



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 5 • FEBRUARY 5, 2025



GROOM FEATURE:
SOFIE KARLSON

1/ST: CONNECTING
THOROUGHBRED RACING
& EQUESTRIAN SPORT

GREAT CHARITY CHALLENGE
DISTRIBUTES \$2.3 MILLION



EQUESTRIANS CREATE POSITIVE CHANGE

for Palm Beach County Non-Profit Organizations

The Arc of Palm Beach County Earns \$100,000 Top Prize

In its 16th year, the Great Charity Challenge sponsored by Fidelity Investments® (GCC) continues to shine as an inspiring example of how sporting events can serve as a powerful vehicle for positive change. Thanks to the unwavering generosity and support of sponsors and donors, this year's event raised \$2.3 million, benefitting 44 non-profits and 12 Wellington schools for a grand total of 56 organizations.

"We are incredibly fortunate to have such a strong and supportive network of partners, and we are excited to continue growing with them to create even more meaningful change in the years to come," comments Anne Caroline Valtin, GCC Executive Director. "Thank you to every donor and sponsor for your steadfast support—you are truly the reason the Great Charity Challenge keeps getting bigger and better, and for that, we are endlessly grateful."



PHOTO © SPORTFOT

As the competition unfolded, this year's Global Music theme added a unique flair with teams donning costumes inspired by musical traditions from around the globe, infusing

the event with vibrant energy and creativity. The funds raised through the GCC will go on to provide vital resources for these organizations, addressing a wide range of community

needs, from education and healthcare to animal welfare and homelessness.

"The Great Charity Challenge is a huge team effort, and the team at Wellington International generously absorbs all the administrative costs, so 100% of the funds raised go right into our community, to organizations that do the most critical work," said Paige Bellissimo Nuñez,

Co-Founder of the Great Charity Challenge. "Thank you to all the organizations here and to Wellington International and Anne Caroline. Her passion and dedication to this event is really what makes it happen year after year."

Wellington Mayor Michael Napoleone celebrated a successful and impactful



PHOTO © CASSIDY KLEIN

evening, saying, "You saw the place packed tonight. The best part of this evening is, not only do we raise so much money for charity, but we bring the entire community out for an event. It's opening the door to new people coming out and seeing what the equestrian community is all about. This is the crown jewel of Wellington and it's something we're so proud of."

The winning team of Tony Stormann's, Taylor Cawley and Eloise Eisner riders, sponsored by Louisburg Farm and Portfolio Horses earned The Arc of Palm Beach County the top prize of \$100,000 in a winning time of 88.781 seconds. The team's musically inspired costume was a nod to the early 90s British girl group, The Spice Girls.

The Arc of Palm Beach County is dedicated to changing the conversation around disabilities by defying definitions, inspiring possibilities and improving the lives of the people they serve, their families and our community.

"It's an absolute honor to be a part of the Great Charity Challenge; we are floored by the generosity of this community," said Charlotte Gill, Chief Advancement

Officer for The Arc of Palm Beach County. "This is the most fun event that we get to experience, and we are grateful to be the winners.

"The funds that we've won tonight are going to go to our micro enterprises," continued Gill. "Our clients love receiving a paycheck just like anybody else, and they work for that paycheck. We have many skilled clients who will be benefiting from the funds received tonight."

The night's festivities didn't stop there—over 20 additional

grants were distributed to worthy non-profits, extending the event's impact far beyond the competition. As the event continues to grow, the partnership between sponsors, volunteers, and the equestrian community promises to bring even more positive change to Palm Beach County in the years to come.

"Fidelity Investments is committed to making a difference in the communities where we work and live and are proud to be the presenting sponsor of the Winter Equestrian Festival and the 16th edition of the Great Charity Challenge. To date this important event distributed over \$21.7 Million to more than 339 charities making a difference in the Palm Beach community," said Matthew Gibson, Head of Southeast Region.

More information on the competition and all funds distributed through the 2025 GCC are available at www.greatcharitychallenge.com.



PHOTO © CASSIDY KLEIN



1/ST:

Connecting Thoroughbred Racing and Equestrian Sport



Preakness 147 at Pimlico Race Course

PHOTO: DEEPSLEEP STUDIO

1/ST is best known as North America's leading Thoroughbred racing, entertainment and wagering company. Holding some of the most recognized brands in the industry, 1/ST is a known innovator elevating the standards of excellence in equine sport.

