



UNITED STATES EQUESTRIAN TEAM FOUNDATION • VOLUME 11 • ISSUE 2 • SUMMER 2013

BEEZIE MADDEN AND SIMON

Seize 2013 FEI World Cup Championship

*The World Cup title has returned to the United States
for the second year in a row.*

BY REBECCA WALTON

Olympian Bezie Madden captured an early lead on the first day of the grueling five-round championship aboard Simon, a 14-year-old Dutch Warmblood owned by Abigail Wexner. Similar to Rich Fellers and Flexible's victory in 2012, the overall win came after a nail biting finish on the final day: a jump-off, between Madden and the reigning Olympic Gold medalist, Steve Guerdat of Switzerland riding Nino Des Buissonnets.

Although Madden had been most concerned about the speed round on the first day, she proved to be the best of the best, easily clearing all the obstacles and clocking in with the fastest round. On the second day of the competition, the pair qualified for the jump-off but had a heartbreaking rail at the last oxer when the distance got too far away. The duo was ranked second going into the final day, and they were ready to fight for the win.

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Beezie Madden and Simon



Photos by Rebecca Walton/Phelps Media Group





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SOLID GOLD

A Sparkling Benefit for the USET Foundation Nets \$160,000 for U.S. Dressage High Performance Programs

An enthusiastic group of High Performance dressage athletes led the way for a fun evening of fundraising for the United States Dressage Team's 2013 European tour in preparation for the 2014 World Equestrian Games. The dinner dance with auction was held on April 13 at the Global Dressage Pavilion of the Palm Beach International Equestrian Center in Wellington.

Partygoers arrived in dress from casual to gilded to match the golden theme, and the evening began to rock with a Grand Prix Freestyle Pas de Deux by U.S. Olympians Robert Dover and Tina Konyot, which was Dover's first public ride since 2005.

Dover also served as emcee for the evening, and guests were soon caught up in the infectious fun as athletes provided great entertainment when they vied to top each other in the "Spend the Day with an Athlete" auctions. Debbie McDonald won top honors as her "Day" was so popular at \$18,000 that it was auctioned twice. Other athletes who volunteered to contribute "days" were Todd Flettrich, Katherine Bateson-Chandler, Michael Barisone, Michelle Gibson, Shelly Francis and Catherine Haddad-Staller, all going for handsome bids.



Robert Dover



Guests enjoyed a fun-filled evening to help raise funds for the U.S. Dressage Team

Not to be outdone at the auction, the five international judges for CDIO Wellington offered an opportunity to sit with them while judging the following day and other generous patrons offered dinners, an African Safari and a weekend in the wine country of California.



Shelly Francis

The evening was created by Robert Dover, newly named Chef d'Equipe and Technical Advisor to the U.S. Dressage Team, who said, "The European tours are imperative for our teams to be competitive in the upcoming world championship and funding is a must for our teams to be well-prepared."

"This was a great opportunity to reach out to the dressage community in Wellington, have a great time and raise money for our High Performance dressage athletes," said Bonnie Jenkins, USET Foundation Executive Director. "The night was so much fun, and we thank everyone for their incredible support. We especially want to thank the Platinum Sponsors and auction donors Kim Boyer, Eliana Cordia and Monwana Lodge, Tim and Susie Dutta, Equestrian Sports Productions, Mr. & Mrs. William Harlan and Meadowood Resort, Fritz Kundrun, Tunny and David Page and Wellington Equestrian Partners." ■

WORLD CUP

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Madden and Simon returned for the final two rounds a day later, ready for action. The first course was easily one of the biggest courses any of the riders had ever seen, and it was unable to yield any clear rounds. Madden was included in the four-faulters, and when leader Luciana Diniz of Portugal had 12 faults, Madden took over the overall top spot by a single fault.

Although they had the win within their sights, the second round of the final proved to be just as daunting. Madden and Simon once again had a single knockdown, creating a tie with Guerdat and Nino Des Buissonnets, who also had a grand total of nine faults.

The championship would be determined by a jump-off between two of the world's fastest horses. Guerdat finished second to Fellers in 2012 in the exactly the same situation, losing by just tenths of a second. This year, he did not want to lose because of time, so he pulled out all of the stops with his quick-footed mount. Unfortunately, it did not pay off when a tight rollback to the final bending line added eight faults to his score.

All Madden and Simon had to do was go clean, and that's exactly what they did. With her clear and concise effort over the jump-off, Madden captured her first individual championship and became one of only five women ever to win the World Cup Finals.

"I was watching on the TV, and once Steve had two down I was just so relieved," admitted Madden. "After I saw the beginning of his jump-off, I thought he was going to be really hard to beat. It was kind of a relief and it took a quite a bit of the pressure off."

Simon and Madden have been partnered together a little over a year, but they both had stellar records to begin with, making it a match made in heaven. In 2011, Madden placed fourth at the World Cup Finals, while Simon placed third. Together, they proved to have the winning strategy.

"I think Simon is a very sensitive horse," noted Madden. "I am always working on rideability, playing around with bits, but I found one where I could have the best control. He can get a bit strong, but, in a way, he's not so difficult because he's so careful."



McLain Ward and Super Trooper de Ness



Beezie Madden and Simon



Reed Kessler and Cylana



Karl Cook and Jonkheer Z



Katie Dinan and Nougat Du Vallet



Charlie Jayne and Chill R Z

He knows his job so well and he wants to do his job, so in that way he makes things easy for me. As long as I can get him there within range he usually makes it."

Madden added, "It was fantastic to win the first leg. It was one of those rounds where everything kept coming up. Then on Friday night, I was happy with my first round and kind of kicking myself for the jump-off. I left it so that somebody else had to make mistakes for me to be on top. Today it was fantastic. The cards laid out right for me, and I felt like my horse went fantastic."

The United States sent 11 competitors to the World Cup Finals under the watchful eyes of new Chef d'Equipe Robert Ridland. In addition to eventual winner Beezie Madden, the U.S. contingent had five riders finish in the top 20 during the championship.

McLain Ward and Super Trooper de Ness, owned by Grant Road Partners, did a wonderful job representing the United States at the young stallion's first championship event. They had just a single error during each of the final rounds, and finished on 13 faults to take home the fifth-place award.

"I've always been excited about Super Trooper," stated Ward. "I've been with him four or five months now. It's our first indoor show together, maybe if we had two we could have one less rail. I would have liked to have won, but I'm thrilled for Beezie. She deserves it more than anyone else in this sport."

