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## Married Couple Do the Double On Opening Day of US Dressage Finals

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## Anartz Chanca riding Dazzle to US Dressage Finals Int. II title. © 2022 SusanJStickle

By ALICE COLLINS, for Jump Media

LEXINGTON, Kentucky, Nov. 10, 2022—The opening day of the 2022 US Dressage Finals Thursday was extraordinary for one family with husband-and-wife duo Anartz Chanca and Marta Renilla both claiming championship titles. Not only did they both win, but they were each riding a horse originally intended for the other.

The first of the year's titles went to Anartz Chanca, who rode his own Oldenburg gelding Dazzle to an unassailable 66.765% in the Intermediate II Adult Amateur class. At 10 years old, the son of Danone I out of a Londonderry dam was the youngest horse in the field of nine starters. They scored sevens across the board from the three judges for general impression, which carries a double coefficient.

This is the second time in two years that the pair have come away with a championship win, having topped the Amateur Intermediate I Freestyle in 2021. Anartz's rise from training level to Big Tour has been meteoric. His background was in endurance horses in his native Spain—and he had a stint as a jumper. But in 2013, he went down the centerline for the first time and has never looked back.

"I'm feeling very proud of Dazzle," said Anartz, who is based with his wife at her family's Woodlands Equestrian Club in Tomball, Texas. "He felt great in the arena. He's only 10, so it's his first year at Inter. II and Grand Prix, so I'm very happy with him. This year he qualified for the Developing Grand Prix Horse at Lamplight (near Chicago), but he developed crazy hives which got out of control in a matter of hours, and we had to scratch. I was really worried about him. Just the fact that he qualified for this and that he's here and healthy and going strong, I couldn't be more proud of him."

Dazzle was originally bought for Marta but was then sold to a junior rider. A few years later Anartz had an opportunity to buy the horse back and jumped at the chance.

"I always thought he was a heck of horse, and now he's not going anywhere," he said. "I made that mistake once already." He will also contest the AA Grand Prix and Grand Prix Freestyle classes this year. "Being here is such a pleasure and a gift. We have such busy lives, with kids, the horses, and my job [he is the president of the American subsidiary of an Italian company that manufactures truck parts]. We love this show; ever since we became U.S. citizens in 2018, we haven't missed it."

Marta Renilla captured the Third Level Open championship riding her family's German-bred Zalando M.R. to 73.250%, chased closely by the reserve champion Martin Kuhn, who was just 0.083% behind. It was only the third show for Renilla and Zalando as the horse had to undergo major surgery.



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Marta Renilla and Zalando M.R. © 2022 SusanJStickle.com

“My husband bought him in Germany as a project, but then he had to have surgery that took him out of business for a year,” she explained. “He had a cyst that we didn’t spot in Germany, so we had to put four screws in his hock. I started riding him as a seven-year-old at the beginning of the year, but he felt more like a four-year-old.

“I slowly developed him on the basics and when he got strong, the movements came effortlessly to him. I waited until just before regionals to qualify, then my second show ever with him was regionals and now here we are at Third and Fourth Level and we’re champions,” added Marta, who rates the horse as a phenomenal Grand Prix prospect. “He’s a horse that gives you 300%—almost too much sometimes. I was so impressed how he stayed with me through the whole test despite his inexperience. That shows our relationship, and I couldn’t be more grateful to have this guy in my life.”

Zalando is by Blue Hors Zack out of a Rubinstein dam, and “he combines dad’s power and hotness with the rideability of the Rubinstein line,” adds Marta. “He’s really a special horse. Even though he was bought mainly for my husband, I stole the ride on him after the surgery, and now he’s saying he might steal him back, but I say, ‘No!’ His horse Dazzle was my horse, but he wasn’t my cup of tea.”

The couple plan to celebrate their monumental day with an early night—“a real treat” for them given their hectic home lives, full barn, and three children.

Heather Mason of Tewsbury, New Jersey is Queen of the Intermediate II Championship—Again

In the lead up to the show, Heather declared that her horse RTF Lincoln “loves the Alltech Arena” and he proved her right by claiming the Intermediate II Open championship Thursday. This was the third straight title for the pair.



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