Now 1/ST is leveraging its experience, reputation and influence to introduce a connected premier racing series while



Nicole Walker and Belinda Stronach

© NATHALIE GORDON

simultaneously developing 1/ST Equestrian Partnerships to establish the company as a world-class showjumping partner and host.

"We believe that the connection between Thoroughbred racing and equestrian events is the commitment to excellence in sportsmanship and the passion both industries, participants and audiences share for horses, riders

and their care," said Nicole Walker, Vice President, The Stronach Group and professional equestrian. "There is an amazing opportunity to introduce new audiences for the benefit of both disciplines – 1/ST is very proud to do so!"

Nicole Walker in collaboration with her mother, Belinda Stronach, Chairman, CEO and President, The Stronach Group and Chairman and CEO, 1/ST, are championing the development of 1/ST Equestrian Partnerships.

From January to May, racing and showjumping link with the 1/ST RACING Tour. The 1/ST RACING Tour is a connected series



Cian O'Connor and Fancy de Kergane competing at WEF 2024

© SPORTFOT

providing fans with over sixty races, including elite Triple Crown prep races, exciting coast-to-coast wagers and incentive opportunities for owners and trainers from 1/ST's three iconic venues, Gulfstream Park, Santa Anita Park and The Maryland Jockey Club. The 1/ST RACING Tour will showcase 1/ST Equestrian Partnerships by highlighting showjumping events to thousands of fans on race days and will engage equestrian media and influencers with events designed for them to experience the thrill of a day at the races.

The 1/ST RACING Tour kicks off with the Pegasus World Cup at Gulfstream Park on January 25. Established in 2017, the Pegasus World Cup is the premier luxury and lifestyle event on the racing calendar attended by A-list celebrities, fashion icons, influencers, passionate fans and some of the best horses and riders in Thoroughbred racing. Broadcast live on NBC and distributed globally, the Pegasus World Cup is the sport's most iconic event of the year. Featuring the Pegasus World Cup Invitational (GI) and the Pegasus World Cup Turf Invitational (GI), horse racing's hottest party showcases premium dining experiences, thrilling trackside ticket options and VIP luxury tables and suites.

1/ST is proud to be part of the Wellington International



Winter Equestrian Festival, as the Official Title sponsor of the CSI2* WEF week 5 from February 5 – 9, featuring 3 classes, one classic and culminating with the \$50,000 1/ST CSI2* Grand Prix. During the week, live Thoroughbred racing from Gulfstream Park and Santa Anita Park will be simulcast in WEF's Tiki Bar and, in turn, WEF week 5 events will be broadcast between live races at both venues. 1/ST representatives will be on site at WEF as part of the vendor village to engage one-on-one with the WEF crowd.

On May 16 and 17, Preakness 150 celebrations return to Pimlico Race Course in Baltimore with a weekend of world-class racing, entertainment and hospitality. The 150th Preakness Stakes (GI), the middle jewel of the Triple Crown, will feature a \$2 million purse and the presentation of the Tiffany & Co. Woodlawn Vase – the most valuable trophy in sports. The winner of the 150th Preakness Stakes will take their place in history amongst the sports' most recognized champions, including Secretariat, American Pharoah and Justify.

In the fall, The California Crown, Los Angeles' newest entertainment event, setting the stage for a California tradition at the intersection of sports, entertainment and luxury lifestyle, will excite West Coast racing fans for the second year. The California Crown (GI) namesake race features a \$1 million purse and the \$750,000 California Crown John Henry Turf Championship (GI) and the \$750,000 California Crown Eddie D. Stakes (GII) along with live trackside performances and unique hospitality and culinary experiences.

In November, showjumping makes its way back to Santa Anita Park for two-weeks of excellence, including the \$400,000 Longines FEI Jumping World Cup™ Los Angeles CSI5*-W qualifying event presented by Lugano Diamonds. The infield at Santa Anita Park has been transformed into a premier showjumping venue featuring the installation of two premier horse show arenas, two schooling areas, 400 dedicated stalls, enhanced security, and a grazing area grown especially for equine athletes.

1/ST operates nearly 500 race days offering the opportunity to experience a day at the races year-round. For more information on 1/ST's marquee events or to book your premium race day experience on any day, at any one of 1/ST's iconic venues, please contact Experiences@1st.com.

