



W I N T E R E Q U E S T R I A N F E S T I V A L

WEEKLY WIRE

WEEK 7 • FEBRUARY 19, 2025



**SPOTLIGHT ON
VIVIAN YOWAN**

**LIZA BOYD IS BACK
IN PETER WETHERILL
PALM BEACH HUNTER SPECTACULAR**

**RINGSIDE HEALTH
SUPPORTS MENTAL
HEALTH AWARENESS**

LIZA TOWELL BOYD

Back on Top

The country's best hunter combinations went head-to-head in the \$150,000 WCHR Peter Wetherill Palm Beach Hunter Spectacular with a win for Liza Towell Boyd of Camden, SC, riding Ondine D'Orleans, owned by Finally Farm and Neill Sites.

The WCHR Peter Wetherill Palm Beach Hunter Spectacular is the highlight of WCHR Week at Wellington International each year and is Boyd's fourth time winning the featured class during 'Saturday Night Lights'.

"It's been a while [since my last win] and every win was in different chapters of my life," recalled Boyd, who was the inaugural winner of the Palm Beach Hunter Spectacular in 1997. "This is an amazing mare and this is her home turf; she grew up here."

Bred in Florida by Monique

Keitz, the 11-year-old Belgian Warmblood was reserve champion in the Equine tack & Nutritionals 3'9" Green Hunters during the week. Inspired by watching the mare's sire Vigo D'Arsouilles carry Belgium's Philippe Le Jeune to a gold medal at the 2010 World Equestrian Games in Lexington, KY, Keitz bred Coco Chanel Z to the stallion. The result was a chestnut mare that bore a striking resemblance to Brunello, Boyd's partner for three consecutive USHJA International Hunter Derby Championship titles.

"I could jump the moon on her. I feel like she knows this venue and I had a good feeling this morning when I rode her. She came in for the second round and jumped her





PHOTO © SPORTFOT

heart out," continued Boyd, who returned for the handy course sitting in second, but laid down a unanimous winning round to post a score of 91.166 for an average of 91.24.

Six-time winner of the Palm Beach Hunter Spectacular Victoria Colvin of Loxahatchee, FL, returned in the lead and held on for the reserved title aboard Paradigm for owner Meredith Lipke. She combined scores of 91.833 and 89.166 for an overall average of 90.499. Amanda Steege of Ocala, FL, rounded out the top three riding Lafitte de Muze. Together, Steege and Lafitte de Muze won the Palm Beach Hunter Spectacular in 2021. Steege combined an 88.25 and 89.333 to average an 88.791 for owner Cheryl Osten.

Of the evening's handy course, Boyd noted, "There were a lot of different things



you could do; there were good turns and you could really show a gallop. It brought out the best in the animals and it made for a great class. I talked to her the whole way around, and I swear she listened."

One of four horses to jump at the 3'9" height on Saturday night, Ondine D'Orleans will now take a well-deserved break before returning to competition during WEF 9 and 11 as hunters take to Wellington International's grass derby field.

Boyd ended the evening with gratitude for the opportunity to soak up the spotlight in the International Arena at WEF. "This is so special for us hunter riders. Derby Finals is our Olympics, but this WCHR week is our World Cup Final. We work so hard to get here and to win this class means the world. I couldn't be happier."

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BEN MAHER

Finds Winning Form on Ginger-BLUE

Great Britain's Ben Maher has been knocking on the door of a grand prix win since the start of the season and finally came during WEF 6. The Olympic champion got his win on the grass derby field in the \$140,000 IDA Development CSI3* Grand Prix, presented by Barnwalkers, with Ginger-Blue, owned by Jane Forbes Clark.

"My horses have all been jumping great here this season," Maher said of

his consistent results that hadn't quite produced a big win yet. "I think I've been clear in all of my grand prix but not quite getting the jump-off finished. I missed out in the five-star grand prix last week which was a frustrating rider error. I'm very happy to put it right this week with Ginger-Blue. She gave me everything today."

The 14-year-old Dutch Warmblood mare (Plot Blue x Royal Bravour) had only

jumped twice in 2025 prior to WEF 6, and both outings produced clear and top results. As a result, Maher was confident she was the pick for the featured test of the week.

