



**Jessica
von Bredow-Werndl**

Jessica von Bredow-Werndl is a German dressage rider and won the individual and team gold medal at the 2021 Tokyo Olympics. She is also the European Champion in individual and team and won the 2022 Dressage World Cup.

Jessica is regarded as one of the best dressage riders of her generation and competes in professional sport in an inimitable way, which is characterized in particular by her love for her horses. Together with them she „dances“ through competitions all over the world and shows others that the loving and trusting partnership with the horse is her secret of success.

As a vegan for many years and a high-performance athlete, Jessica has already been dealing with the topic of nutrition for many years. Not only her charges, but also she herself should be supplied with nutrients as optimally as possible. Only in this way the body remains in a healthy balance and is capable of peak performance.

**Doctor
Roxy Leyshon**

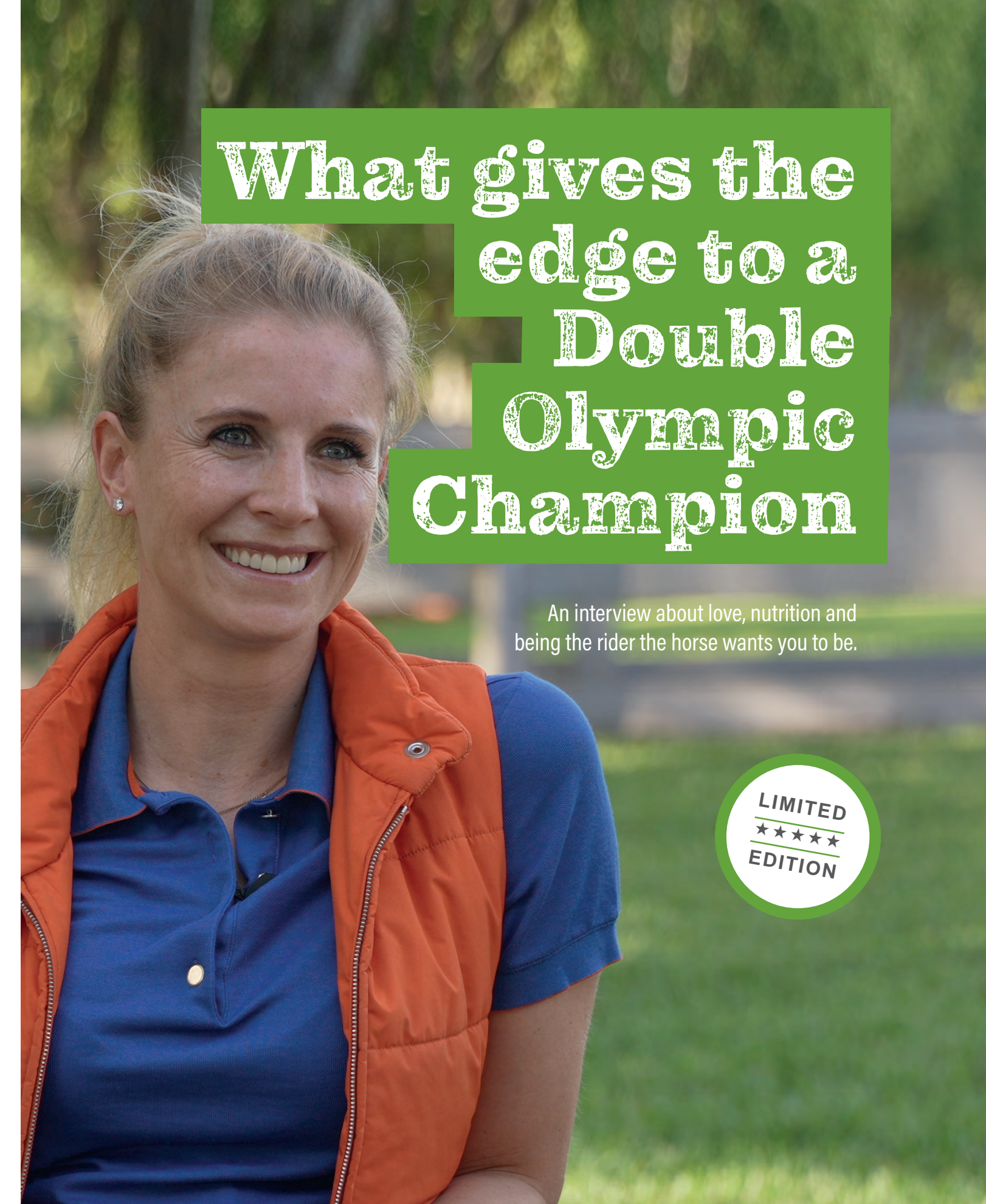
Roxy Leyshon BVMS MRCVS is a veterinarian with specialization in nutrition for high performance horses from Rey and Associates Sports Medicine in Wellington, Florida.