Racing on California Crown Day at Santa Anita Park



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With a focus on innovating Thoroughbred racing for the next generation and a dedication to the care and safety of horses and riders, the expansion and investment into 1/ST Equestrian Partnerships represents 1/ST's commitment to enhancing the global reach of equine sport through strategic partnerships and curated event and entertainment offerings.

For more information on 1/ST, visit www.1st.com or follow @1ST_racing on X or @1stracing on Instagram and Facebook.

Calvin Harris at 2024 Pegasus World Cup

© DEEPSLEEP STUDIO



TEAM "FORE-REAL" IS THE REAL DEAL

In BrainJuice U25 Grand Prix Series Team Event

It was a real-deal victory for Team "Fore-Real" during WEF 4 in the \$25,000 BrainJuice U25 Grand Prix Series Team Event, a pinnacle event for young show jumpers at Wellington International. Emilie Conter, age 24, Tony Stormanns, age 17, Zayna Rizvi, age 19, and Ansgar Holtgers, Jr., age 19, led by chef d'équipe Helena Stormanns, put in a stellar performance across two rounds and a jump-off for the top of the podium.

Team "Run Ferder Run", consisting of Emily Dehoff, Karime Perez Nunez, Alexander Alston, and Jake Endicott, had pole position after round one, with a zero score. As the last to go, Endicott returned to try to seal the deal with a clear round, however one rail down with Game Over put the team into the third-place position.

"Fore-Real" jumped to two time faults in the second and was combined with their score of zero in round one to put them in a dead-heat with Team Travers, made up of Carlee McCutcheon, Cassidy Rein, Sterling Malnik, and Nina Mallevaey. With one

time fault from each round, a jump-off between Mallevaey and Holtgers, Jr. would determine the win.

Mallevaey kickstarted jump-off action aboard My Clementine, bringing down two rails on her way. Holtgers, Jr., brought it home with Chaploon on a clear effort in the jump-off, meaning victory for "Fore-Real."

Chef d'équipe Stormanns was immensely proud of her team, which included her son, Tony. Every rider learned from the experience, but her biggest lesson was that clear rounds are crucial.

"On paper there seemed to be a lot of clear rounds, but in the end, no team jumped clear, and it's always the way in Nations Cups and championships," she elaborated. "People get excited and think they have to go fast but you need to jump clear rounds. It was a case of being careful, trying to stay clear and not losing your head."

Helena also knew the amount of pressure not only on each rider but especially put on Holtgers, Jr. when he had to jump off for the win.

"Every jump is pressure," she said. "That's the way it

is. We would have loved him even if he hadn't won it, but it works our way sometimes. And the draw made a big difference; the fact that Nina had to go first, that was tough. Your risk is then much bigger—you don't usually win with bad luck."

Holtgers, Jr. enjoyed the pressure and the entire team experience. "I think it adds a great pressure which we don't get a lot," he remarked. "We should get that more often because it sets us up for the bigger stuff. Tony and I both had a time fault, which was not looking so good



PHOTO © ANGRY DOG



PHOTO © ASHLEY NEUHOFF

but then we also had the chance to come back and do a jump-off and come out on top."

Conter has a great deal of experience under her belt but enjoyed the camaraderie the team event brought Friday as she eyes bigger events in the future.

"I think it's great for the riders here to already get a feel of the Nations Cup pressure; it's super different," she shared. "It's good preparation for what's to come. My horse is quite speedy, so I had to keep moving in his rhythm and keep him to the right and keep the rails up. He was jumping better every round."

Rizvi has jumped a Senior Nations Cup before, so the team environment was not new to her, however, working with a new team always provides a new experience.

"In any class I try to do my

best, so I ride it how I'd ride anything," Rizvi shared about her approach. "But these team events are special for us young riders to get used to it. Even if we've already jumped a Nations Cup, it's still always a good experience to go in there."

Tony Stormanns is still quite young, even on the U25 circuit, so he's squeezing everything out of each opportunity to become a better rider and teammate.

"I think for young riders like me, who are just getting into the U25 tour, a team competition like this is pretty exciting," he shared. "Most of the time you're by yourself and then you come down here and you get to ride with your friends, with a team."

