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Genevieve Rohner Becomes Youngest Para-Dressage Rider

 By [Town-Crier Editor](#) - March 24, 2022


Genevieve Rohner

Genevieve Rohner recently became age-eligible to compete internationally, though she has been riding 10 years. Supported by the Metropolitan Equestrian Team's (MET) Equine Opportunity Program (EOP), Rohner became the youngest classified para-dressage equestrian globally on March 10. When she rode down centerline in her first international event at the Adequan Global Dressage Festival in Wellington, she became the youngest global para-dressage competitor.

Rohner, 14, a Grade IV competitor, was born a 28-week premature triplet and diagnosed with cerebral palsy, sensory integration disorder (autism spectrum), amblyopia and misaligned right leg bones. She began riding for therapy at age four with one of her brothers, who had a stroke at birth and was also diagnosed with cerebral palsy and autism.

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When recent circumstances prevented Rohner from riding her own mount, MET, an affiliate of the Intercollegiate Horse Show Association, along with C.J. Law, head coach of the Mt. Holyoke College Equestrian Team, stepped in. They connected Rohner with Barton Patrick, trainer of Mika McKinney's former mount, Phoenix.

McKinney, a graduate of Mount Holyoke College and an equestrian team member, was a Grade V para-equestrian from Maine. McKinney died in 2019 from osteosarcoma. Her dream had been to compete at the highest level in para-dressage. On Phoenix, Rohner will fulfill the first step in her dream to compete for Team USA at the 2024 Paralympics in Paris, while bringing Phoenix full circle by completing with the mare what McKinney was unable to finish.

In 2021, Rohner received a full day clinic with Olympic silver medalist Adrienne Lyle, the grand prize in a Dressage Today contest of more than 850 entrants. In 2020, she rode to first place in both of her Emerging Athlete events at the U.S. Equestrian Federation hosted Adequan 2020 Para Dressage Championships.

Currently training with Tokyo Paralympics bronze medalist Kate Shoemaker in Florida, with whom Rohner will also compete in March, and Annie Sweet in Utah, Rohner will also compete with Tokyo gold medalist Rodolpho Riskalla of Brasil.