"She's naturally an incredibly fast horse," Maher continued. "She jumped great already on Thursday with an unlucky one down in the jump-off. The jump-offs have been really fast throughout WEF. My reaction

time is getting a little quicker and she naturally covers the ground well. Some people took a stride out to the double which is against my rules a little so I knew I had to make time up elsewhere."

Maher topped the list of seven total jump-off contenders over Catzy Cruz's (MEX) course. In a winning time of 35.80 seconds He edged out Marilyn Little (USA) by five one-hundredths of a second to bump her to second place with La Contessa. Cathleen Driscoll (USA) rounded out third place with Idalgo, owned by Donald Stewart.

"Ginger-Blue came to me when she was seven years old," Maher continued about his partnership. "She's grown up here at WEF. It tends to be quite heavy jumping here. They use bigger material which is more interesting for the crowd but she's a very careful horse so it tends to back her up a lot. We pick and choose her classes here at WEF. We love the grass; it's a fantastic facility and great atmosphere today. She's a trier and that always gives any rider confidence."



HALLIE GRIMES TAKES AIM

at Brainjuice U25 Season Title

Hallie Grimes (USA) is inching closer to a big WEF goal. She—like many under-25 grand prix riders—is focused on winning the BrainJuice U25 Grand Prix Series Final and found herself one step closer with a win in the \$31,020 BrainJuice U25 Grand Prix aboard Karoline of Ballmore on the final day of WEF 6.

“Karoline of Ballmore “Korra” loves a big field,” Grimes said about the 15-year-old Belgian Warmblood mare (Diarado x Convento van de Helle) owned by Can We Keep It?,



LLC. “She’s hot as a pistol and loves to have that space to use herself. Today, the jumps

were all spread far apart and I felt like I could give her the ride I wanted everywhere. That was definitely an advantage.”

Korra’s fondness of the field traces back to her win in the Rolex Grand Prix in 2022, with Ashlee Bond (ISR) aboard. Grimes knew she could build on the confidence they have as a pair and produce a top result.

“Daniel Bluman and I discussed the jump-off before I went in,” she said of the last-minute advice to take things slower. “He watched everyone before me, and we thought a slow clear would be good because my goal is to win the overall. But we jumped fence one and she felt incredible. I felt like I had control of the momentum, and I ran home. I didn’t go all out, but to the last jump I pressed the gas.”

Though Grimes is already extremely experienced at the age of 22, she admits she had a lot of learning to do once taking over the ride on Korra.

“She’s taught me more than most horses,” Grimes continued. “It took a lot of getting to know her and a willingness to try things a different way. I do a lot of things with her that might be considered unconventional; I always start with a trot jump in the schooling area because it relaxes her. I’ve adapted to her, and she seems to be really happy and healthy, which I take a lot of pride in.

“Everything is about slowing her down,” continued Grimes. “She’s the scopiest horse I’ve ever ridden, so it’s about controlling the momentum. If you get that figured out, she’s a weapon.

“I’ve been doing the U25 series for five years now and there was definitely a point where a U25 grand prix was the biggest thing I’d ever jumped,” she concluded. “Now I’ve jumped a few five-stars consistently. This year I have 10 horses here but a lot of them are quite young, so I’ve been focusing on producing them. I don’t have the string to compete at the highest level this year at WEF but my goal is to win the U25 series this year.”



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PHOTO ©SHELBY PHILLIPS

Spotlight On: VIVIAN YOWAN

Vivian Yowan has been riding her whole life—starting with tiny crossrails and progressing to the big jumps of the grand prix ring, she has experienced it all. The 27-year-old equestrian began her journey in early childhood and has since grown into an accomplished rider. Her success is rooted in her family's deep passion for horses, the guidance of her junior trainers—Tim and Kelly Goguen—and her experience riding for Southern Methodist University's NCAA equestrian team. Today, she is a thriving professional in the hunter and jumper rings, crediting her achievements to her exceptional equine partners, dedicated trainers and invaluable mentors.

We sat down with Vivian to discuss her journey, aspirations, and accomplishments as she takes the next steps in her riding career.

Q What drew you to the sport?

A My mom grew up riding, and when she met my dad, he started riding as well. I grew up right across the street from Ox Ridge Hunt Club [in Connecticut], so riding was a natural part of my life—it was literally in my backyard. I started riding when I was just three years old.

Q What were some of the most valuable lessons you learned from Tim and Kelly Goguen?