The tenth place honors went to 18-year-old Reed Kessler, making her World Cup debut with her Olympic mount Cylana. The young riders shined for the U.S., as Karl Cook also made his first appearance at a World Cup Finals. He stayed steady throughout the competition to eventually place 11th aboard Jonkheer Z.

Katie Dinan made a great effort with Nougat Du Vallet during their first World Cup appearance. They made it through each round of the competition and finished in the 16th position overall.

Charlie Jayne also competed on the final day aboard Alex Jayne and Maura Thatcher's Chill R Z. The luck was not on their side during the last two rounds, but their efforts throughout the week helped them to finish 17th in the rankings.

The other representatives for the United States were Rich Fellers and Flexible, owned by Mollie and Harry Chapman, Kent Farrington and Uceko, owned by RCG Farm, Christine McCrea and Romantovich Take One owned by Windsor Show Stables, Lucy Davis and Nemo 119, and Ashlee Bond and Wistful, owned by Little Valley Farm.

The United States Show Jumping riders have now set their sights on the 2013 Furusiyya FEI Nations Cup Finals. The competition will be held in Barcelona, Spain September 26-29, 2013, and once again Robert Ridland hopes to guide the United States to a top finish at an international competition. ■



Lucy Davis and Nemo 119

All photos by Rebecca Walton/Phelps Media Group

Chef d'Equipe **ROBERT DOVER'S** Strategy

for Making the United States a Dressage Powerhouse

Robert Dover, the new U.S. Dressage Team Chef d'Equipe and Technical Advisor, has been hard at work planning for the future of dressage since his recommendation for the position by the United States Equestrian Federation's Executive Committee in April. Between organizing a unified plan for competitors from pony riders to High Performance riders, creating a 58-slide PowerPoint presentation outlining the plan and traveling to Europe to oversee U.S. athletes competing, Dover has been on the go.

Fresh from a trip to the World Equestrian Festival in Aachen, Germany, where the U.S. enjoyed success in the Nations Cup as well as the Under-25 Grand Prix Freestyle, Dover's energy and commitment bubbles up when he talks about recent and future triumphs.

"Aachen was obviously a great success for our American athletes and I think it showed the resurgence of the excitement and the determination of America to be back on top as a power in the sport," said Dover.

"My goal is to produce a world-class machine that will encompass all divisions from the kids on ponies to our international elite competitors, in order to provide the pipeline of top-class combinations coming up through those divisions to ensure sustained success for many, many years to come," continued Dover.

His plans were created with the help of the other dressage coaches along with George Williams, President of the United States Dressage Federation. Dover challenged them to identify their dreams for a world-class program so he could incorporate those dreams into a comprehensive plan for both competition and training. "Each of them has done that and we have been tweaking along the way," he said. "We have come up with what I believe will be the very best program that any nation can have for their athletes."

Dover's inclusive PowerPoint presentation outlining his plans has already been taped by USEF TV and he will deliver it live at the Markel/USEF Young Horse Championships August 22-25, 2013 at Lamplight Equestrian Center, and at the National Young Rider Dressage Championship October 8-12, 2013 in Lexington, KY.

"That PowerPoint presentation has every single division of what our vision is for the next four years and beyond, in order to produce the best teams at every level going forward," explained Dover. "We needed to clearly see where we have been over the last years versus where we would like to be – which is on the highest podium. We have a defined path toward that direction that includes clinics and strategies for both training and competition for our all our athletes. In order to ensure sustainable success, we can't



Photo by Shannon Brinkman

just count on having a few top riders with a few good horses and hope that the timing is right every few years. We have to be concerned with the pipeline for our young athletes, both two and four-legged, by bringing those athletes forward in a way that they are prepared to be the top competitors of the future."

Dover believes that it is his duty as the Chef d'Equipe and Technical Advisor to concern himself with not just the High Performance division, but with the stepping stones along the way. He believes that the future of High Performance dressage begins with children on ponies having exposure to top training to instill confidence at a young age. Dover is especially proud of his Robert Dover Horsemastership Clinic held in Florida in January when 22 talented young dressage riders came together to learn from Olympic athletes, international riders, judges, veterinarians, farriers sports psychologists and other experts in the field.

"They got a great deal out of it and what we do is just keep pushing up the bar so that the kids are better and better prepared," stated Dover. "They know what is necessary to be internationally competitive."

"What we need to ensure is that by next year, we just don't have one great kid going to Aachen on a great horse," he shared. "I would like to see six or more top under-25 kids with great horses in Europe, showing that our future is one in which the Europeans can look at us and know that they have a lot to be concerned about."

He added that his plans include creating a more harmonized and united effort to ensure a successful future for all athletes from beginners on up. "I think that we are definitely coming to a more organized coaching effort and not one that usurps students away from their personal trainers or tries to undermine any one system but one in which the natural flow of information stays within some system that's more organized and doesn't allow so many things to fall short of excellent results."

Not one to let grass grow under his feet, Dover's schedule includes more trips to European competitions, a series of clinics along with strategy sessions for High Performance athletes throughout the country, qualifiers for the 2014 World Equestrian Games in Normandy, France, and the PowerPoint presentations—and that is just until it is time for his third annual Robert Dover Horsemastership Clinic in January in Wellington, FL.

"I am going to be busy, there's no doubt about that," he said. "I'm happily busy with that and I think that in order to have some extraordinary results, it's going to take an extraordinary effort on everyone's part. ■ – By Sue Weakley



George H. Morris

GLADSTONE PROGRAM

Showcases Rising Talent



Ten personally selected riders joined the world renowned George H. Morris at the USET Foundation's headquarters, Hamilton Farm, in Gladstone, NJ, May 21-26, 2013 to participate in the George H. Morris Gladstone Program, an intensive week of training and education for exceptionally dedicated and talented show jumping riders. Morris selected each rider, focusing on their talent, their serious interest and their desire to pursue a path that will prepare them to be a "team" rider, training to one day represent the United States in international competition.

This program is the brainchild of Morris and was designed to educate, support and guide potential "team" riders on the overall knowledge and expertise required to succeed at the top level of international show jumping. In addition to daily training sessions with Morris, the participants were able to participate in closed, hands-on sessions, with a veterinarian, a farrier, a top team stable manager, a physiotherapist and a High Performance business executive. One evening session was devoted to the USET history and the importance of the Gladstone location to the development of the Teams and their work ethic and camaraderie. Morris stressed the "Gladstone way of doing things," which he well knew from his many years as a Team member.