As for the team name, it came as a result of ChatGPT. The four teammates were intended to be "Four-Real" but when the team name was due, it accidentally

turned into "Fore-Real" due to a spelling mistake. The error proved to be lucky, however, as they went on

to share a podium with Nick Skelton, chef d'équipe of Team Travers—an accolade not many riders can boast.

The Countdown to Valentine's Day is On—
Shop Early for Your Sweetheart!

sip & shop

FEBRUARY 8
6:00–7:00 P.M.

INTERNATIONAL CLUB LOBBY

Enjoy passed hors d'oeuvres
& cocktails prior to the
\$385,000 Fidelity Investments®
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OPEN TO THE PUBLIC



AROUND THE GROUNDS

from the Wellington International Photography Collective



PHOTO © QUINN SAUNDERS



PHOTO © ASHLEY NEUHOF



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PHOTO © ES EQUINE PHOTOGRAPHY



PHOTO © NICOLE SCHULTZ



PHOTO © ES EQUINE PHOTOGRAPHY

SOFIE KARLSON

On Ten Years of Grooming for Christian Kukuk

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

By Sarah Eakin

Sofie Karlson, 29, is from Sweden and has worked for Olympic Champion Christian Kukuk for 10 years. Kukuk and his Olympic mount, the 15-year-old Westphalian gelding Checker 47, won the \$215,000 CSI4* NetJets Grand Prix during 'Saturday Night Lights' of WEF 3 with Sofie on hand as groom.

What led to your job working with Christian Kukuk?

When I started working for Christian he was riding in two-stars and the majority were national shows. It's not like where we are today. I did not have so much experience when I started, and I was not really planning to work there for ten years. I just wanted to work with horses, and it happened through contacts that I had. I thought it was a huge opportunity.

How would you describe Checker 47's personality?

He has quite a personality but he's very shy with new people, especially when it comes to new men. He prefers people that he knows, and when he's secure he's very open to everything. As soon as he knows people he's quite a clown. He eats everything from candy to carrots to chips; whatever comes along.

How did Checker 47 handle his 'Saturday Night Lights' victory?

This time he was very relaxed [in the walk up to the ring]. Normally our horses—when they get braided and things like



this—they know what's coming, especially a horse that has been around as long as Checker has. This week he was very relaxed.

What do you love most about your job?

I wouldn't say one specific thing. It's probably a mix of everything. It's tough as we must put the rest of our life on hold; there is no private life. But it makes it all worth it when you can work with horses, and you get to meet so many people, and you get to travel and see things that many people don't get to see. To a non-horse person, they probably think we just muck stalls but there's so much more with the blacksmith, traveling, organizing, working with vets. You learn to do so much with so many different parts of the business. You also make friends from everywhere—all kinds of backgrounds and countries.

What advice would you give to somebody wanting to work as a groom at the top level of the sport?

Be eager to learn new things from other people. And then, work hard for it. But also, don't let it get into your head and take everything on your shoulders when things go wrong. Don't take everything personally.

From Hoof Care to Alligators: Your Must-Have Wellington Handbook

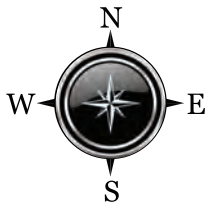
Wellington's unique climate brings both opportunity and challenge for equestrians, and *The HorseGrooms Guide to Wellington* is the perfect resource to navigate it all. From expert-backed insights on hoof care, managing skin issues like summer sores, and keeping horses comfortable in the humidity, to must-know tips for grooms, riders, and

horse owners alike, this guide, developed by our media partner HorseGrooms, is packed with valuable knowledge for grooms, trainers, and horse owners.

It also offers great recommendations for affordable days off—whether you're looking for a quiet beach, a fun night out, or are from another country and just figuring out

how to handle traffic (or alligators, because yes, Florida wildlife gets a mention too). Available now for \$6.99—a must-have for every equestrian in Wellington!

Download the *HorseGrooms Guide to Wellington* in the HorseGrooms Shop at HorseGrooms.com.