A I think the most valuable lesson I learned was to always put the horse first. Growing up in that program as a junior, I gained

a deeper understanding of horsemanship rather than just competing for the sake of it. That foundation was incredibly valuable in my transition to becoming a professional.

Q Looking back at your junior career, what stands out?

A I'd say I have a few accomplishments, but my biggest one was winning individual gold at North American Youth Championships. Of course, there are others as well; I had a well-known junior hunter named Ransom, and interestingly, I'm showing his full brother next week—which is exciting. Ransom was a horse I brought along myself, and I played a role in making him a recognizable name, which I consider a

significant achievement. He competed at Capital Challenge, participated in the night class here at Wellington International, and had a very successful career.

Q How did competing on the NCAA equestrian team at SMU shape you as a rider and competitor?

A I'd say the biggest takeaway was learning to work with others. Even though it's an individualized sport, it really fosters a sense of team camaraderie. I also think it helped me gain experience riding different horses. While they may not have been the same caliber as the ones we show here, adapting to various horses was a valuable skill. Additionally, it taught me a lot about horse care, which is just as important. Going to college and stepping away from the competitive side of the sport allowed me to see it from a different perspective. Experiencing it at a different level made me appreciate what we do and what our horses are truly capable of even more.

Q You've had success in both the hunter and jumper rings—do you have a favorite?

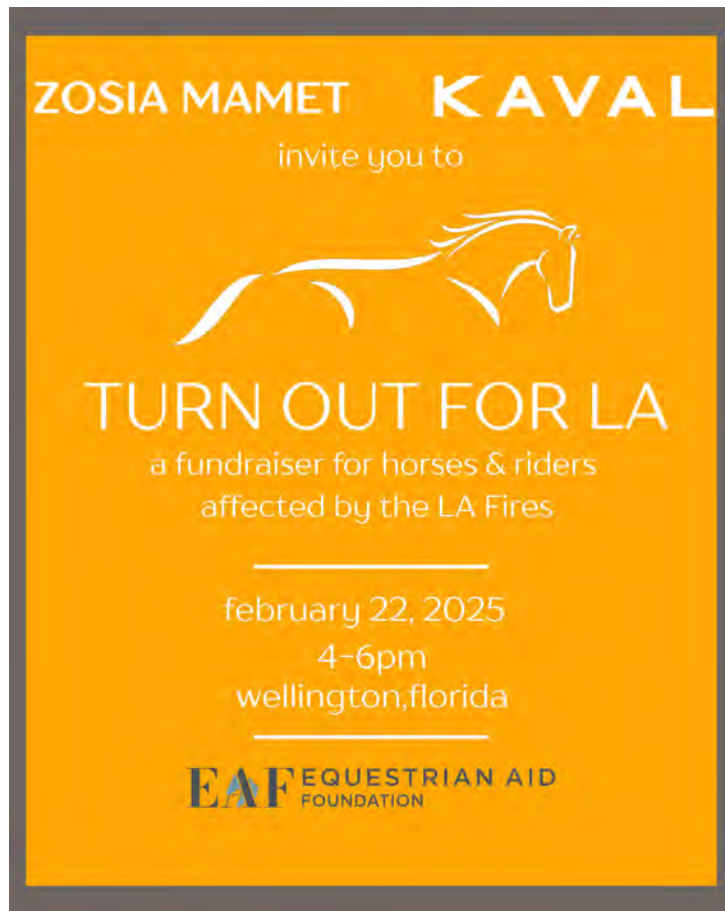
A I definitely enjoy competing in both disciplines. Hunters hold a special place in my heart since I've dedicated so much of my career to them. However, I currently have a jumper, and it's been a fun change of pace. It feels like a bit of an escape from the hunter world, and there's less pressure when I step into the jumper ring, which makes it even more enjoyable.

Q What horse has had a particularly special impact on your career?

A Ransom. He's the reason I ended up with Knowingly, who has also had a major impact on my professional career. In a way, they're connected, which has been special because it bridges my junior career with my professional journey. I also had one of my first junior hunters named Whatever—I know, funny name—he was the horse that put me on the map and played a significant role in my early success.

Q If you could give one piece of advice to young riders aspiring to follow in your footsteps, what would it be?