At the age of 75, Morris still continues to show that he is the best in the business. He promotes the importance of getting back to the basics as the fundamental principle for success.



Back Row (L-R) - George H. Morris, Lisa Goldman, Meg O'Mara, Chase Boggio, Hillary Simpson, Jared Petersen.
Front Row (L-R) - Mattias Tromp, Shawn Casady, Michael Desiderio, Katie Lynch, Jordan Coyne



Morris provided a week of intense sessions with the ten riders, working with two groups of five. The riders taking part in the program were 18+ and ranged from national equitation champions to grand prix riders with the minimum requirement to be competing successfully at 1.45 meters. The training and education will help these riders in their quest to become “team” riders.

The riders chosen included Chase Boggio (GA), Shawn Casady (TN), Michael Desiderio (NJ), Katie Lynch (CT), Jared Petersen (FL), Jordan Coyne (FL), Lisa Goldman (IL), Meg O’Mara (NJ), Hillary Simpson (FL) and Mattias Tromp (NY).

“It is really an extension of what we have with the winter Horsemastership Clinic in Wellington. It is basically the same thing; it is for those who are a little bit older” explained Morris. “At least half of them, maybe more, are in the top 30-40 of the computer list.

Morris continued, “In any situation like that, in any country, it always has to be the same thing—structure—a comprehensive structure. It has to include veterinary care, stable management, possibly a blacksmith, possibly a sports psychologist. This should happen in any country. Versus a rider clinic where you go for a day to three, you only get to focus on what happens in the ring, this is a comprehensive structure of horsemanship.”

Morris worked with the riders to expose the problems, and correct them. He emphasized the importance of the horse being on the bit and accepting the seat, legs and hands. His philosophy is based on tradition, and his classical work has been the binding glue for champions across the nation.

Morris stresses above all else, being fair to the horse. The participants worked through several progressive warm-ups involving transitions with gaits, counter cantering, serpentine and flying changes. Riders also practiced turning on the forehand from a collected walk and moving the haunches over so that the front and hind ends of the horse travel in two parallel circles. After perfecting the warm-up, riders shortened their stirrups for jumping.

As Morris is well known to do, he scrutinized every detail of each horse and rider combination. He switched spurs, studied the horses’ reaction to spooky corners in the ring and challenged riders with an intricate course. He reminded riders that his philosophy of warming up at a show involves very little. He has his riders jump an oxer followed by a series of verticals that included a long and short approach, making sure not to over-tire the horse or act desperate due to lack of homework.

After a week of preparation, the riders were prepared to take on the final course. Morris made each rider demonstrate their skills over the course until he felt 100 percent confident and confirmed. He portrayed his absolute diligence for insistence and attention to detail, allowing the riders to understand the importance of following the plan. Morris complimented the riders when then they showed the attention to detail he was enforcing during the program. Each rider was asked to remember the importance of horsemanship, and the regrouping and confidence necessary to take on the course with a careful eye.

A major part of what Morris looks for in each of the chosen riders is their character and how they respond to challenges. He looks for the riders who take on adversity with an open mind, plan, regroup and tough it out. He specifically praised riders throughout the week when they rose to the challenge and exemplified what he had expressed in his teachings.

Morris also spoke about the importance of education in the sport. He informed the riders and auditors alike that they should read books, confessing that he has nearly 400 in his personal home library. He is a consummate professor, passionate about his topic and passing his knowledge along to others. It is obvious that he wants to leave the sport in a good place, and would like to pass along his knowledge to future generations.

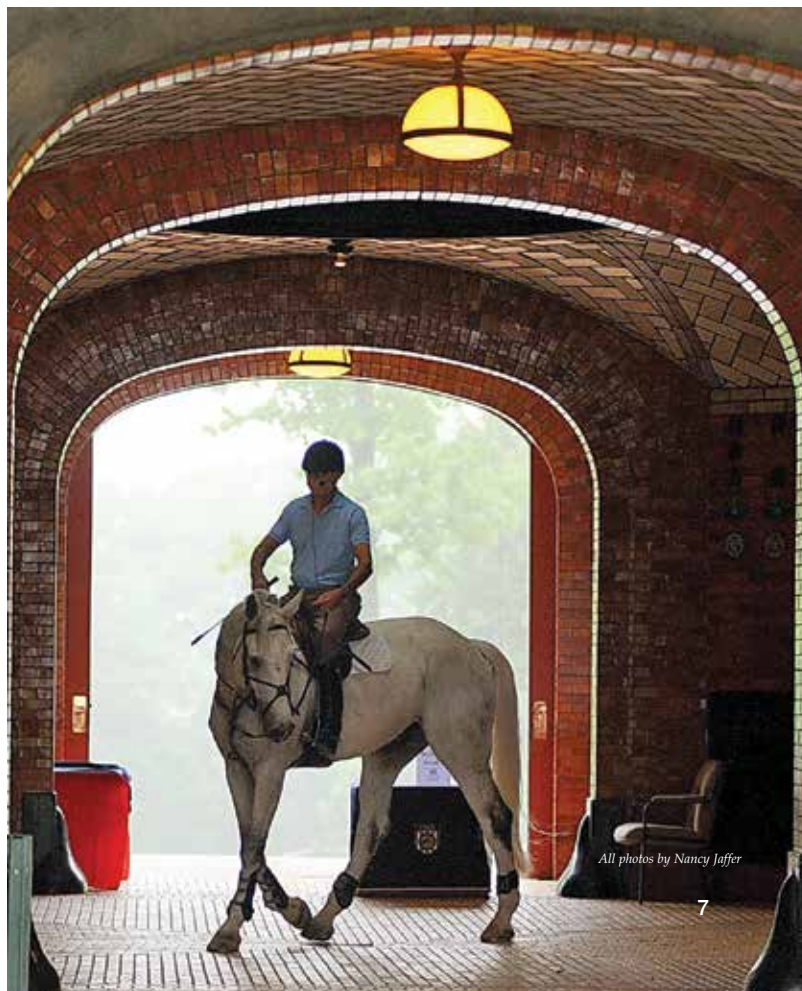


Meg O’Mara and Cequila

All who attended considered this program a complete success, and Morris hopes to replicate its success next year. The George H. Morris Gladstone Program is part of the developing pipeline where riders are working toward one day representing the United States on an international level.