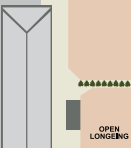


14440 PIERSON ROAD

EXHIBITOR ENTRANCE



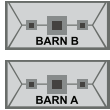
dever
GOLF CART
MAINTENANCE



TENT A
LAUNDRY
OPEN LONGEVING

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

LEGEND

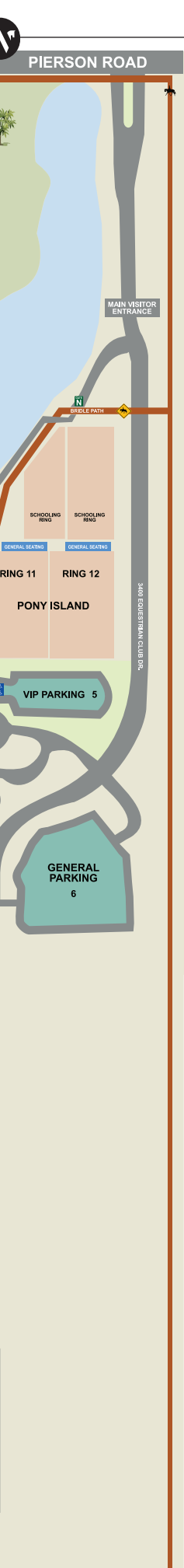
- Medic
- Fire Rescue
- Gate Entry
- Restrooms
- Food Vendors
- ATM
- Handicap Parking
- Horse Crossing
- Shuttle Stop
- Shuttle Route



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FUTURE EXPANSION OF SHOW GROUNDS



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Lugano
Kiton
NetJets Business Centre
Weatherly Stroh Artist
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TIKI TERRACE

WEF Store
Hermès
Karina Brez Jewelry
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

Ola' Mair Boutique
Vanner House
UNIQ. Jewelry (WEF P-4)
Ryde Equestrian (WEF 5-6)

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
Best Islands Kitchen
Alorian Saddlery



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
ToastiesVendor Row
Silvia's Tacos.....Pony Island



PHOTO © CASSIDY KLEIN

DAMAS DE TANNERRE AND EMILY WILLIAMS BEST THE REST

In \$25,000 USHJA International Hunter Derby

PRESENTED BY BLUCREEQ SPIRITS

Damas de Tannerre didn't have experience on his side in the \$25,000 USHJA International Hunter Derby, presented by BluCreeq Spirits, but that didn't stop him from taking the top spot.

With Emily Williams aboard, Autumn Janesky's 12-year-old Selle Français gelding jumped to the win during WEF 4.

"That's actually the first derby I've ever done with

him," said Williams, who hails from North Salem, NY. "This was his first shot, and he rose right to the occasion. I couldn't be happier with him."

Scores of 91 for the classic



portion and 94.25 for the handy portion of the single-round "hunter & go" class put Williams and "Dan" into a promising position a little over halfway through the order. With some competitive pairs still to come, they ended up holding the lead and claiming victory with their 185.25 total.

"I've had the pleasure of getting to catch ride him over the past year and I started having him in my program and working with him full time since November," Williams elaborated on her partnership with Dan. "We've taken our time rebuilding and getting to know each other. I try to do

what's best for the horse and we honestly haven't shown him much."

The decision was made just last week to enter, knowing the horse was meant for a stage like this.

"I jumped him one class a little bigger Wednesday, then Autumn did him in the adult hunters Thursday and Friday," Williams said of the horse's preparation for derby day. "He literally came from the adult hunter ring over here and jumped around with me. He's not a normal animal; he's so good."

While his looks set him apart, Williams believes what truly makes Dan special is

his desire to be a competitor. "He's so scopey, he has so much personality, but he gets into it," she shared. "The bigger the venue, the bigger the jump, and the handier, [the more] he thrives on it. He's one of those horses that is so fun to ride because he's just as into it as you are. If you give 100 percent, he gives 110."

Williams also had a little extra fuel to her fire as she rode four very competitive horses in the class. With each round prior not feeling quite perfect, she knew she wanted to lay it down with Damas de Tannerre.

"I was lucky to get to ride a few other horses, all lovely

horses that I don't know quite as well as I know Dan," she said of her day in the International Arena. "They were all good, but we had little mistakes and I am competitive, so by the time I was on Dan I was digging deep and had the luxury of knowing him well. I knew as long as I didn't make a mistake he'd give me his all and he did."

Liza Boyd took second place aboard MTM Crossed My Mind, owned by Addy Grace Anderson, with a total score of 184. Jimmy Torano and Laskano, owned by Isalou, Inc., were third with a score of 183.25, including the highest handy round score of 95.