Her passion is to provide patients with the best functional management to perform at their best, with an approach based on specially designed nutritional plans involving careful selection of feed, supplement management and micro-nutritional recommendations. Dr Leyshon and the team at Rey and Associates are proud to be the service providers of multiple elite equine athletes including World, Olympic and World Cup Champions. As a lifelong horse enthusiast, Roxy has competed at higher levels in dressage and show-jumping and spends as much time in the saddle as possible.



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**What gives the
edge to a
Double
Olympic
Champion**

An interview about love, nutrition and being the rider the horse wants you to be.



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A Conversation with Olympic Gold-Medalist Jessica von Bredow-Werndl

A German hat trick made three times a charm when Jessica von Bredow-Werndl's clinched her reign as the individual Olympic, European and World Cup Finals champion. The top-ranked FEI dressage rider and the 2007 Trakehner mare Dale-
ra topped the 2022 World Cup Finals scores with a 90.836% in the Grand Prix Freestyle, posting marks of perfect 10s from multiple judges in their piaffe and transitions in Leipzig, Germany.

As the first German to win the World Cup championship on home turf since the series began in 1986, Bredow-Werndl knows what it takes to make it to the top. Journalist Sue Weakley caught up with her in Wellington, Florida, to talk about her horses, success, fitness and nutrition. Roxy Leyshon, BVMS MRCVS, from Rey & Associates Sports Medicine joined them to discuss the nuances of equine nutrition whether for an Olympic athlete or a treasured backyard pony.

„Sue“ - I was looking at your scores. Wow! Your freestyle scores are amazing.

„Jessica“ - It really feels like dancing. That's what I call it because I think Dale-
(Tsf Dale-
ra Bb, a 2007 Trakehner mare –
Easy Game x Dark Magic –
Handryk) feels the rhythm as much as I do. And we just love to dance to our music because in the other test, we have no influence from the music. We just take the music, which is played. But in our freestyle, it's the music I've chosen and she knows it. She knows it's her music. And as soon as the music starts, it's time for our dance. And I think she feels the same.

„Sue“ – What is the key to your success? What gives you the edge?

„Jessica“ - The important piece of my success is my fitness, not only my mental fitness, but also my physical fitness. We have been doing extra training, functional training and yoga for 11-12 years. In 2018,

we published DressurFit®, a training fitness program for riders. It's translated into English now. This is a 12-week program made for riders to improve their fitness. The good thing about it is that it's not important to train every day to get an effect. It's 10-20 minutes of core training, functional training and stretching, which makes a difference. We can't ask our horses to move like athletes like dancers when we are not the right partners



to dance with. This is what's so important to me to really help the horses, to feel their possibilities and to feel their body without disturbing them.

„Sue“ - I was reading an article that was by Louise Parkes. She said that for you, "it was about being more Jessica," she said you individualize everything that you do with each horse. Tell me, is it training or is it more than that?

„Jessica“ - Being more Jessica is the reason why I started everything. It's because of the love for the horses. Being more Jessica means not trying to please anyone else, trying just to do what feels right for the here and now, for the horse and me. Being more Jessica also means to be the little girl who wants to play with the horses and be surrounded with horses and not to take everything so seriously. Life is serious enough and life can be very short. This helped me to connect to the real me and never stop the search for my inner Jessica. It's a good journey.

„Sue“ - How do you do that?

„Jessica“ - I reflect on myself. I reflect on my personality and I reflect on what I'm doing and, of course, my mistakes. I'm not always in a good mood, but I'm pretty good at getting back into a positive mood. I remind myself of all the many things I'm grateful for. I think being grateful is a huge help to moving forward. The more positive you are and the more you're looking for good things in a difficult situation, the more you can make out of it. The more it brings you further to the next step.

And I also learned to cope better with having no success. There's always a message behind everything that happens to

you. And when you look for these messages, maybe you don't see them right away before you realize, OK, it's meant to be like this. It's not always as easy as it sounds. I like to look for a deeper sense of what happens.

„Sue“ – In addition to living a vegan lifestyle, what else do you do to support your energy?

„Jessica“ - I've learned a lot about nutrition. I've always been very interested in the topic. I realize that most riders do everything they can to give their horses the right nutrition, minerals and micronutrients. I have to do the same for myself. I'm very happy and proud to have found a company that has developed the perfect supplement for me as a vegan, rider, mom and businesswoman, to have the right nutrients, minerals and everything I need for my body. I realize that even if you're not vegan, you can't get all the minerals and vitamins from food.