“The idea was that I will initially do these, and then as I am less able to do them with my age, top athletes will conduct them in different parts of the country. That was always the idea,” concluded Morris.

The USET Foundation would like to acknowledge and thank B.G. and Suzanne Porter for their generosity, which made this program possible. ■ – *By Kendall Bierer*



All photos by Nancy Jaffer

BARCELONA FINALS SECURED

United States Finishes Second and Fourth at Spruce Meadows



Katie Dinan and Nougat Du Vallet

The 'Stars' and 'Stripes' United States Show Jumping teams competing in the FEI Nations Cup Jumping Qualifier held on Thursday, June 13, 2013 at the CSIO5* at the Spruce Meadows Continental Tournament in Calgary, finished in second and fourth place, while the team from Ireland secured the victory in the rain and wind in Canada.

With the 'Stars' placing fourth, the United States finished atop the standings in the newly created North American, Central America and Caribbean League. The team earned 100 points this winter with a victory at the \$75,000 Furusiyya FEI Nations Cup at CSIO Wellington and added 75 points at Calgary and has now secured a coveted

spot in the Furusiyya FEI Nations Cup Season Series Final to be held in Barcelona, Spain, on September 26-29.

The United States sent two teams to the post in Calgary.

The Stripes Team was comprised of Brianne Goutal, Katie Dinan, Candice King and McLain Ward. Joining the Stars Team was Kent Farrington, Reed Kessler, Charlie Jayne and Christine McCrea. The Stars team was the designated "point" team for qualification purposes. Their eventual fourth place finish on the day earned enough points to assure Barcelona participation.

United States Chef d'Equipe Robert Ridland made qualification for the finals a top priority when he was named as the new coach. "We've now qualified for the Finals and won the League to boot," he said. "It would have been nice to win here today, but we had two good finishes and we've accomplished one of the things we listed as a priority for the team early on."

In addition to negotiating the challenging track set by Course Designer Leopoldo Palacios, the teams had to deal with nasty weather, especially in the second round when the heavy rains arrived and the high winds picked up. A tight time allowed only added to the day's difficulty.

The Stripes Team was led by the double clear rounds of Katie Dinan and Grant Road Partners LLC's 12-year-old

Selle Francais, Nougat Du Vallet. Dinan had one of only four double clear rounds on the day. "There's always more pressure when you're on a team and it was only my second Nations Cup and I just wanted to rise to the occasion, stay calm and poised," said a very happy Dinan following the victory lap. "I was really pleased, Nougat felt great, I knew when we walked the course it was do-able, but you still have to do it. I knew after the first round I was only halfway done and needed to make some adjustments for the second round, which I was happy I was able to do. I'm just so happy and my horse jumped great," she smiled. Dinan was awarded the Furusiyya Rider of the Day title for her efforts.

Brianne Goutal and Remarkable Farms 12-year-old Selle Francais stallion Nice de Prissey had a steady day for the United States, picking up just a single knockdown in each round. Candice King and Campbell VDL, a nine-year-old Holsteiner stallion owned by the Stateside Farms LLC had a first round score of 13, but improved to only 9 faults in round two for Team Stripes. Two-time Olympic Gold medalist McLain Ward and Sagamore Farm's 12-year-old Warmblood gelding Rothchild, rode the anchor leg beautifully, completing another one of the only four double clear rounds on the day. Ward's second round was particularly impressive as the clear round came during heavy rain with high winds. Conor Swail and Cameron Hanley had the other two faultless performances for the winning Irish team.



Brianne Goutal and Nice de Prissey



McLain Ward and Rothchild



Christine McCrea and Zerly

The Stripes Team finished in second place with a two-round total of nine faults. Team Ireland had only a single knock-down to secure the Calgary win.

Kent Farrington was the lead-off rider for Team Stars, the "points" team. Riding Robin Parsky's 11-year-old Anglo-European mare, Blue Angel, Farrington, a 2011 Pan American Games Team Gold medalist, had two rails down in the first round, but came back with a solid four fault effort in round two. A toe at the tub was the only mark on the second round score sheet.

London Olympian Reed Kessler and her 14-year-old Selle Francais Mika produced a consistent day for Team 'Stars,' with just a single knockdown at the tall planks in round one and then a foot in the water in the second round.

The 10-year-old Zangerscheide stallion, Chill R Z, piloted by Charlie Jayne and owned by Alex Jayne and Maura Thatcher, also had two rounds of four faults, knocking a block off the wall in the first go and pulling down a pole at one of the big oxers the second time around.

Handling the anchor duties was 2011 Pan American Games Gold medalist Christine McCrea with Candy Tribble and Windsor Show Stables' 9-year-old Dutch mare Zerly. A shoe off in the first round led to an uncharacteristic eight fault total, but the rapidly improving combination emerged with a beautiful faultless go the second time out, despite the nasty weather.

The Stars Team finished in fourth place with an overall total of 24 faults.

Ridland was excited about the United States' ability to field two strong teams at this world class competition. "We did it a little differently than most by having two equal teams, but I think it really worked out today. Each team had a mix of veterans and young riders or young horses with more experienced riders. I believe the future looks really good."

The team from Ireland finished with just four faults to claim the title in the \$100,000 Furusiyya FEI Nations Cup and Team Canada One earned a third place finish and a spot on the podium with a score of 14 faults. ■ – **By Kenneth Kraus**



Kent Farrington and Blue Angel



Reed Kessler and Mika

All photos by Holly Burns Media



Charlie Jayne and Chill R Z

ROTTERDAM NATIONS CUP

United States Ladies Finish a Close Second

The United States Show Jumping Team finished just a single fault off the winning pace to take a strong second place in the Furusiyya FEI Nations Cup at Rotterdam on Friday, June 21. While the team was comprised of three veteran riders, Lauren Hough, Laura Kraut and Beezie Madden, it was rising star Lucy Davis of California who showed the way in The Netherlands with two beautifully ridden clear rounds on Barron, owned by the Old Oak Farm. Twenty-year-old Davis was presented with the Furusiyya Rider of the Day award when all was said and done.

The winning team from Germany secured their first points of the season in the race for the Furusiyya FEI Nations Cup Season Final at Barcelona in September. The United States, not competing for points in Rotterdam, had already nailed down a spot in the final with their strong finish at Spruce Meadows just days earlier.

