A photograph of a man in a blue shirt and jeans leaning against a green horse trailer. A brown horse is standing next to him, looking towards the man. The background shows trees and a fence.

TIK MAYNARD

PRESS KIT

IN THE MIDDLE

**ARE THE
HORSEMEN**

He studied the horse, and human nature, and how the two can find balance.
And in that journey, he may have found himself.

TRAFALGAR SQUARE BOOKS | HORSEANDRIDERBOOKS.COM



Photo by Kathy Russell

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ABOUT THE BOOK

In 2008, 26-year-old Tik Maynard faced a crossroads not unlike that of other young adults. A university graduate and modern pentathlete, he suffered both a career-ending injury and a painful breakup, leaving him suddenly adrift. The son of prominent Canadian equestrians, Maynard decided to spend the next year as a “working student.” In the horse industry, working students aspire to become professional riders or trainers, and willingly trade labor for hands-on education. Here Maynard chronicles his experiences—good and bad—and we follow along as one year becomes three, what began as a casual adventure gradually transforms, and a life’s purpose comes sharply into focus.

Over time, Maynard evolved under the critical eyes of Olympians, medal winners, and world-renowned figures in the horse world, including Anne Kursinski, Johann Hinnemann, Ingrid Klimke, David and Karen O’Connor, Bruce Logan, and Ian Millar. He was ignored, degraded, encouraged, and praised. He was hired and fired, told he had the “wrong body type to ride” and that he had found his “destiny.” He got married and lost loved ones. Through it all he studied the horse, and human nature, and how the two can find balance. And in that journey, he may have found himself.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Tik Maynard began riding with the Vancouver Pony Club, in Southlands, British Columbia. After achieving his ‘A’ rating, he began competing in Modern Pentathlon, where he represented Canada at three World Championships, and the 2007 Pan-American Games. In 2008, Maynard began a journey to improve his riding. From Germany to Florida, from Alberta to Texas, and from Florida to New Jersey, Maynard was willing to go wherever he had to, to learn from the best. Along the way he discovered something more important: horsemanship. It is that idea

that continues to motivate him. Today, Maynard searches out knowledge from many sources, but his most important mentors are his parents and his wife. He is married to US Eventing Team Member Sinead Halpin. Together they run Copperline Farm in Citra, Florida.

Maynard has always been a passionate book lover. He has written a children’s story, published by REAL magazine, has won the Malahat Review Open Season Award, and has twice been shortlisted for the CBC Literary Awards for his non-fiction works.

“Both a fascinating record of a young man’s quest to find his place, and a vivid portrait of an industry and a culture built upon on one of our most ancient and transformative relationships, that between the human and the horse. Acutely observed, vividly told, and not to be missed.”

KATHY PAGE
Author of *Alphabet and Paradise & Elsewhere*

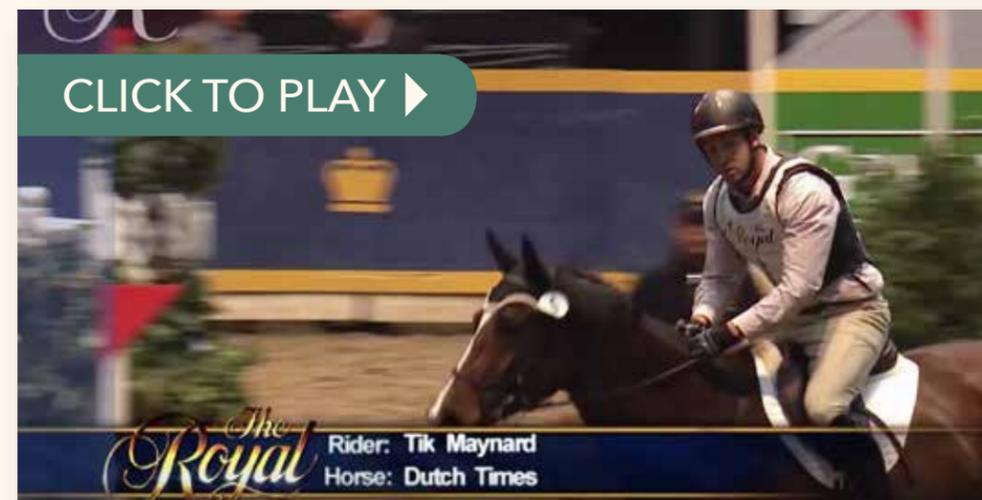


Photo by Kathy Russell

WATCH THE BOOK TRAILER



WATCH TIK WITH HORSES



“Its a shame you have to use the word ‘natural’ in front of ‘horsemanship.’ It should all be natural, the way you interact with a horse, the way you converse, teach and perform together in this incredible partnership.

