

= David O 'Connor (equestrian) =

David John O 'Connor (born January 18 , 1962) is a retired equestrian who represented the United States in the sport of three @-@ day eventing . He competed in two Olympic Games , winning a team silver at the 1996 Summer Olympics and an individual gold and team bronze at the 2000 Summer Olympics . At the 1999 Pan American Games , O 'Connor took an individual silver and team gold and at the 2002 World Equestrian Games he assisted the US team to gold . After his retirement from competition in 2004 , he became involved in the administrative side of international eventing . O 'Connor has held top coaching roles for the US and Canadian national eventing teams , and was president of the United States Equestrian Federation from 2004 to 2012 . During his career , O 'Connor and his horses were awarded many honors , including equestrian and horse of the year awards from several organizations . In 2009 , he was inducted to the United States Eventing Association 's Hall of Fame , and two of his horses have been granted the same honor . O 'Connor is married to fellow international event rider Karen O 'Connor , and the pair operate two equestrian training facilities in the eastern United States .

= = Personal life = =

O 'Connor was born in Washington , D.C. His English @-@ born mother , Sally O 'Connor , was a dressage rider , judge and author . David began riding at a young age , and as a child participated in a cross @-@ US horseback ride with his mother and brother , covering 3 @,@ 000 miles over several months .

O 'Connor married fellow equestrian Karen O 'Connor , also an international three day event rider , on June 26 , 1993 . The pair became the first married couple to compete on the same US Olympic equestrian team when they rode with their team to a silver medal at the 1996 Summer Olympics . They rode to a second shared medal at the 2000 Summer Olympics , again marking a historical Olympic moment as the first husband and wife duo to do so . They operate equestrian training facilities in The Plains , Virginia and Ocala , Florida . When not involved in equestrian activities , O 'Connor enjoys reading and golfing .

= = Career = =

= = = Competitive career = = =

In 1986 , O 'Connor began riding in international competition for the US . Early in his career , O 'Connor competed in numerous high @-@ level events as part of the US team . He acted as an alternate (substitute) rider at the 1988 Summer Olympics . Riding Wilton Fair , he was part of the US team at the 1990 World Equestrian Games , where he placed 35th individually and the team took fourth . At the 1994 World Equestrian Games , he placed 44th individually riding On a Mission and again acted as an alternate for the US team .

O 'Connor competed in two Olympic Games for the United States . At the 1996 Summer Olympics in Atlanta , Georgia , he took fifth place individually , riding Custom Made . Riding a second horse , Giltedge , he also helped the US team to a silver medal . At the 2000 Summer Olympics , again riding Custom Made , he took the gold medal , and helped the US team to a bronze aboard Giltedge . During the individual competition at the 2000 Games , he led each stage of the event , and made Olympic history with a record @-@ breaking dressage score . Observers called the ride " accurate and precise with good cadence throughout . " At the 1997 Badminton Horse Trials , O 'Connor and Custom Made won the CCI4 * , the top event at the trials , becoming only the second American pair to do so . In the 1998 World Equestrian Games , O 'Connor , riding Giltedge , took an individual sixth place and helped the US team to a fourth place . Again riding Giltedge , O 'Connor won silver at the 1999 Pan American Games and assisted the US team to a gold medal . The pair also rode to a team gold at the 2002 World Equestrian Games in Jerez , Spain . O 'Connor was consistently

ranked as one of the top three day event riders in the world by the Fédération Équestre Internationale , holding fourth place in 1996 , third place in 1997 and first place in 2000 . He was also the top eventing rider in the US , topping the United States Eventing Association (USEA) leaderboard , in 1998 and 1999 . He was a three @-@ time winner of the Rolex Kentucky Three Day , once at the CCI4 * level and twice at the CCI3 * level .

= = = Administrative career = = =

In 2002 , both Custom Made and Giltedge were retired from competition . In 2004 , O 'Connor retired from competition and quickly became involved in administrative aspects of the three @-@ day eventing world . He served as the President of the United States Equestrian Federation from 2004 to 2012 . In 2006 , O 'Connor was appointed the International Technical Advisor to the Canadian national eventing team . In that capacity , he led the team to silver medals at the 2007 Pan American Games and the 2010 World Equestrian Games . In January 2013 , O 'Connor left the Canadian team after being appointed chef d ? équipe to the US national eventing team .

= = = Awards and honors = = =

The USEA named O 'Connor their Rider of the Year in 1996 and 1997 , and in the same years named O 'Connor 's horse Lightfoot was the Horse of the Year . O 'Connor was also named The Chronicle of the Horse 's Eventing Horseman of the Year in 1996 , in combination with his wife , Karen . In 1997 , O 'Connor was awarded the Whitney Stone Cup , an annual award by the United States Equestrian Federation which honors " an active competitor who displays consistent excellence in international competition and high standards of sportsmanlike conduct while serving as an ambassador for the United States and equestrian sport . " In 1998 , Lightfoot was named the USEA Horse of the Year , and in 1999 , another O 'Connor horse , Rattle & Hum , was awarded the honor . Rattle & Hum also took home The Chronicle of the Horse 's Eventing Horse of the Year in 1999 . The following year , The Chronicle of the Horse named O 'Connor both Overall Horseman and Eventing Horseman of the Year , and his horse , Custom Made , was named both Overall Horse and Eventing Horse of the Year . Two years later , in 2002 , Giltedge , O 'Connor 's other main horse , was named both Overall Horse and Eventing Horse of the Year . The United States Equestrian Federation named O 'Connor their Equestrian of the Year twice , in 2000 and 2002 . Also in 2002 , O 'Connor was awarded the USA Equestrian Sportsmanship Award . In 2009 , O 'Connor and Custom Made were inducted into the USEA Hall of Fame , and in 2012 Giltedge was awarded the same honor . As of 2013 , four horses ridden by O 'Connor (Giltedge , Custom Made , On a Mission and Wilton Fair) held positions in the list of the top 50 USEA high scoring horses .