Davis' sensational double clear ride was one of only three on the entire day. Philipp Weishaupt of Germany and Janika Sprunger of Switzerland were the only other two riders able to master the track twice.

The United States ended the first round on a total of only four faults after Davis and Beezie Madden with Abigail Wexner's Cortes 'C' produced wonderfully ridden fault free rounds. Laura Kraut and Cherry Knoll Farm's Cedric completed the first round with just a foot in the water, that coming after Cedric wanted to go left with the water jump to the right. Lauren Hough and Quick Study, owned by the Mateo family, had the drop score



USEF Chef d'Equipe Robert Ridland with Laura Kraut riding Cedric, Beezie Madden and Cortes 'C', Lauren Hough aboard Quick Study, and Lucy Davis with Barron

of eight faults in round one.

Germany finished the first round with only two faults and with the United States on four, the battle lines were drawn for a neck and neck, down to the wire finish in round two.

In the second round the United States was nearly perfect with two clear rounds, one from Davis and the other from Kraut, who masterfully dealt with her water issues on Cedric, but as it turned out, a single time fault from Lauren Hough and Quick Study would prove very costly when the day was done. Madden and Cortes 'C' had the drop score the second time around.

The one fault score from round two gave the United States team a total of only five faults on the day and put the pressure squarely on the backs of the riders from Germany, who were anxious to finally put some points on the board in their race to qualify for the Furusiyya Cup Season Final.

With two clear rounds already on the books from Christian Ahlmann and Philipp Weishaupt in round two, it was up to Ludger Beerbaum to secure victory for Germany. Riding Chiara, Beerbaum was up to the challenge, putting in a careful clear that netted the pair just two time faults and a two round total for Germany of just four faults, only one fault better than the United States.

"My teammates gave me a lot of confidence going into the Nations Cup. It was incredibly valuable to be able to spend time with three women who have achieved some of the highest honors in the sport," stated Davis. "Seeing how they handle the pressure and excitement of a Nations Cup week was a great learning experience for me, sharing their experiences and insights."



Lucy Davis earned the Furusiyya Rider of the Day Award

Davis was honored at the end of the competition with the Furusiyya Rider of the Day award. "It feels amazing to have won this award, and it's a huge honor. I'm on a team with three women who I've looked up to since I started riding, so to have won this award amongst them, and also amongst the Germans is a huge honor." ■ – Kenneth Kraus



Will Faudree and Marilyn Little **SCORE TOP 10 FINISHES** for the United States at Saumur CCI***



Marilyn Little and RF Smoke on the Water

Will Faudree and Marilyn Little notched top 10 placings to lead the Land Rover U.S. Eventing Team in a strong effort at the prestigious Saumur CCI***, held in Saumur, France, on May 22-26, which drew 46 competitors from around the globe. The four American entries took advantage of Land Rover Competition Grants to support their travel abroad.

Riding Jennifer Mosing's Andromaque to a score of 55.8, Faudree, of Hoffman, NC, finished in fifth place. Faudree and Andromaque, a 12-year-old Irish Thoroughbred mare, stood eighth after dressage with 47.8 and moved up to fourth after a standout cross-country trip that was well within the allowed time.

"She was amazing; she was just pure class the whole way around," Faudree said following the cross-country phase. "She just left the start box and I never had to kick her once. She locked onto everything and was just fabulous. It was fun the whole way around and it was an honor to be a part of it."

Pierre Michelet's show jumping course gave horses and riders a stiff test. Like many other combinations, Faudree and Andromaque found it to be a challenge, collecting 8 faults to move down a notch to fifth. Faudree was pleased with the mare's effort.

"She tried very hard and looked great this morning," Faudree said after show jumping. "She's naturally a very careful horse, so I'm not too concerned about it in the future. I just need to apply what I learned this weekend going forward."

He added that competing abroad gave him valuable experience and a sense of what to expect from major European events. "The rails are quite light and spindly over here; you can't even breathe on them," he explained. "We need to be prepared for that in the future."

Just three combinations managed to keep all the rails up in the show jumping, including winners Bill Levett and Shannondale Titan, representing Australia, and third-place finishers Arnaud Boiteau and Quoriano 'ENE HN' of France. Nicolas Touzaint and Lesbos, also competing for France, took second after knocking one rail.

Little, of Frederick, MD, and RF Smoke on the Water moved into contention with an impressive cross-country round that put them in eighth going into the final day of competition. They picked up 8 faults in the show jumping but maintained their position to finish eighth overall on a score of 60, securing another top placing for the United States. RF Smoke on the Water, an eight-year-old Wurttemburger gelding, is owned by Raylyn Farms Inc. and Phoebe and Michael Manders.

"Smoke was fantastic; he was totally on his game from the first fence," Little said of her cross-country trip. "He was full of confidence and went out feeling like King Kong and came home well. I think I was far more concerned about the course than he was. He read them (the corners) beautifully. He's only an eight-year-old but he marched around there like he was 12."

Also representing the United States at Saumur were Hannah Burnett, of The Plains, VA, and Buck Davidson, of Ocala, FL. Davidson was eliminated on cross-country when it was determined that he and The Apprentice, owned by Sherrie Martin, had not gone correctly through the flags at fence 18B before continuing to fence 19. Burnett put in solid efforts throughout the competition but had a refusal early on in the cross-country course. She finished 26th on Harbour Pilot, a 10-year-old Irish Sport Horse gelding owned by Jacqueline B. Mars. ■ – *Mary Adelaide Brakenridge*



Will Faudree and Andromaque

All photos by Shannon Brinkman

BUCK DAVIDSON

Claims Third Pinnacle Cup Honor

Each year, the USET Foundation awards the prestigious Pinnacle Cup Trophy to the highest placed American rider during the Rolex Kentucky Three-Day Event CCI****. This year, the honor went to Buck Davidson of Riegelsville, PA, and Ocala, FL, who won it for the third time. Davidson piloted Ballynoe Castle RM to a fourth place finish at the world-class event.