“In my day, they called it, ‘It’ and it was a kind of secret society because people were ridiculed for taking the time to understand the way horses think and learn, rather than just showing the horse who’s boss. Today, it is becoming more the way, to train horses using love, language, and leadership; using psychology rather than mechanics no matter what your discipline, from recreational to performance.

“This is not horsemanship versus eventing; it is about laying a proper foundation before specialization. To see Tik bridging these two worlds in his quest to become a real horseman will inspire generations to come and contribute to making a better world for horses and the people who love them.”

PAT PARELLI

Bestselling Author, Founder of Parelli Natural Horsemanship®



Q&A WITH TIK MAYNARD

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Your book *In the Middle Are the Horsemen* chronicles several years you spent “on the road,” trading labor for an equestrian education in the role of “working student.” How would you describe what a working student is to someone outside the equestrian industry?

It is a trade. Instead of trading work for money, it is a trade of work for knowledge. It is like an apprenticeship or internship. Every working student position tends to be a bit different, but they are inevitably a lot of work. And that is because horses are a lot of work.

How did you first hear of what being a working student could offer? Was it something you always planned to do?

Being a working student is a pretty common thing in the riding world. Many top riders went through a phase of being a working student, and although I could have skipped it and just rode more, because my parents own horses and a horse business, I felt like it was sort of a rite of passage. From a business perspective I wanted to earn my way, work my way up, not just enter a management position. And now having said that I could have skipped it, I’m glad I didn’t! I have learned more, in so many ways, by being a working student than I would have dreamed possible.

Before you set off on your horsemanship adventure, you were a modern pentathlete. How did you discover modern pentathlon? Do you still practice all five events that make up the sport?

Many kids that ride are introduced to Pony Club at a young age. I was, and my brothers were, too. In Pony Club there are all kinds of interesting activities, like something they call Quiz, and Prince Phillip Games, which is like mounted relay races. There is also tetrathlon, which is riding, running, swimming, and shooting. Many kids that start in tetrathlon, go on to modern pentathlon, which includes fencing as the fifth sport. Modern pentathlon is practiced all over the world and is a part of the Pan American Games and the Olympic Games. I was even lucky enough to go to the Pan Am Games in Brazil in 2007.

And no, I do not still practice all the events. I run a little bit still to stay in shape. And I ride of course. I do miss it, but I also love what I am doing now.

Your time as a working student spanned three years and sprawled across Canada, the United States, and Europe. How did the places you visited influence your evolving goals? What is one specific place you journeyed to that you feel had a profound impact on you?

What surprised me was how different Florida, and the South in general, felt to me. Even though Germany has a different language I felt relatively at home in their culture. Of course I had a few issues in Germany, but they were to do with personal relationships, not the culture. I was unprepared coming to Florida to see billboards advertising Jesus and gun shows, or the lack of recycling. Lots of little things like that. But the people are so friendly! I live in Florida now and love it, but it is definitely different than Vancouver!

Your desire to record your experiences in writing was as strong as your interest in becoming a better rider. How did writing about your struggles, your successes, what you learned, what you didn’t, affect your journey? Did it dictate the outcome ever, or was it simply a manner of processing?

It was mostly a matter of keeping balance in my life and giving me some perspective.

I love horses, but if they are the only thing in my life I lose some of the enjoyment. I love writing, but if I were to write full time I would go crazy—and I would have nothing to write about.

The perspective comes from thinking about my experiences and how they fit into the bigger picture. No matter how tough it can feel, and how many ups and downs there are, working with horses is a choice, and if it ceases to be fun there are many things that are

more profitable.

Your wife is a top international rider. Is it difficult to find balance when you both are in the same profession? Or when it comes to having horses and riding being part of the relationship equation, do you feel it is plain old necessary?

Working with horses, and trying to be the best at something, takes so much passion and commitment. We have arguments about things for sure, but as time goes on we find out what is important to each other and it gets easier. For example we have this game where we will ask each other “How important is going to the rider party, out of ten?” If she wants to go 8 out of 10, and I’m tired and I don’t want to go 6 out of 10, then we go, even if I’m tired. And I make the best of it. Of course the game only works if we are honest, and in the end it balances out.

Also, we have different strengths at the barn so we can help each other. She is great at dressage and cross-country. She is amazing at stable management. I have a strong show jumping background, and I end up working with all the young horses and complicated horses. I love having a complicated horse problem to think about. They are like riddles!

In the end I think it’s tough, but we get each other, and I wouldn’t trade her!

What is one lesson you hope readers will take away from your book?

When I hear this question, I think, God,

Q&A WITH TIK MAYNARD

I just hope they make it past the first chapter. If they even finish the book I'll be happy.

But a lesson? Let me think. Maybe don't judge people too harshly when they are in a different place on their horsemanship journey than you. A lot of riders see somebody doing something different and they don't ask why, or have the patience to see things from another point of view.