They make an electrolyte that I drink before the tests, before the competitions and during the day when I'm riding five to six horses, I don't get tired anymore. I have my additional micronutrients and minerals, I can take. This made a big difference for me. I used to eat sugar to keep my blood sugar levels up during a test because I would start to see stars at the end of long tests. Since I've been using the electrolyte drink, I'm not experiencing that anymore. I used it in Tokyo and it helped me a lot to stay hydrated and have enough energy.

„Sue“ - How did you know which minerals and vitamins and all the micros that you needed? How did you know how to find what they were?

„Jessica“ - I knew who to ask. Anusan. They're professionals and I have already had a good experience with them. I have been using some of their products for my horses for a while now.

That's why I trusted them. And the results speak for themselves.

„Sue“ - Also with us is Roxy Leyshon, DVM with Rey & Associates Sports Medicine. The concept of nutrition and specialized nutrition works into her everyday life as a veterinarian. Tell me about what you do.

„Dr. Leyshon“ - I'm a veterinarian. I base



out of Florida and work throughout the US and Europe.

My day-to-day work and passion is nutrition and feeding horses' cells. Nutrition is often overlooked or underrated. Feeding a horse is more than just their feed and supplements. My job is to understand what our horses need, then be able to do something about it, to make a difference, optimize their health and prevent illness and injury as best we can. We try to get the best results keeping it as simple as possible.

Our horses are high-performing athletes, but at the end of the day, they are animals with feelings and emotions. We walk this fine line between feeding the horse as an animal, designed to be in a field grazing all day and feeding elite athletes. It's my passion is to find out how we keep them performing and happy at the same time so that they can give their best.

„Sue“ - Tell me about the horses here in Wellington, the high-performing athletes and compare those to a backyard horse. How are their needs different?

„Dr. Leyshon“ - Every horse is an individual and every horse has certain things that they need. Every horse has certain risk factors that might be their weak points for their health or things that make them function better. I think the difference is management systems and the pressure that these horses are under. It doesn't necessarily mean that a high-performing horse needs to be fed better than a backyard horse or that a backyard horse may not be as well-looked-after as a high-performing horse. So individually, what does each horse need for what they're doing?

„Sue“ - Do you find that it depends on the horse for what they need in terms of the quality of feed and supplements?

„Dr. Leyshon“ - A lot of people ask me about certain brands and products. I would say that there are a lot of really good feeds out there. The challenging part is finding out which one would suit what type of

horse. Each individual horse is different and the tricky part is finding out what works for that horse. And when it's working, not be tempted to change too much, although adaptability is also important. I would like to call it a mix between art and science. You have information and you have horsemanship. It's very interesting to tap into that and optimize it.

„Sue“ - I like how you individualize it for each horse and their level of work too.

„Dr. Leyshon“ - I have grown up riding and being lucky enough to be around these amazing animals every single day, day in and day out. I love to discover patterns. Different types of horses have different responses to things like performance anxiety and horses that just don't deal with it. It's important to accept horses for what they are and try to do what you can to manage things you can't control. Everybody asks me, "Oh, you see the same thing every day, don't you just like end up doing the same thing?" Absolutely not! Every day, there's something new. Every day is a school day. Every time you think you 100% know, you don't. It gives us the drive to keep learning and maybe make a difference to one horse. It's a privilege to be able to do that.

„Sue“ - In your day-to-day practice, what are some of the things that you see that most horse owners would not know?

„Dr. Leyshon“ - I think the most significant thing that I explain to people and that fascinates me is the complex interrelationship between the digestive system and the mind of a horse. The link between the brain and the gut,

how stress and behavior and gastro-intestinal responses interplay with each other. It's interesting how the relationships create different manifestations in horses.

It's a turning circle of interrelationships that are reliant on each other. It's very interesting to pinpoint what is the catalyst or the weak point in the chain of relationships. Maybe the horse is exhibiting one kind of symptom, but what part of this chain reaction is off or not functioning, and how can we help the whole relationship work for better health.

„Sue“ - Dr. Leyshon, what brings you and Jessica together in your work with horses?

„Jessica“ - We both want the best for every horse. That's what we are both looking for every day.

„Dr. Leyshon“ - It's a pleasure to work with somebody that just has that much knowledge and insight. We have common interests. We both love nutrition. We both love things that work. We love things that are effective and do the best for our horses. We have shared a common system of how we can figure this out for our horses. And we also share a common interest in the brands and products we use to improve the health of our horses and ourselves.