PHOTO © CASSIDY KLEIN



WEF Sport Horse Auction

featuring
VDL Stud

// AUCTION

Thursday
February 27, 2025

Auction of talented 5, 6, 7, and 8-year-old showjumpers during WEF week 8

// PRESENTATION

Tuesday
February 18, 2025

LIVE, PHONE & ONLINE BIDDING!

www.wefsporthorseauction.com



WEF STANDINGS



MARTHA JOLICOEUR DOUGLAS ELLIMAN



Leading Lady Rider Award

- Natalie Dean USA – 278 pts
- Emilie Conter BEL – 242 pts
- Jessica Mendoza GBR – 222 pts
- Erynn Ballard CAN – 185 pts
- Lillie Keenan USA – 168 pts



PHOTO © SPORTFOT

Ireland's Naimh McEvoy accepts the Martha Jolicoeur, Douglas Elliman Leading Lady Rider Award for WEF 4 from Danielle Miranda and Jessica Perez.



LEADING INTERNATIONAL RIDER

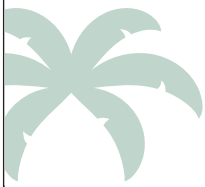
Presented By Michael & Wendy Smith

- Nayel Nassar EGY – 276 pts
- Luis Fernando Larrazabal VEN – 242 pts
- Richard Vogel GER – 229 pts
- Carlos Hank Guerreio MEX – 210.5 pts
- Spencer Smith USA – 188 pts

HERMÈS SELLIER PARIS

1.50M CHAMPIONSHIP JUMPER SERIES

- Luis Fernando Larrazabal VEN – 138 pts
- Cian O'Connor IRL – 133 pts
- Peter Lutz USA – 115 pts
- Nicola Philippaerts BEL – 109 pts
- Vanessa Hood USA – 92 pts



WEF STANDINGS



PHOTO © SPORTFOT



UNDER 25 GRAND PRIX SERIES

- Nina Mallevaey FRA – 159.5 pts
- Emily Dehoff USA – 156 pts
- Hallie Grimes USA – 152 pts
- Tim Brennan IRL – 134.5 pts
- Millan Morssinkhof NED – 131 pts

Nina Mallevaey pictured riding My Clementine, leads the BrainJuice Under 25 Grand Prix Series standings after two weeks of U25 competition.



PHOTO © SPORTFOT



DON LITTLE MASTERS STANDINGS

- Camille Pacheco Cesarski riding Flint T.S. ET – 70 pts
- Lauren Brody riding Nutou – 65 pts
- Bonnie Orlowski riding Locato van het Kapelhof – 64 pts
- Patricia Hurter riding Wuali Quanti – 64 pts
- Michael Smith riding Quality Time 4 – 59 pts

Camille Pacheco Cesarski riding Flint T.S. ET currently leads Don Little Masters jumpers presented by Rushy Marsh Farm division standings.

GROOMS:

Recognizing and Creating Social Development

By Helen Babington-Smith

Though only two figures appear together in the competition arena, the athletic endeavors of our equestrian heroes are the result of the efforts of the vets, farriers, trainers and especially the grooms who work so closely with horses and riders on a daily basis.

Equestrianism is a team sport at its heart – and for far too long the grooms' role in that team was widely underestimated.

The groom is not 'just' a groom. Their first role is to know their horses inside and out and to care for their health and happiness. But they are also logistics managers, drivers, amateur sports psychologists, assistant trainers... the list continues.

For grooms, the priority is always their horses' welfare – and often their riders' too. They work tirelessly to ensure their athletes are supported to be successful in competition; and to ensure their horses are loved and cared for whatever the outcome.

It is the grooms who are awake first in the morning, and who work late into the night, who carry their riders' hopes and fears alongside their own, and often put their own interests to one side.



PHOTO © CASSIDY KLEIN

"I have no doubt I couldn't have my horses in their best form without my grooms. It takes a team to have the horses not only ready for competition but for the day-to-day upkeep and care it takes to keep top horses operating at their peak!" says 5* Show Jumper Grant Seger.

"I'm very sentimental about my horses and anyone involved with horses knows that it begins and ends with the grooms. I was so happy to see the new additions of the groom title recognition on streaming platforms/start lists alongside rider and owner in top-level competition around

the world.