A Be patient. When I was a junior—especially in the beginning—I struggled with the ups and downs of the sport. It can be tough when you hit a low point, and it's easy to feel discouraged. But you must stay patient, keep working through it and trust the process. In the end, you'll come out stronger and be a better rider because of it.





AROUND THE GROUNDS

from the Wellington International Photography Collective





CHAMPIONS GALLERY



Adult Amateur Hunter Grand Champion Hoopla, ridden by Michael Baum.



Isabella Fioretti rode Deja Blue to co-champion of the IDA Development/Horseware Ireland Adult Amateur Hunter 18—35 division.



Park City, co-champion of the IDA Development/Horseware Ireland Adult Amateur Hunter 18—35 division with Devon Corrigan in the irons.



Ever So Often, ridden by Paige Walkenbach, was champion of the 3'6" Small Junior Hunter 16-17.



Along with winning the 1735 BrainJuice U25 Welcome, Surprise—ridden by Tony Stormann— was present



Babylon was presented with the Champion Equine Insurance Hunter Style Award from Laura Fetterman after carrying John French to a win in the 3'6" Performance Hunter Stake during WCHR week.

WEF STANDINGS



MARTHA JOLICOEUR DOUGLAS ELLIMAN



Leading Lady Rider Award

1. Natalie Dean USA – 496 pts
2. Mimi Gochman USA – 327 pts
3. Erynn Ballard CAN – 315 pts
4. Emilie Conter BEL – 306 pts
5. Charlotte Jacobs USA – 272 pts



Natalie Dean accepts the Martha Jolicoeur, Douglas Elliman Leading Lady Rider Award for WEF 6 and stays at the top of the season leaderboard.



PHOTO © SPORTFOT



LEADING INTERNATIONAL RIDER

Presented By Michael & Wendy Smith

1. Natalie Dean USA – 333 pts
2. Ben Maher GBR – 320 pts
3. Luis Fernando Larrazabal VEN – 306 pts
4. Nayel Nassar EGY – 291 pts
5. Carlos Hank Guerreiro MEX – 266.5 pts

HERMÈS SELLIER PARIS

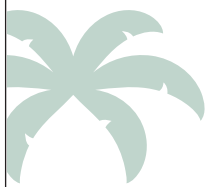


Venezuela's Luis Fernando Larrazabal won the WEF 7 Hermès 1.50m to retain his spot at the top of the season standings.

PHOTO © SPORTFOT

1.50M CHAMPIONSHIP JUMPER SERIES

1. Luis Fernando Larrazabal VEN – 185 pts
2. Nicola Philippaerts BEL – 146 pts
3. Cian O'Connor IRL – 133 pts
4. Spencer Smith USA – 122 pts
5. Mark Bluman COL – 120 pts



WEF STANDINGS



DON LITTLE MASTERS STANDINGS

Jeanne Reid riding Atalante d'Uhart – 112 pts

Lauren Brody riding Nutou – 83 pts

Michael Smith riding Quality Time 4 – 76 pts

Camille Pacheco Cesarski riding Flint T.S. ET – 70 pts

Bonnie Orlovski riding Locato van het Kapelhof – 64 pts

Patricia Hurter riding Wuali Quanti – 64 pts



UNDER 25 GRAND PRIX SERIES

1. Hallie Grimes USA – 247 pts
2. Emily Dehoff USA – 224 pts
3. Tim Brennan IRL – 219.5 pts
4. Isabelle Ehman USA – 195.5 pts
5. Taylor Cawley (USA) – 174 pts



The lead changed hands after Hallie Grimes (USA) raced to a WEF 7 Brain Juice U25 Grand Prix win. PHOTO © SPORTFOT



LEADING HUNTER HORSE & RIDER AWARD STANDINGS

presented by THE IN GATE

AS OF WEF5: 2.16.25

1	SANDORI	GEOFFREY HESSLINK	436 PTS
2	AVENTUS	GEOFFREY HESSLINK	337 PTS
3	TRADEMARK	GEOFFREY HESSLINK	326 PTS
4	FOREVER ROMANCE	SCOTT STEWART	325 PTS
5	CARTER	BRADY MITCHELL	320 PTS

COMPETITION RINGS

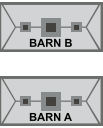
- International Arena
- Mogavero Ring
- DeNemethy Ring
- Rost Ring
- Grand Hunter Ring
- South Ring
- Rings 6 -12

