensive. I started riding at the age of two. I learned everything I knew prior to the IHSA from my mom, Janie Weber, who owns and manages Stepping Stone Farm in Ridgefield, Connecticut. I was riding daily and continued on to show in the Big Equitation and Junior Hunters, as well as Young Riders and the Grand Prix. I was competing almost every weekend as a junior rider.



How did you get involved with IHSA?

I saw a sign posted on campus at the University of Vermont with information about the Equestrian team. I went to the first meeting and signed up for the team with head coach Madeline Austin.



What do you think was most valuable about the experience?

The most valuable aspect I learned while on the team was realizing all of the riders were dealt even cards while competing. I loved no matter what background you had, you were all walking into each competition evenly.



Do you keep in touch with any of your IHSA teammates?

I follow a bunch of the riders from the team on social media and keep in touch that way. I stay in touch with Madeline as well, via phone and social media. One of my students is now riding under Madeline Austin and competing on the IHSA team.

Describe the experience competing on the team?

Madeline taught me a lot about the dressage movements in riding, which was an area I wasn't very familiar with. The team was a lot of fun as well. I loved riding different horses at every barn for the competitions. I enjoyed learning more about the balance you must have with your horse when riding a course or under saddle. Under Madeline's coaching, the UVM team made it to the National Championships. I was representing our team in open flat and fences and went on to win both titles. Everything I learned while being on the team has carried through to many aspects of my career. I feel every rider should compete with the IHSA while in college.



Tell us about your life now.

For the past 12 years I've run Starbuck Equestrian with my sister Juliana Starbuck in Ridgefield, Connecticut. We breed, train and compete at the National Grand Prix level as well as bring along young horses and riders in both the hunter rings and jumper rings.

