

**READER STORY • JAN 12, 2022**

"My 13-year-old daughter Genevieve is the youngest U.S. Paraequestrian (since 2017). In 2022, she'll become the youngest globally when she makes her international CPEDI debut.

Genevieve is a triplet born at 28 weeks with many medical issues. They spent three months in two different NICUs. She started hippotherapy at 4 years old, falling in love with Sadie, a gray Welsh pony. She has ridden many therapy horses in the last decade, but Sadie and 22-year-old Star (National Show Horse, recently passed away) are Genevieve's heart horses. Star was kindly given to Genevieve for two years while she learned her FEI para tests.

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Since horses most closely mimic the human gait, riding also benefitted both her cerebral palsy and her misaligned leg bones. Riding proved to be magical for Genevieve. She became utterly focused on everything horses, but most of all, her imagination.

Named to the USEF Para Emerging Athletes list with two horses in 2020, Genevieve also competed at her first Para-Dressage National Championships on a catch ride she spent only three hours on before showing. She earned 69% from international judges and was Reserve Emerging Athletes Champion.

Donut, Genevieve's 7-year-old Hanoverian gelding, is affectionate and silly and makes Genevieve laugh. She's madly in love with him, and he returns that tenfold. She's aiming for the 2024 Paralympic team with him, her goal since she was 5.

Genevieve struggles with sensory processing disorder (non-clinical autism), and what being with Donut gives her, improves her life incredibly." —Lexi R.