"My grooms are some of my closest friends and most important people in my own life and they deserve every ounce of credit or attention that I ever receive, if not more."

Public recognition like this is becoming more common, not only from riders, but from



shows, where grooms are receiving generous monetary prizes, such as at Wellington International where the Grand Prix winning groom each week receives a \$500 prize, sponsored by Double H Farm.

Unfortunately, it is not yet the norm for grooms to be confident of a positive working environment; there are still many stories of poor employment practices and substandard working conditions, which contributes to a reported rise in grooms leaving the horse industry.

Creating Widespread Change

In 2022 the FEI supported the founding of the International Grooms Association (IGA) – an historic moment, as for the first time grooms were given a formal voice to be heard at the highest levels of horse sport.

The IGA works in collaboration with the FEI and several shows, including Wellington International, to shine a light on the role of the grooms, and to bring positive development where it is needed.

This year, the IGA has strengthened the existing Board further, welcoming John Madden as Chair, to help guide this mission.

On his appointment, John said “I started in this industry as a groom. I loved the horses and I loved the challenge of our sport, which led me to build my whole future and business around them both.

It was one of my original goals in my own business to

turn grooming from a “job” into a professional career.

I feel strongly that this sport wouldn't exist without the hard work and diligent care from the grooms and that shouldn't be overlooked.

The grooms deserve a strong organization like the IGA looking out for their best interests.”

The Vision

The vision of the IGA is to see grooms regarded and treated as the true professionals that they are. The equestrian industry is facing an increasing challenge in finding and retaining good staff.

It is vital that we work together to make the

necessary changes within the industry to better enable the grooms to care for their horses and support their riders.

By seeking greater recognition for the role grooms play, the IGA strives to promote excellence in the profession, highlighting the importance of ongoing education and a clear career path for grooms from apprentices to managers.

IGA Rep and groom to Martin Fuchs, Sean Vard, said of the IGA, “I believe the work of the IGA is crucial to our sport in developing a more positive way towards fairer conditions for grooms and stable staff.

“Hopefully with the improvements being made, it will encourage more people to

choose this as a career option and enjoy the benefits of working with these incredible animals across the globe.”

Positive Development

Together we are creating a more positive future for the grooms who support the sport today, and the ones who will follow them.

This development will benefit not only the grooms themselves, but horse sport as a whole.

The IGA

The IGA is here to support these exceptional people in their indispensable role.

To learn more, or to support the IGA visit www.internationalgrooms.org

CHAMPIONS GALLERY



Alice Goodwin rode Adler to a championship title in the Small Junior Hunter 15 & Under division.



Along with winning the Griffis Residential CSI2 1.45m Qualifier, Magnolia—ridden by Isabelle Ehman and owned by Double E, LLC—was awarded the WEF 4 Champion Equine Insurance Jumper Style Award by Laura Fetterman.*



Emily William's Sea Smoke claimed the Champion Equine Insurance Hunter Style Award from Laura Fetterman after winning the Almased 3' Green Hunter Stake and taking champion of the division.



Autumn Janesky guided her own Appointed to the top tri-color in the IDA Development Adult Amateur Hunter 18-35 division Sec. A.

Owner Robin Parsky Reflects on Show Jumpers PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

By Sarah Eakin

California's Robin Parsky announced her plan for life at a very early age. "I was only 10 years old when I made that determination," she recalled. "My father wanted me to have racehorses with him and I said: 'I don't like racehorses; I want jumping horses. I want my horses to be in the Olympics'. My parents couldn't believe that I was saying that. So that's how it started in California many years ago."

Parsky began riding at six years old and competed as a junior show jumper before pursuing her childhood announcement to her parents. She began to fulfill her dream of owning show jumpers at Buena Vista Farms in Rancho Santa Fe, which she founded in 1992. From there she rode horses herself as an amateur and began to support top show jumping athletes. "It was a great and wonderful life," she said.

The first show jumper she owned horses for was the USA's Anne Kursinski as part owner of Eros, an Australian-bred Thoroughbred. Parsky's Olympic dreams came true when Kursinski and Eros competed at the 1996 Atlanta Olympics and claimed team silver for the U.S.