Also, I see a lot of gray area in how we treat horses. For example people often

say it is wrong to abuse horses. That is great to say, but abuse is sure open to interpretation. Some people might say it is abuse to even own a horse. Some people pay more attention to physical abuse, and some people are very aware of emotional abuse. I try never to say never or always. Instead I try to think: "I thought that was true, but maybe there is a better way."

TIKMAYNARD.COM

"Tik Maynard writes like a seasoned novelist, but there is no mistaking the authenticity of his story. Whether you're crazy about horses or not, you'll enjoy this ride."

RICK LAMB

*Author of *Human to Horseman* and
Co-Author *The Revolution in Horsemanship**

"Tik is not only a fantastic writer but a special horseman. His ability to work naturally through a horse's problems and to communicate what he does in a way people can understand is a gift. He has a neverending want for knowledge about horses, and I hope he continues to share his experiences."

LAUREN BLISS KIEFFER

US Olympian





“About five years ago, I met Tik for the first time when he attended a clinic I was giving in Maryland. I immediately observed: Tik is a special person, who has an equally good understanding for both people and horses. Tik can put himself in his partner’s place and listens closely to the horse that has offered Tik his trust.

“Tik possesses the knowledge of both classical riding and natural horsemanship that is necessary to bring them together. Bringing together these two complementary approaches has helped him become a true horseman. He has traveled a rough road. But, he never gave up. Over time, he was able to convert every discouragement, every rejection, into something positive. He’s tried to learn as much as he can from each of his trainers. That still applies to Tik today and is the basis for this exciting book.

“What can the reader gain from this book? You should never give up and always keep your specific goal in sight—and you must do that in the face of all the adversities that a rider must overcome in the course of his education. In this regard, Tik is a role model for all of his readers.”

CHRISTOPH HESS

FEI Dressage and Eventing Judge and Ambassador for Training and Education of the German National Equestrian Federation (FN)

EXCERPT I

FROM *IN THE MIDDLE ARE THE HORSEMEN*

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“I would have done that a little differently,” Bruce said, as he shook his head. “I would have gone slower. It’s not a race. And when you do get the rope around his neck, make sure you leave out more slack.”

I nodded. The horse kicked out as he cantered away from us.

“Right now we just have to catch him,” he continued. “One try with the halter is enough. We just want to get him out of here as calmly as possible. It should be whatever is easiest for the horse. Later, when he’s settled in at my place, we can start with the real work.”

The gelding was now at the far end of the ring, looking straight back at us. One ear was forward and one back, then they switched. But both eyes never left us.

Bruce went to the middle of the corral where he had left his rope and picked it up.

“How we get him in the trailer now depends a lot on what kind of space he’s in. With this size here, the lasso might work best.”

He let the rope slide through the honda knot, creating a cylindrical loop a couple of yards in diameter.

“If you keep him at this end, I’ll see if I can throw this over him.”

“Sure, no problem,” I said, but I was a little skeptical, both of Bruce throwing the loop over the horse, and of this being the best tactic to take in order to quietly catch him.

Bruce walked down the middle of the corral, directly at the gelding. The lasso knocked against his thigh as he moved. He stopped about fifteen feet from the horse. I stood on the left side of the ring, so that if the horse moved we knew it would be to the right. Bruce brought his lasso into a slow swing over his head.

There are many kinds of throws, and I had learned three: the overhand, the houlihan, and the backhand. Bruce was planning a simple overhand. The horse saw the rope move and bolted down the fence. Bruce didn’t hesitate. Once more the lasso went behind the man’s back, picking up speed, before leaving his hands and moving, slowly it seemed, toward the fence, slightly ahead of the gelding. The horse galloped on—straight into the trap. As the rope settled around his neck, his speed and momentum tightened it, but he continued down the fence.

Time seemed to speed up. Bruce madly

played out rope, letting the horse gallop, giving him a chance to feel the rope and the easy tension in it. I tried to stand out of the way behind Bruce. He let the horse circle the corral twice and settle.

“This is a lot different than roping cattle!” Bruce yelled to me, coiling in the rope.

I thought back to the afternoon when he had taught me how to rope. Bruce showed me the simple overhand first, then the backhand from different angles, and finally the houlihan. He demonstrated the scoop toss and del viento, but I stuck with the basics. I learned how to switch from the backhand to the hula, but how it’s impossible to go from the hula to the backhand. He showed me how the scoop toss soars into the air like a dove freed from your hand, returning to the earth in a deadfall, until suddenly, when the calf steps into the trap, you pull on the rope, and the scene unfolds in double time, the rope quickly, suddenly, ferociously, alive.

