

# Harry Meade

After his dramatic fall at Wellington Horse Trials in August, we were keen to catch up with Harry, who reveals all about his fall, his first girlfriend and his love of drawing

**I've never had a really bad fall before, but I can remember the one at Wellington very well as I wasn't knocked out!**

It was pretty painful. I landed with straight arms and both elbows snapped back the wrong way and shattered. Thankfully I was wearing my Airowear body protector so I didn't have any injuries to my torso, despite the horse landing on me - luckily he's fine.

It's rather inconvenient having no arms at the moment and I'm very reliant on the people around me, especially my wife who deserves a medal for looking after me so well, despite being six months pregnant and having our one-year-old daughter to contend with, too! I'm trying to stay fit and I'm looking forward to getting back on board.

**I always look forward to riding at the big events. I'm lucky enough to have completed Badminton eight times,** and have some truly memorable moments from Burghley. In 2007 Bruce Davison (former American rider) and I were the only two to jump double clears, and we were the oldest and youngest competitors in the field!

**The 2016 Rio Olympic Games are firmly in my sights.** Thanks to the support of our wonderful owners, we have a smart string of



Harry's daughter Lily comforts him in hospital after his fall

horses we hope will be future championship team contenders. Our main aim is to continue to build up a strong team of horses and owners to really make the most of the next few years.

**I run a small yard - for me it's about quality not quantity.**

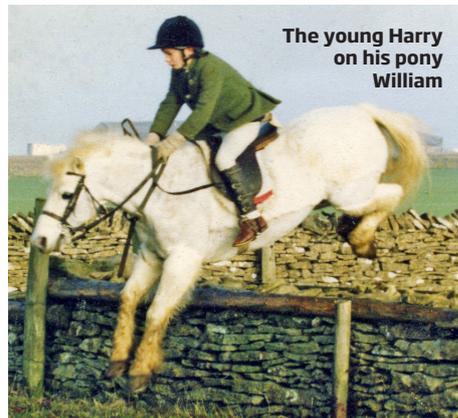
I try to focus on the end goal and the best way to fulfil each of my horses'

potential, instead of looking for lower-level, shorter-term successes. This plan sometimes feels like we're adopting the approach of the tortoise against the hare, but the statistics speak for themselves.

**Laura Tomlinson (née Bechtolsheimer) was my first girlfriend but probably at the holding hands kind of age!** We met aged eight when she was at school with my sister. We still see a lot of each other and she's my dressage trainer, which is great!

Eventing is a very friendly sport, and after my recent fall we've been overwhelmed with support. William Fox-Pitt was there when it happened, he's always been very supportive. I worked for him as his apprentice rider and learnt a huge amount from him, in terms of style of riding, training horses and relationships with owners. In the 10 years since then he's remained a bit of a mentor and become a great friend.

**I'm lucky to spend my time doing something I love, but I love loads of other sports including ski-ing and, embarrassingly, go-karting!** I also enjoy drawing, although I haven't picked up a pencil in the last few years, it might be rekindled in my retirement - or when my arms get better! My wife, Rosie, and I do try and have a life away from horses too. We hardly have a free weekend for nine months of the year so it's always nice to have a good



The young Harry on his pony William

catch up with as many friends as we can in the off season.

**I grew up surrounded by stars like Lucinda Fredericks, who always claims she once changed my nappy but I think she just likes to wind me up!**

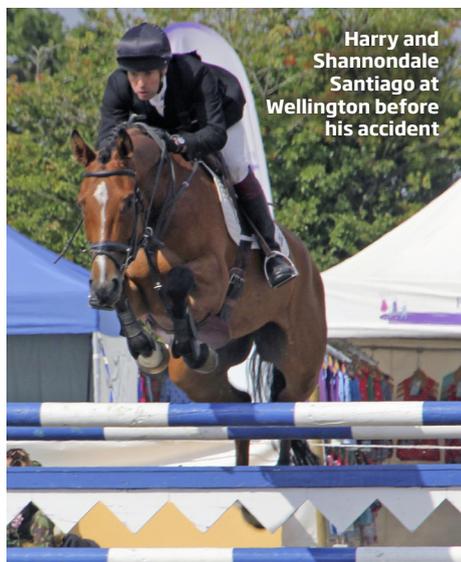
My father, Richard, is a triple Olympic gold medallist and retired from competing when I was a small child, but I remember pupils and foreign championship teams staying with us while they trained with my father. They were like older brothers and sisters so it was great fun and not surprising I wanted to follow them.

**Despite the fact I come from an equestrian family, I had a very uncompetitive upbringing.**

Because my parents were so heavily involved with eventing, they knew the downside of competitive sport and so there was always an emphasis on riding for fun and not taking it too seriously. This probably helped me as I had almost no lessons when I was small and we all became natural riders, thanks to bombing around bareback.



Harry, with wife Rosie



Harry and Shannondale Santiago at Wellington before his accident

## Join Harry's team

Harry is always looking for new horses and owners to join his team. For more information visit [www.harrymeade.com](http://www.harrymeade.com)