OFFICES & PARKING

- 1 Exhibitor Services
- 2 Administration
- 3 Show Office
- 4 Admin Parking
- 5 VIP Parking
- 6 General Parking
- 7 Stabling / Dever

SHOPPING AREAS

- Bridge Deck Shops
- Farm Stand
- Hunter Hill
- Pony Island
- Ring 6 Vendors
- South Ring Vendors
- Vendor Village
- Tiki Terrace
- The Shops at Int'l Club



SHUTTLE STOPS #

- 1 Main Entrance
- 2 Farm Stand
- 3 Ring 6
- 4 Exhibitor Services
- 5 Vendor Village
- 6 Dever Golf Cart Rentals
- 7 FEI Barns
- 8 South Ring
- 9 South Parking
- 10 Ring 10
- 11 DeNemethy Ring
- 12 International Club
- 14 Grass Lot 5 Parking

LEGEND

- ⊕ Medic
- 🚒 Fire Rescue
- 🚪 Gate Entry
- 🚻 Restrooms
- 🍴 Food Vendors
- 🏧 ATM
- ♿ Handicap Parking
- 🐾 Horse Crossing
- 🚏 Shuttle Stop
- 🚌 Shuttle Route

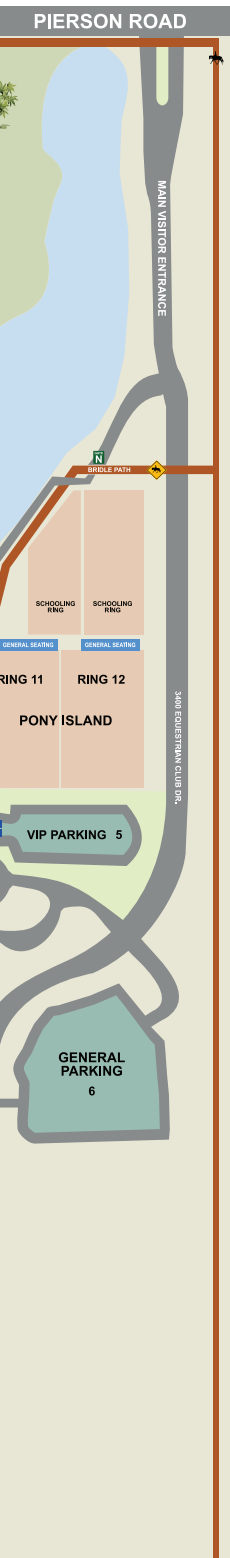


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- KAVAL
- DandyLion (WEF 1-6)
- Equestrian Stockholm (WEF 7-10)
- Julie Keyes Art (WEF 11-12)
- Serenella

BRIDGE DECK AT TIKI TERRACE

- Dada Sport
- Michel McNabb (WEF P-2)
- Helgstrand Jewellery (WEF 3-4)
- Carol Morano Equine Art (WEF 5-6)
- Equisite Elements of Style (WEF 7-12)
- Alexander Academic Access (WEF P-1)
- DELGÉ (WEF 2)
- J Wilder Imports (WEF 3-5)
- The Calvert Collection (WEF 6-10)
- Maya Delorez (WEF 11-12)

THE BARN AT HUNTER HILL

LeMieux

HUNTER HILL

- Lash LaRue (WEF 7-12)
- Ola' Mair Boutique
- Ryde Equestrian (WEF 5-6)
- Vanner House

INTERNATIONAL RING WARM UP

- Prestige Italia
- Equitan
- Bruno Delgrange Maître Sellier
- Barnwalkers
- IDA Development

RING 6

- Antarès Sellier
- Voltaire Design
- THEAULT

OASIS

- Charles Ancona
- La Enovesé Designs
- Devoucoux

VENDOR VILLAGE SOUTHSIDE

- Danny & Ron's Dog Rescue
- Equestrian Team Apparel
- Optic Nirvana
- Fab Finds by Sarah
- JODS
- Sofie's Boutique
- Der Dau
- Human Touch (WEF P- 4)
- Gladiator Equine (WEF 5- 8)
- Shop Cou (WEF 9- 12)
- Equiline
- Turner & Co
- Running Fox
- Kocher Tack Shop
- Tony Hanley Supplements
- Stephex
- CWD
- Tack n Rider
- Personalized Products
- Equine Tack & Nutrition
- CM Hadfields