Davidson captured the Pinnacle Cup in 2009 and 2003, but this year it was with his partner Ballynoe Castle RM, a 13-year-old Belgian Warmblood/Irish Thoroughbred owned by Carl and Cassandra Segal. The duo traveled to England as alternates for the United States Eventing Olympic squad in 2008 and represented the U.S. at the 2010 World Equestrian Games. The pair finished with 45.2 penalties in the Dressage phase, and then moved up from eighth place after completing a clear cross country phase. They had eight faults over the technical stadium jumping track on the final day to finish with 53.2 faults in fourth place. Their efforts claimed the highest ranking for the United States.

"This is my third time winning the award, which is really wonderful, although I'd really like to win the event," laughed Davidson. "It was a great weekend and all of my horses were

fantastic. I just feel very fortunate to have the opportunity to win the Pinnacle Cup more than one time."

Davidson and Ballynoe Castle RM are a veteran duo, and Davidson felt very confident on his seasoned mount. "I had two really nice horses that went before Ballynoe Castle that are less experienced, so I was able to go around the cross country course twice before riding him," he explained. "He's not the fastest horse, but he has a lot of experience. It played out perfectly. I started off quickly and jumped all the fences safely and it just worked out perfectly. I couldn't have had a better ride; he gave me everything he has."

Davidson added, "Ballynoe Castle is a once in a lifetime horse. I started him from the beginning. He's 13 now, and he's been competing at the advanced level since he was eight. I'm just so thankful and so lucky to be partnered with an unbelievable horse. It's been a dream ride and I don't really want to wake up from the dream. I want to have him for a long time, so whatever he tells me he is feeling is what we are going to do. This horse does not owe me anything. Obviously I'd like to go to the 2014 World Equestrian Games in Normandy, France, whether it's with Ballynoe Castle or any of my other mounts." ■ — Rebecca Walton

Buck Davidson at the Head of the Lake with Ballynoe Castle RM during Rolex Kentucky 2013

Photo by Nancy Jaffer



"The Giltedge Challenge"

EXCEEDS \$1,000,000 GOAL AND CONTINUES

In December 2012, the USET Foundation announced a new fundraising initiative, "The Giltedge Challenge", that was made possible through the generosity of Jacqueline B. Mars. The goal of the initiative was to raise \$1,000,000 for the discipline of Eventing. Mrs. Mars pledged a half million dollars restricted to the Eventing High Performance Programs, if it could be matched by the Eventing community by June 1, 2013. The equestrian community quickly stepped up to help raise funds, achieving the goal in just four short months. To date, "The Giltedge Challenge" has raised \$1,258,000 for the discipline.

The strategic plan that was developed by David O'Connor, the new U.S. Eventing Chef d'Equipe, and approved by the USEF High Performance Eventing Committee, laid out an ambitious and comprehensive program that addresses the critical factors for this country's elite and developing athletes to achieve excellence, and for the United States to be among the world's most competitive nations at CCI****'s, World Championships and Olympic Games.

Mrs. Mars, USET Foundation Trustee, Eventing horse owner and long time loyal supporter of equestrian sport, invited those who share her passion and commitment to Eventing to join her in support of the High Performance Eventing Program. Major gift commitments



Jacqueline B. Mars

are eligible for the Challenge and may be paid over a four-year period. Due to the interest and appreciation of the Eventing athletes, a separate level of giving was developed for the Long Listed Eventing Athletes.

"I am so pleased by the generous response to the Challenge, and appreciate the Leadership gifts from so many as they joined me in the early stage. Giltedge was a horse who achieved amazing things through determination and a kind heart and the Eventing community is displaying those same traits, which is no surprise and incredibly rewarding", remarked Mrs. Mars.

"We are so fortunate to have leaders like Jacquie at the USET Foundation. Her gift has inspired others in the Eventing community to lend their support which has allowed the programs and preparations for our U.S. Eventing High Performance program to be implemented," said Tucker Johnson, USET President and CEO.

"The Giltedge Challenge' will continue with a 50% matching contribution from Mrs. Mars through December 31, 2013. I hope we can encourage even more people to join this effort who love the sport and desire to see our athletes, both equine and human, compete and win at the highest levels of international competition," remarked Bonnie Jenkins, USET Foundation Executive Director. ■ – Rebecca Walton



For more information on the USET Foundation and "The Giltedge Challenge", please call Bonnie B. Jenkins, Executive Director (908) 234-1251.

LEADERSHIP GIFTS

Jerome Broussard	Jacqueline B. Mars
William S. Coleman, Jr.	Carl and Cassandra Segal
Miles and Parker Collier	Howard and Martha Simpson
Fletcher Farms	Thomas A. Tierney
Sarah Broussard Kelly	James and Sarah Wildasin

PATRON GIFTS

Jatial, Inc.
James W. Cogdell
Annie L. Jones
Fernanda Kellogg and Kirk Henckels

EVENTING ATHLETE GIFTS

David Adamo	LEAW Foundation
Maris Burns	and Plain Dealing Farm
Courtney Cooper and Neal	Martha and Greg McDowell
Camens (C Square Farm)	Beth Perkins
Dr. and Mrs. David S. Caras	Michael and Nathalie Pollard
and Jenny Caras	Katherine Sullivan Scovil
Tiana Coudray	Mackenna Shea and Family
Sally Crane and Elinor MacPhail	Lizzie Snow
Four Peaks Farm	Allison Springer
Avery Klunick	



Giltedge and David O'Connor

DRESSAGE TEAM LEADS THE WAY

in Solid U.S. Effort at 2013 CHIO

AACHEN

The United States produced strong finishes during the nine days of the prestigious 2013 CHIO Aachen in Germany, highlighted by a podium finish for the U.S. Dressage Team.



Steffen Peters and Legolas 92

All photos by Shannon Brinkman

DRESSAGE

The U.S. proudly took the podium in the Lambertz FEI Nations Cup with a third place finish for team members Steffen Peters, Tina Konyot, Jan Ebeling and Shelly Francis during the 2013 CHIO Aachen. All four riders earned qualifying scores for the FEI Grand Prix Special Test in the MEGGLE-Preis later in the competition.

Peters, of San Diego, CA, anchored the team aboard Four Winds Farm's Legolas 92, scoring a 75.298% in the FEI Grand Prix to finish fifth in the Preis der Familie Tesch. Konyot, of Palm City, FL, and her own Calecto V earned a 71.064% for the 16th place slot. Ebeling, of Moorpark, CA, finished 17th with a 70.936% aboard Rafalca, owned by Ann Romney, Amy Ebeling, and Beth Meyers. Francis and Doktor, owned by Patricia Stempel, scored a 69.596% for 20th place. The combined scores of the four riders, including one dropped score, vaulted the U.S. team to third place.