As a current owner of no fewer than eight horses



PHOTO © SARAH EAKIN

competing at top level, Parsky has plenty to keep up with at the Winter Equestrian Festival this year. World no. 1 show jumping athlete, Sweden's Henrik von Eckermann, rides two of Parsky's horses. One of which is Minute Man, an 11-year-old Belgian Warmblood stallion of which Parsky is majority owner. Von Eckermann has already given Parsky a high profile win on the grass derby field with Glamour Girl in the Dodd Technologies CSI 3* 1.45m as well as a victory in the Adequan® WEF Challenge Cup Round Three. Parsky purchased the horse and—being a friend of Henrik's wife Janika—she offered the

mare to Janika and Henrik some five years ago.

Glamour Girl's breeding ticked one of Parsky's favorite boxes when she bought her—the fact that she is by Zirocco Blue. "I love Zirocco Blues," she said of the 14-year-old bay Dutch Sport Horse mare. She also bought Jet Blue, sired by the same stallion and ridden by USA's Carly Anthony, who also has another of Parsky's horses, Heavenly W, in her string.

Glamour Girl and von Eckermann hit it off from the start. "He lets her go. They are a perfect pair. They have been that way from the beginning," said Parsky. "She has a forward ride, and she's

got speed. She doesn't like to go slow; she goes with him and he goes with her.

"That horse has won many five-star classes—we think maybe over 30. Not many horses can do that. Henrik told me once, 'you know, to have a horse like this is an absolute dream, because she's so consistent.'"

Parsky looks for the horses herself or works with the riders on finding them. "That's why I go to so many horse shows because you can't learn if you don't go. I'm always a little bit 'shopping'. I think right now I'm very comfortable with the group that I have. They run the gamut."

Parsky also has a 12-year-old Oldenburg mare, First Lady, competing successfully with six-time U.S. Olympian Mclain Ward. But it is not just the top level horses that Parsky is excited about. Parsky owned Gazelle, who achieved great things with USA's Kent Farrington. The Belgian Warmblood mare grossed over \$4 million in prize money and won nearly all the top five-star grands prix in the world, including the Rolex Grand Prix of Aachen. At WEF this year, competing as a 7-year-old is Gazelle's grandson, which Parsky bought as an embryo. Anthony has the ride aboard

B Rockabilly Z who made his first show debut on U.S. soil this week, bringing home a blue ribbon clear round.

In Holland, two more potential stars are waiting in the wings—foals out of Blue Angel, an Anglo-European mare that Parsky owned and Kent rode to multiple grand

prix wins worldwide.

“She’s had eight horses,” Parsky said of Blue Angel, who is based at the VDL stud in the Netherlands.

“Two of them are now five. They’re stallions and they’re keeping them stallions, which means they’re good.



PHOTO © ELYSIAN MEDIA

Now we have a pipeline.”

Parsky’s involvement in show jumping and contributions to the sport extend beyond being a longstanding owner of show jumpers. She is Chairman of the FEI’s The Jumping Owners Club. “My goal with that position is to encourage more people to become owners in our sport,” she said. “We give an ‘FEI Jumping Owner Award’ every year to the owner with the best record in our sport. It’s very prestigious. I have met some of my best friends now through the JOC and I am very proud to be part of this group.”

Parsky has also been a ‘Gold Medal’ donor to the United States Equestrian Team [USET] Foundation for over 30 years.

Parsky’s journey began in California and looks set to continue there when the LA Olympics come in 2028. Los Angeles is not just special to Parsky because of her Olympic time there. The city was a factor in inspiring her to be involved in the show jumping world.

“There was a wonderful movie that Disney produced called *The Horse with the Flying Tail*,” Parsky said of the 1960 documentary based on the palomino horse Nautical, which won the team gold medal for the USA at the

1959 Pan American Games with Hugh Wiley. “It was such a wonderful story and such a great horse. And a lot of it was filmed in Los Angeles,” Parsky said.

The film proved to be a catalyst for Parsky’s equestrian pursuits. “I got hooked on the sport. I worked in 1984 on the Olympics in Los Angeles when I had just graduated from college. And that got me even more interested because all the big riders came to Los Angeles. It was so thrilling,” she recalled.

“So, I said, ‘this is what I’m going to do with any spare money that I have.’ I always say I have more horses than I have brains. I do have a lot, and I support all the riders that I can.”

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