VENDOR VILLAGE NORTHSIDE

- Loopy's Crepes
- The In Gate
- Ride EquiSafe
- Miki Saddlery
- Hunt LTD
- Parlanti
- Fratelli Fabbri
- EQUIS
- Vogel NYC
- Harry's Lemonade

PONY ISLAND

- Farm Stand
- Silvia's Tacos
- Palm Beach Int'l Academy
- Florida Snow
- Hunter's Landing

THE BARN

- Dandy Products
- FarmVet
- Josey's Laundry
- Anonymous Coffee
- Paddock Paws Veterinary Clinic

RING 9

- Arion Sellier
- Forestier Sellier
- Sportfot
- Muddy Paws Ice Cream
- Nathalie's Café

RING 10

- Ringside Health Clinic
- McGuinn Farms
- Magdalena's Mexican

SOUTH BARN

- Rider's Boutique
- Zest
- KP Concessions



PLACES TO EAT

- Anonymous Coffee.....Barn 4
- Florida SnowPony Island
- Harry's Lemonade.....Vendor Village
- Loopy's Crepes.....Vendor Village
- Magdalena's Mexican ...Ring 10
- Muddy Paws.....Ring 9
- Nathalie's CaféRing 9
- Oasis Café.....Vendor Village
- BrainJuice Tiki HutInternational Arena
- Toasties.....Vendor Row
- Silvia's Tacos.....Pony Island
- KP ConcessionsSouth Barns



MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS:

Supporting Mental Wellness Across All Walks of Life

While mental health issues are common in all walks of life, one group that is often overlooked are athletes, especially those in the equestrian community. Recent studies have highlighted the staggering prevalence of mental health issues across the general population, but athletes, especially those at a competitive level, face unique stressors that can amplify these challenges. The pressures of competition, high expectations, and the demanding nature for equestrians can have significant mental health impacts, yet they are too

often brushed aside. It is important that we take the time to not only raise awareness but also to actively support one another by checking in and seeking the help we need.

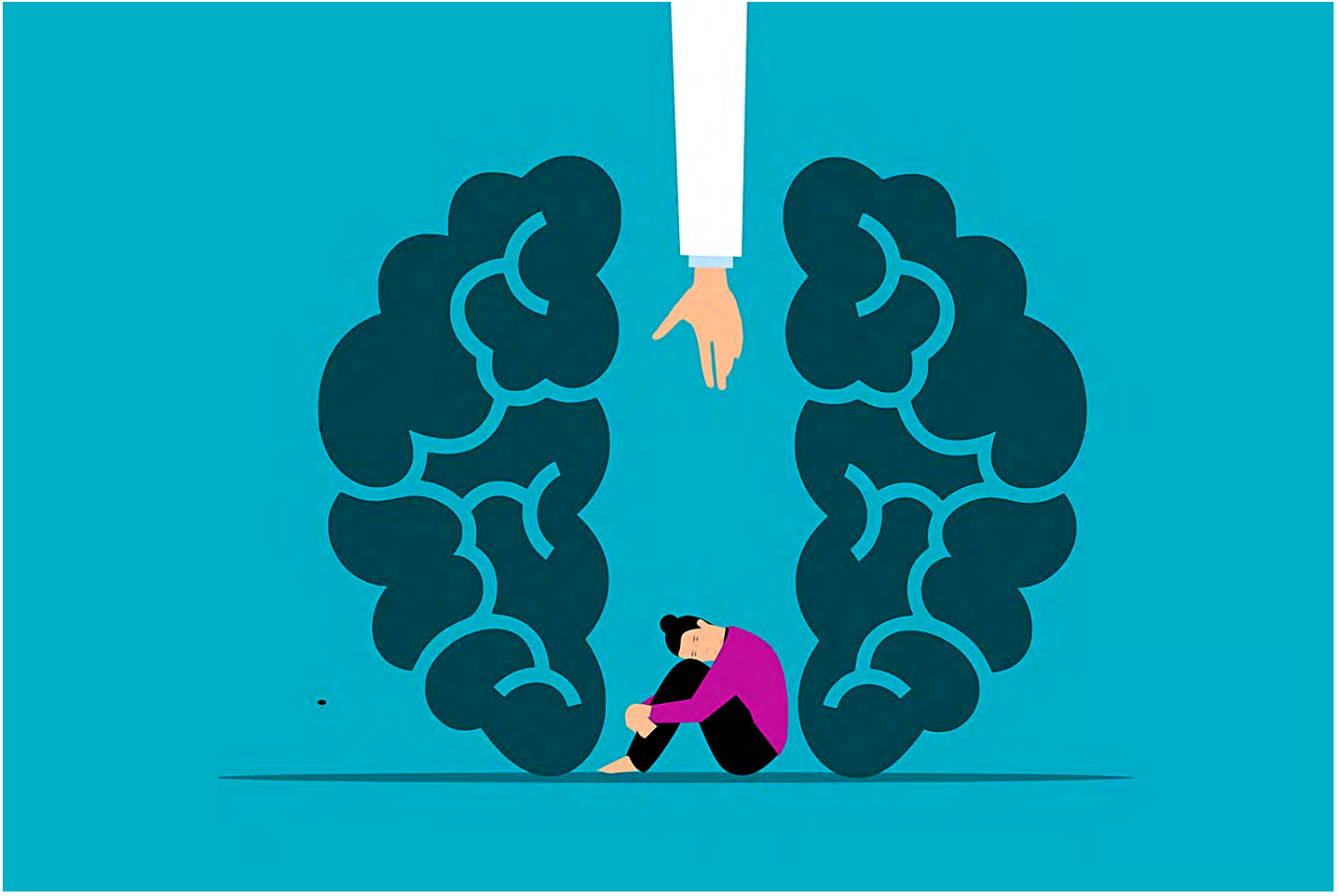
Equestrians, who work closely with horses and are required to maintain intense focus while managing high-risk situations, are especially vulnerable to these pressures. Riders, trainers, grooms, and stable staff often juggle multiple roles, and the physical and mental demands can be overwhelming.