"Our Nations Cup riders came here for a medal and they did not disappoint. Each of them showed why they are among the best in the world," said U.S. Chef d'Equipe Robert Dover.

Germany took home the top prize in the Lambertz FEI Nations Cup and second place went to Denmark.

Peters and Legolas 92 were the top U.S. duo in the Grand Prix Special finishing in eighth place with a 73.375% in the MEGGLE-Preis CDI05*.

Thirty horse and rider combinations competed in the class and Konyot and Calecto V placed 13th with a score of 71.104%, while Ebeling and Rafalca earned a 70.417% for their 15th place finish. Francis and Doktor dodged the raindrops but earned a 69.042% to finish in 22nd place.

The Small Tour began when Caroline Roffman took the centerline on her own Her Highness O in the Deutsche Bank Stadium for the 2013 CDI4* dressage competition. Roffman, of Wellington, FL, earned a seventh place finish in the Preis der VUV class with a 71.026%. Later in the week, Roffman, Team Veterinarian Dr. Rick Mitchell, and Dover decided to withdraw the mare for veterinary reasons.

Sagacious HF, owned by Hyperion Farm, Inc, Roffman also competed in the CDI-U25 Grand Prix, triumphantly placing second with a 68.953% that included one-handed tempi changes in the Preis der Liselott und Klaus Rheinberger Stiftung class. "It was an amazing experience," said Roffman. "To be part of a team, have people supporting you, and showing you the ropes for hopeful future experiences on teams was wonderful."

Dover could not have been more proud. He commented, "The world of dressage has witnessed a new star being born here in the Aachen stadium and I cannot wait to come back next year with even more horses and riders ready to win at all divisions."

Also in the Small Tour, Shelly Francis of Loxahatchee, FL, aboard Patricia Stempel's Danilo, placed 11th with a 67.500% in the Preis der VUV class. Later in the competition, Francis rode Danilo in the Intermediaire I Test in the WOTAX-Preis to a 10th place finish with a score of 68.974%.

In the Large Tour, Susan Dutta on Tim Dutta Inc's Currency DC scored a 64.766% in the Grand Prix Test to finish in 19th. Later in the week, the duo earned a 67.042% for a sixth place finish in the Grand Prix Special in the Lindt-Preis class.



Tina Konyot and Calecto V

The final day of the CDI05* drew 15 combinations including Peters, Konyot and Ebeling representing the U.S. in the Deutsche Bank Prize for the final day of Freestyle dressage competition. Peters and Legolas 92 were rewarded for their piaffe and passage, earning a score of 78.675% for sixth place. Konyot and Calecto V scored a 74.900% in the Freestyle for 10th place, earning high marks for choreography and musical interpretation. Ebeling and Rafalca finished in 13th with a 72.025% while scoring well for their canter work.



Caroline Roffman and Sagacious HF



Tiana Coudray and Ringwood Magister

EVENTING

Tiana Coudray and Ringwood Magister finished in the top 10 for the United States at the Aachen CICO3*. They were the highest-placed members of the Land Rover U.S. Eventing Team, which took seventh in the team competition. Coudray and Ringwood Magister put in an impressive cross-country effort over a tough course that caused trouble for many combinations on the last day of the competition.

"I am over the moon," Coudray said after cross-country. "He was absolutely playing with the course today. It obviously caused so much trouble. It was very, very tough. Very experienced riders had trouble. I went later in the day and I had not seen a clear round all morning, but he gave me such a good feel out there on the challenging course."

Coudray and Ringwood Magister, a 12-year-old Irish Sport Horse gelding owned by Jatial Inc., scored 43 in dressage and went double clear in show jumping to enter the cross-country phase in a strong position. They collected 14.8 time penalties on the cross-country course to take 10th place on a score of 57.8.

Other U.S. competitors hoped to move up the leader board on cross-country day, but ran into trouble at the more demanding questions presented by Rüdiger Schwarz's course. Clark Montgomery, of Wiltshire, UK, and Universe, a 12-year-old Dutch Warmblood gelding owned by Jessica and Carole Montgomery, Janet Higgins and Elizabeth Smith, picked up two refusals at the skinny triple brush. Montgomery and Universe pushed on from there to successfully complete the course. They added 85.6 penalties to their score, finishing in 35th place with 152.2.

Will Faudree and Pawlow, a 14-year-old Irish Thoroughbred gelding owned by Jennifer Mosing, had an unfortunate beginning to their cross-country run when Pawlow pulled both front shoes early in the going. Faudree, of Hoffman, NC, incurred penalties

for refusals at two fences. Pawlow then slipped on the landing of the final fence, resulting in a fall and the pair's elimination. Neither Faudree nor Pawlow was hurt.

Marilyn Little and RF Smoke on the Water had a rider fall at the corner fence in the Rolex water complex. Little, of Frederick, MD, and RF Smoke on the Water, an eight-year-old Württemburger gelding owned by Raylyn Farms Inc. and Phoebe and Michael Manders, were uninjured.



Will Faudree and Pawlow

All photos by Shannon Brinkman

DRIVING

The unstoppable Chester Weber again showed he is one of the top four-in-hand drivers in international competition, putting in impressive performances throughout the phases of the Aachen CAIO-4 to finish on the podium in third place individually.

Weber, of Ocala, FL, drove a team comprised of two of his own horses, Senate and Para, as well as two horses owned by Jane Clark, Splash and Uniek. He opened the competition by coasting through a standout dressage test to win Wednesday's Prize of Fa. Horsch, Der Entsorger with a score of 31.2. On Thursday, he got off to a strong start in the team competition with another dressage win, this time in the Prize of Martello Immobilienmanagement GmbH & Co. KG on a score of 38.21.

Weber maintained his individual lead through Friday's Prize of Soers cones phase, in which he picked up just 1.19 time penalties and left all the balls in place. Saturday's Wohnwelt Pallen Marathon course posed a stiff test, and Weber took 14th in that phase to finish third overall on a score of 125.78. Australia's Boyd Exell was the winner with 118.46 and The Netherlands' Koos de Ronde edged out Weber for second with 124.81.

