

= Robert Dover (equestrian) =

Robert Benjamin Dover (born June 7 , 1956) is an American equestrian who has had international success in the sport of dressage . Riding from the age of 13 , he began specializing in dressage at age 19 and competed in his first Olympics in 1984 . He competed in every summer Games between 1984 and 2004 , winning four team bronze medals . He also took a team bronze at the 1994 World Equestrian Games . Dover is the most honored dressage rider in the United States , and has been inducted to the United States Dressage Federation Hall of Fame . Outside of competition , Dover founded the Equestrian Aid Foundation in 1996 to assist others in the equestrian world , and hosted a TV show that searched for the next dressage star . From late 2009 to early 2011 , Dover served as the Technical / Coach Advisor for the Canadian national dressage team . In April 2013 , Dover was named Technical Advisor / Chef d 'Equipe for the US national dressage team .

= = Personal life = =

Dover , who is Jewish , was born in Chicago , Illinois to parents Herb and Jean Dover . He was given a horse for his Bar Mitzvah at 13 and was active in Pony Club , graduating at " A " level , the highest level . He decided to specialize in dressage when he was 19 . Dover attended the University of Georgia . He is openly gay , and his partner is fellow rider Robert Ross . Injuries , including a torn rotator cuff and pinched sciatic nerve , began to plague him in the late 1990s , causing major back pain and reducing his ability to ride .

= = Career = =

= = = Competition = = =

In 1984 , Dover competed in his first Olympic Games at the age of 28 . At the Los Angeles Games , he finished 17th individually , and the US team finished 6th . At the 1988 Seoul Olympics , he finished 13th , and the team tied for 6th place . In 1992 , at the Barcelona Games , Dover tied for 22nd place , while the American team took the bronze medal . At the 1996 Atlanta Games , the 2000 Sydney Olympics and the 2004 Athens Games the United States dressage team took the bronze medal each time , while Dover finished 25th , 23rd and 6th respectively . He was elected team captain in all six Olympics in which he competed . Of his Olympic experience , Dover says , " The medals themselves aren 't the important thing . My memories of the Games and of the entire Olympic experience are , to me , everything . "

In 1987 , Dover defeated Reiner Klimke , a six @-@ time Olympic gold medalist , at the German Aachen Grand Prix freestyle competition . In doing so , he became the first American in 27 years to win that event . In 1994 he was named the US Olympic Male Equestrian Athlete of the Year , and in 1995 awarded the Whitney Stone Cup , given by the United States Equestrian Federation (USEF) for excellence in international competition . Dover has been named the USEF Dressage Champion five times , and ridden seven times in the FEI World Cup Final . In 1994 , Dover rode with the United States dressage team at the World Equestrian Games , winning a team bronze . He was also amassed more than 100 Grand Prix victories . Overall , Dover has won more honors in dressage than any other rider from the United States . In 2009 , Dover announced his retirement from competitive riding , instead choosing to focus on teaching and philanthropy .

= = = Other = = =

Dover founded the Equestrian Aid Foundation in 1996 . The Foundation 's mission is to financially assist members of the equestrian community who have suffered a catastrophic accident , injury or illness . In 2002 , Dover was listed as one of the 50 most influential horsemen by Chronicle of the Horse magazine . In 2007 , " The Search for America 's Next Equestrian Star : Dressage " , a reality

TV show created and promoted by Dover , aired on the Fox Reality Channel with five one @-@ hour episodes . The show followed a search for young , talented dressage riders , with the final five being allowed to train with Dover for one month before a winner was selected ; the winner became Dover 's assistant . In 2008 , Dover was inducted into the United States Dressage Federation Hall of Fame . Dover served on the USEF Dressage Committee for many years , and spent eight years on the US Olympic Committee Athlete Advisory Council .

In late 2009 , Dover was selected as a Technical / Coach Advisor for the Canadian dressage team , with a contract that extended through the 2010 World Equestrian Games in Lexington , Kentucky . After the Games , it was announced that Dover and the Canadian team had not been able to agree on contract renewal terms , but in late 2010 it was announced that Dover would remain as the interim trainer for the first quarter of 2011 . In March 2011 , German equestrian Markus Gribbe was hired , and Dover 's term as a Canadian coach came to an end . Dover is known for his coaching abilities , with some of the best dressage riders with top international titles to their credit coming from his stables . During his time as a trainer for Canada , he was no longer be eligible to train top riders with the USEF . In April 2013 , Dover was named Technical Advisor / Chef d 'Equipe of the US national dressage team . He is expected to remain in the position through the 2016 Summer Olympics . Dover is currently a rider and trainer at Stillpoint Farm in Florida .