

**Zeitschrift:** Swiss review : the magazine for the Swiss abroad  
**Herausgeber:** Organisation of the Swiss Abroad  
**Band:** 12 (1985)  
**Heft:** 1

**Artikel:** Heidi and Jessica - a happy Encounter  
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**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-907708>

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# Heidi and Jessica – a happy Encounter

Heidi Hauri was born in Seon, Canton of Aargau, on 27th October 1950. Her first playground was the farm of her parents, a real dreamland for a lover of nature! She grew up with all kinds of animals, and she has always loved horses. On the other hand, she never had dolls...

Her disposition, her radiant smile, her sense of humour and her presence of mind make her immediately attractive.

We met her in the «Pauzella», in the Ticino, near the Italian frontier. Her domain is a beautiful estate in the middle of a forest, one of the finest horse centres in our country. She has been living there since 1971. After six years of working with the owner, Giorgio Robbiani, they got married.

*Q: Mrs Robbiani, you belong to a family for whom success in the equestrian sport is nothing new. What part have your father and your brother Max Hauri played in your life? To what extent have they contributed to your personal success?*

A: I cannot but be grateful to my father and to Max. They were more than guides to me. Thanks to their experience and their advice I have learnt a lot and have been able to climb to the top thanks to them. I was never envious of my brother's successes, on the contrary, we have always been real partners.

My father has helped me to discover the beautiful equestrian sport, and thanks to him I rode my first pony at the age of four and took part in a competition for the first time when I was six. I owe him all my gratitude.

*Q: How were you received in the Swiss team? Do you believe you have the same chances as a man?*

A: Acceptance was not made



Los Angeles 1984: Heidi and Prince Philippe

easy for me, specially due to the anything but chivalrous attitude towards me. The Swiss equestrian team has 17 members today, of whom five or six take part in all international competitions. When I was admitted, some of the gentlemen withdrew. It was like facing a wall, the biggest hurdle I have ever had to take. My colleagues always found a reason for my success – it could only be by coincidence that I was successful. This attitude was so unbearable

that I was practically on the point of withdrawing. But then I got angry, and that enabled me to fight. After a year of making an effort I was integrated in the group.

*Q: How do you organize your day when you are not on tour?*

A: Here in the «Pauzella» where I live with my husband, I do the housekeeping like any other wife. Apart from the many different daily jobs to do with my «profession», such as invitations to events, instructing, training, dressage, receiving customers, administrative work etc, I am simply a woman who also likes knitting and her kitchen.

*Q: Are you afraid of spectators? I am thinking of the numerous competitions in general and of the Olympic Games in particular.*

A: I have overcome my fear of spectators. I still have to go through a few moments of excitement and apprehension when I ride into the arena. But the moment the starter's signal is given,



my concentration is so intense that there is no more room for fear or anxiety. That was also the case in Los Angeles where 34 000 spectators were present.

*Q: You won the bronze medal for individual show jumping: how difficult were the obstacles?*

Yes, it was a real Olympic Test. But satisfaction is always in proportional relation to the difficulties of the course, and the bronze medal this summer will probably remain the most beautiful souvenir of my whole career.

*Q: We can not mention your name without coupling it with that of Jessica, your mare. Do tell us about her.*

A: I bought Jessica in Ireland in 1979. I was immediately convinced by her beauty and the line of her head. At that time, she was 4½ years old. Since then we have worked together and have grown together in international events. Jessica is a most remarkable mare who has a feeling for competition, and I trust her implicitly. She also has a very difficult character, but she will remain the horse of my heart, and I shall never consider giving her up, in spite of the offer of several million dollars which was made to me following my third place in Los Angeles.

*Q: Is it possible to judge at the moment of purchase whether a horse will be a success? Are there any indications?*

I believe it is only possible to tell at the moment of competition, specially at international level, whether the horse one rides will really be a success.

*Q: What are your feelings before and during a competition? Do you talk to your horse?*

A: Above all I concentrate on the layout of the course. The horse and I become one, ready to give the best. I never think of winning, only that I should not make any mistakes if at all possible, and just to give my utmost. When not competing, I do talk to Jessica

and also to the other horses in order to establish confidence. But during a competition I only talk to the animal in order to calm or encourage her.

*Q: Where are the boundaries between amateur and professional horsemanship?*

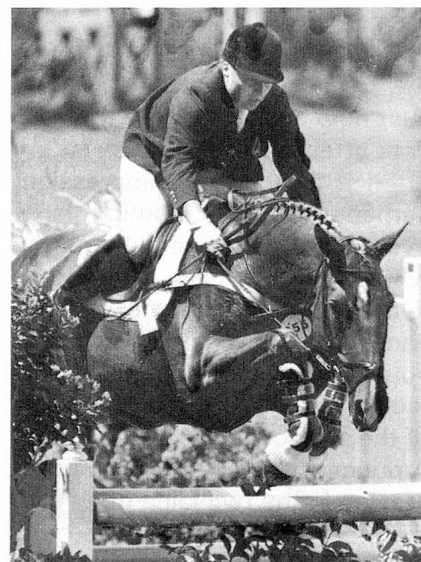
A: At international level one could really call all competitors professionals. I remain in the category of amateurs because I refuse to change the name of my horses, one of the conditions made by sponsors. I could never give up my complete freedom which I enjoy today as an independent rider.

*Q: What advice would you give to a beginner?*

A: Passionate effort and a good dose of sensitivity, and above all a great deal of patience. One has to have the courage to wait.

*Q: What are your future plans?*

A: I should like to take part in the



European Championships in France in 1985. Furthermore, I should like to remain a few more years in the «international equestrian circus».

*Interview by Isabella Franzoni*

## **SWISS-VIDEO:**

### **A new Achievement by the SRG**

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It contains a large choice of titles and may be ordered free of charge from the following address:

Schweizerische Radio- und  
Fernsehgesellschaft SRG  
Giacomettistrasse 1-3  
3000 Berne 15  
Switzerland

## **Holidays in Switzerland for Swiss Children from Abroad – Summer 1985**

As mentioned in the latest issue of the «Revue», the Holiday Organization for Swiss Children Living Abroad will again organize holidays in Switzerland for Swiss children living abroad or for children of other nationalities whose mothers are Swiss by origin.

Documentation can be obtained from Swiss representations or directly from us:

Ferienwerk für Auslandschweizerkinder  
Postfach  
CH-8022 Zürich