After that lesson, when Bruce had left, I had kept practicing. It was hard enough on the ground; I couldn’t imagine riding at the same time. But I had liked the feel of the rope in my hands and set up a bale of hay on its end, playing with the different roping shots until dark.

“Tik,” Bruce said, breathing hard now, “I don’t call this ‘natural horsemanship.’ Once he’s got that rope around his neck, or a halter on his head, that

ain’t ‘natural’ anymore.”

The horse turned his head to the outside of the corral, looking to get away from the tension he felt encircling his neck. There was sweat glistening along his flanks. He broke into a trot. Bruce was watching, ready to release the pressure as soon as the horse took one step toward us.

“Look at it this way,” he said, gesturing to the left with his head while managing the rope. “Over here are the ‘natural horsemen.’ And often there is nothing natural about what they do. And over there,” he nodded to the right, “are the, well, whatever the opposite is—the people who don’t take into account the horse and what its capabilities and tendencies are.” Bruce paused for second, thinking. “There are lots of those guys, I guess. In the middle, though, are the horsemen.”



Photo by Kathy Russell

EXCERPT II

FROM *IN THE MIDDLE ARE THE HORSEMEN*

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I glanced down. I saw the sweat from my face fall on Sapphire's withers. It mixed with hers and slid to her shoulders. Her neck foamed where the reins rubbed against the skin. Drool from her lower lip fell, caught by the wind. We were two strides farther before it hit the ground. I was back in Canada, on Vancouver Island, in full gallop, home from Germany, and enjoying an intermission before heading to Ocala, Florida, to work with Karen and David O'Connor. I looked ahead the way a soccer player looks downfield before chipping the ball to a teammate.

Eventing. Eventing! So this is what it was. This was a thrilling and wild affair. My parents watched cautiously. It seemed they had hidden this great thing from me. What! How? Now they offered advice timidly. My friends didn't know where I was. But this was no fling; it was love. It snatched me from my home. It arrested yesterday's desires and replaced them with new purpose.

I had no idea where this sport might lead me. Would I end up living in Germany? Or maybe competing in Ontario or the Carolinas? But I was getting ahead of myself, and that was the one thing, perhaps the most important thing, I should not do in this situation. I smelled the air,

fresh from the Pacific Ocean. Sapphire's hooves struck the ground like the thunder of timpani, and we galloped on.

I was halfway through my first course, wondering what I had been doing my whole life before now. I looked to the left—a cord of wood blocked my entrance to the forest. I continued on, my horse's legs flew in double-time, straight and true, and we turned to be perpendicular to the obstacle. And then we were up and over, and on a new trail. The trees rushed by! A blur. I knew they were evergreens, but they might have been fir or juniper or hemlock. The browns and greens blended together. We sped through; then we were out on the grass again.

The ground was firm, but not too firm. Dry, yet not too dry. Green as the emerald pastures of a picture book. I had no idea that footing like this was not just great—it was rare.

In my childhood, riding happened in a ring. Both my parents were my coaches. My mother showed me the joys and principles of riding as an amateur. My father explained the obligations and responsibilities of the professional. Although they had both evented themselves, they quit when my mom was expecting.

"Too dangerous," they explained when I was fourteen, "too many crushed bones."

"Yeah?" I had said.

"Too many shattered hearts. Eventing is like trying to outrun a train: eventually it'll catch up to you."

"Sure," I'd replied with a laugh. "But don't worry, I can leap tall buildings, too!" And I hurdled, and tripped, over the couch. The truth was, I was not really interested in eventing—at least not back then.

"You think I'm worried about you? No way!" my mother had said, shaking her head. "It's the horses. They don't deserve that."

Fifteen years after that conversation I found myself at my first event. And my parents were there to support me...

...Cross-country! It was fast! It was my heart in my mouth, tears in my eyes! It was my arteries working like pistons, throbbing in time with Sapphire's stride. Ba-BOOM. Ba-BOOM. Ba-BOOM!

And then there were the two water jumps, the first that left me behind, but the second that was smooth. My leg swung slightly forward, I landed in my heels, and I found my horse's mouth again. Below us the water splashed, cooling her chest, leaving a tiny rainbow in our wake. And then we were off.

We looked ahead. The Cowichan Valley rose up on my left. There was forest on my right. We rushed forward.

Spectators sat on the hill. They held dogs. They looked for photo ops. Sometimes they held their breath. I saw all these things, and I saw none of them. The stirrups held me high, out of my mare's way, but her breathing was more labored now.

The finish line came up. There were two flags marking it: red on the right, white on the left. I crossed through and forgot to glance at my watch. I was breathing hard, along with Sapphire. The stewards glanced at their clipboards. The vet was busy with other competitors. Sapphire put her head low, but her ears stayed pricked and forward. Someone took our photo.

Later I would notice that in the picture, I was smiling.



Photo by Kathy Russell

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