According to the *National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH)*, approximately 1

in 5 adults in the United States experience a mental health disorder each year, with anxiety, depression, and attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) being among the most common.

Depression affects roughly 7.8% of the adult U.S. population, but athletes have been shown to experience depression at rates between 10% to 30%.

Anxiety disorders affect about 18% of adults in the general population. Studies suggest that up to 34% of elite athletes experience anxiety symptoms severe enough to impact performance. ADHD is also



prevalent in the U.S., affecting about 4.4% of adults and 5.8% of children.

One of the most important steps in maintaining mental wellness is initiating an open dialogue about your mental health with your primary care physician or mental health professional. Too often, athletes, including those in the equestrian world, do not address their mental health concerns due to the stigma that surrounds

seeking help, or the fear of appearing “weak” in a highly competitive environment. However, early intervention can make a significant difference in preventing a mild condition from becoming a more serious issue.

Primary care physicians are an excellent first point of contact when it comes to mental health. They can identify early symptoms

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I scream for PONY ISLAND ICE CREAM!

Finally Farm's team of groomers are all involved when it comes to the preparation for WCHR week at Wellington International. That is especially true for the \$150,000 Peter Wetherill Palm Beach Hunter Spectacular, which produced a win for Liza Towell Boyd and Ondine D'Orleans. The groomers award was also shared. "We share it since we all work as a team," said Olivia Murray, who has a series of job titles including rider, assistant manager and assistant trainer. She is joined on the team by Randi Button, Gavino Ochoa, Carlos Manzon, Luis Silva and two sets of brothers; Ramon and Rojelio Costilla, and Marciano and Herminio Villalon.

Saturday night preparation in the warmup ring sent off good vibes for the team. "Ondine D'Orleans did everything that we expected and more. We could tell that she really wanted to win," Murray said. "She can be sassy in the schooling ring sometimes which is normal for her. But she really didn't show much sass. She was trying her little heart out in the schooling ring and we had a really good feeling."

IT TAKES A TEAM

for Palm Beach Hunter Spectacular Winner Ondine D'Orleans

This article is part of a collaboration between HorseGrooms, Wellington International & Paper Horse Media.

By Sarah Eakin



Marciano Villalon and Ramon Costilla with Ondine D'Orleans during 'Saturday Night Lights.'

To keep the focus, Boyd talks to Ondine—not just a little, but the whole time they are showing, giving her a blow by blow account of what is coming up. “It is so that she pays attention to Liza instead of looking at the people watching her,” said Murray. Liza recites the whole course at the Ingate and then talks her through each jump “Liza really believes she listens to her!”

