

Sylter Nachrichten

Saturday, July 15th, 2006



Picture Above: The nine Chinese riders under their national flag with their German hosts.

Nine Chinese at the Horse-Riding Ranch

Edward Wong runs the only internationally accredited horse riding center in Shanghai / Business visit on the “Olivenhof”

Tinum – Nine Chinese on the horse ranch could be a variation of the well known folklore song about the three Chinese with the contrabass: This week, nine enthusiastic equestrian sportsmen are on a visit at the “Olivenhof” of Maren Knutzen and Joerg Meier to find out more about the German horse riding culture. The daily training sessions don't stop them from doing several sightseeing trips, especially to the beach.

Edward Wong, owner of the first internationally accredited equestrian sports centre in Shanghai, came to Sylt for the first time in December: “It is astonishing how the island has changed with the summer. Such a wonderful setting amongst forests and trees, not to mention the beach, cannot be found anywhere in Shanghai.” Along with an instructor, two mothers and six children came to Sylt to find out more about the European equestrian culture. “For 50 years, there were no horses in Shanghai” explains Ed. We only started our center at Meadowbrook three years ago with some ponies from Mongolia, and some Russian breed horses.

In March of 2005, Joerg Meier came to the metropolis of 18-million people, as a horse expert and guest instructor. He was only able to stay for two weeks, due to the acute illness of his daughter. So, that is how that the former Australian 'military' national coach invited Edward to a horse camp on the Olivenhof.

The nine Asians, from five to 46 years of age enjoyed their trip to Germany. Thanks to the mediation of Westerland's mayor Petra Reiber (an active rider herself) an exception was made and the guests were allowed to lodge on the abandoned air base. Maren Knutzen took care of the catering. "Our children are so fascinated by this island, enjoying nature, the meadows, the carefree play, and the blue sky – all this is hard to find in Shanghai," rejoiced Ed. Apart from the daily practical training and theory lessons on the ranch, they also took riding trips through the surrounding area; the rides along the beach were everyone's favorites.

When the Chinese delegation heads home on Sunday, they will have much to tell – of the really big horses and galloping along the shoreline under clear blue skies, and much more.