Once the show is over, Ondine's main focus is to get back to the barn and her stall where an ever-present haynet waits. “If it's not there, she has a little meltdown,” said Olivia, while citing that preferably they would do away with the haynet, to avoid stress in the

back and neck. “She's all about the winner's circle but then she wants to get back to the barn and have her own space, all she wants is food. And whether she eats from it or not, the haynet has to be there so that she has food at all times.”

Ondine, an 11-year-old Belgian Warmblood mare owned by Finally Farms and Neill Sites, was bred in Florida by Monique Keitz. Ahead of her ‘Saturday Night Lights’ victory, she and Boyd were reserve champions in the Equine Tack & Nutritionals 3'9" Green Hunter division during the week. “She is different every day,” said Murray. “Because she is a chestnut

mare, Liza likes to say it's Ondine's world and we're just living in it.”

When Ondine arrived, the team had to learn to understand her and accept that the mare's quirks were

something to be recognized rather than corrected.

“We had to learn that her quirks are what makes her good and not something to be worried about,” continued Murray.

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THE BRAINJUICE TIKI HUT

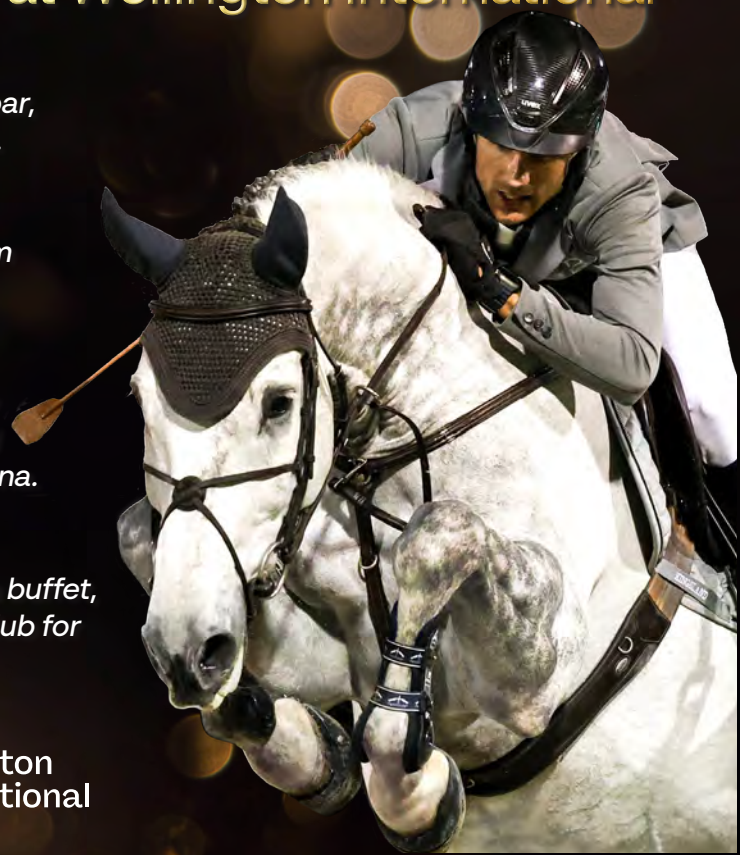
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International



WEEK 7 of WEF

PRESENTED BY

LUGANO

OVAL STIRRUP
NECKLACE
22.45 CTS DIAMONDS

Lugano is proud to sponsor Week 7 of the Winter Equestrian Festival, a premier event celebrating the elegance, athleticism, and artistry of the equine world. As long-time supporters of the sport, we are honored to continue our involvement each year.

Known for our bespoke wearable works of art, Lugano's equestrian-inspired jewelry reflects the sport's rich heritage. Each piece is meticulously crafted to embody sophistication, striking a balance between boldness and timeless elegance.

We invite you to explore our exclusive offerings at the Lugano lounge at The Shops at the International Club, or at one of our other locations, including Newport Beach, Aspen, Palm Beach, Ocala, Houston, Washington, D.C., and London.

For more information, please contact Melissa Brandes, Ocala Salon Director & VP, Global Equestrian Sales at melissa@luganodiamonds.com.

Georgina Bloomberg,
Equestrian & Philanthropist

Discover more at
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