Also representing the U.S. was Jimmy Fairclough of Newtown, NJ, driving a team leased from Koos de Ronde. Highlights for Fairclough included a 22nd in the Prize of Martello Immobilienmanagement GmbH & Co. KG with 60.29 and a 20th in the Wohnwelt Pallen Marathon with 101.47. He completed the competition in 23rd place individually on a total score of 186.80.

After the individual competition concluded, Weber and Fairclough continued on to the Prize of H&T Automotive Components obstacle (cones) competition to determine the overall team standings in the Fendt Nations Cup. The U.S. duo finished in sixth on a score of 305.15, making them the highest-placed two-person team. .



Chester Weber with Senate, Para, Splash and Uniek

Photo by Shannon Brinkman

VAULTING

Vaulters from the United States Team finished strong in Aachen. The CVIO3* vaulting competition included U.S. sisters Kimberly and Cassidy Palmer from Half Moon Bay, CA, performing their Freestyle test in the Prize of Sparkasse Pas de Deux competition.

Vaulting on Wolfgang Renz's Leon 364, lunged by Renz, the sisters finished their first Freestyle test with a score of 6.658, earning them fifth place. The next day, they improved that Freestyle score to 7.302, securing a fourth place. The combined scores slotted them for a fourth place overall in the Pas de Deux, which averages the two Freestyle scores for the final outcome.

Alicen Divita from Redwood City, CA, earned sixth place overall in the Prize of Sparkasse Individual Female Competition, an improvement over her 10th place finish at the Aachen CVIO3* in 2012. Thanks to top 10 placings in all three phases of competition, the 24-year-old Divita was 10th in the compulsory competition with a 7.208, fourth in the technical competition with a 7.294 in a field of 26 competitors, and eighth in the Freestyle on Pino del Rio. The horse, owned by Divita's mother, Julie Divita, was lunged by Elke Lensing. Divita competed at the Krumke CVIO3* in June, using her technical skills to earn third place.

The United States' best individual Freestyle effort was from Elizabeth Ioannou from Saratoga, CA, who earned a 7.961 and seventh place on Lasse Kristensen and Emma Seely's Jarl, lunged by Kristensen. Ioannou earned a 7.026 in the compulsories and a 5.994 in the technical test to finish 12th overall with her combined scores.

Mary Garrett from Seal Beach, CA, earned a 7.043 in the compulsory test and a 5.765 in the technical test with combined scores to finish 14th in individuals, vaulting on Leon 364, again lunged by Renz.

Kristian Roberts from Moss Beach, CA, was the sole individual male vaulter from the United States. He was also competing aboard Leon 364, lunged by his owner. Roberts earned a 5.630 in the compulsories and a 6.538 in the technical portion. His three combined scores netted him the 14th spot with an average score of 5.586. ■ – Sue Weakley and Mary Adelaide Brankenridge



Kimberly and Cassidy Palmer

Vaulting photos by Julia Rou



Alicen Divita

UNITED STATES DRIVERS

Take France By Storm at Saumur CAI-A4

While the Saumur CAI-A4 is held in France, the eyes of the driving world were on the representatives from the United States June 7-9 as drivers Chester Weber and Laurie Astegiano stormed to victories in the Four-In-Hand and Pony Team divisions, respectively. Weber bested some of the world's finest to cruise to victory in the Four-In-Hand division with a three-day total score of 128.5, while Astegiano dominated the Pony Team division with a total score of 145.93.

Astegiano frequently competes for the U.S. throughout Europe, and she has consistently been a top performer in Saumur, including securing a second place finish last year. This June, the two-time FEI World Pony Driving Championship Team Bronze medalist was prepared to drive away with the victory from day one of competition. She grabbed the early lead with her team of ponies: Arvalon Braint, Liezelhof Dave, Timmy 97, Templedruid, St. Jerneborg, along with Mastro's Baroness, in the dressage phase with a leading score of 56.26, and she never relinquished it. She finished second in the marathon with a score of 85.56, but still held onto her overall lead going into the final day of competition. She finished the final day with just 4.11 penalties in the cone phase to leave her with her total score of 145.93 and the international honors.

The nine-time USEF Four-in-Hand National Champion and two-time FEI Four-in-Hand Driving World Championship silver medalist was unsurpassable in any of the phases, taking the wins across the board in the dressage, marathon and cones phases.



Laurie Astegiano with Liezelhof Dave, Mastro's Baroness, Timmy 97 and Templedruid St. Jerneborg



Chester Weber with Senate, Para, Splash and Uniek

On day one, Weber unsurprisingly shot to the top of the field of 21 horses with a dressage score of 36.22. Weber is affectionately dubbed 'Mr. Dressage,' as he's been continually successful in this first phase. Weber has never had a major marathon phase victory however, so when he bested the field with a marathon score of 89.28, he was thrilled. Earning his first international marathon win against some of the world's greatest drivers made it all the more exciting.

"Winning the dressage is something we have been fortunate to become accustomed to, but this was our first big marathon victory. It was a World Cup qualifier and many of the best were there, including two members of the Dutch Gold medal team, Ijsbrand Chardon and Theo Timmerman. Moreover, Chardon without a doubt is the winningest driver the sport has ever had," Weber explained.

Weber put the final exclamation point on his Saumur CAI-C4 win by winning the cones phase with one single ball down for an additional three penalty points. Those three penalty points earned Weber and his team of four horses, which he co-owns with Jane Clark, a total score of 128.5 over the three days.

Weber's strategy for the Saumur CAI-C4 involved putting his trotter Horus du Bois as the lead for the marathon and cones phases, while Splash was the lead for the dressage phase. Splash took the right wheel during the other phases, while the popular Boris held the left wheel position for dressage and the marathon, Uniek held the left lead position throughout all phases and Para took his position at the right wheel for dressage and the left wheel for cones.

"Our decision to go to Saumur was a building block in our strategic plan. The marathon there was sandy and hilly, both of which made it challenging for the horses," Weber concluded. "This was one step as Jane Clark and I keep our sights on the World Equestrian Games in Normandy." ■ – Emily Riden

All photos by Piret Visul.com

Morgan, Matheson and Stroud Named **PONY DRIVING NATIONAL CHAMPIONS**

Tracey Morgan, Jennifer Matheson and Lisa Stroud's ponies may be small in stature, but they are mighty in talent and ability.

The three pony drivers bested fields that included fellow national and world champions to claim this year's national titles in the USEF National Combined Driving Single Pony Championship, the USEF National Combined Driving Pair Pony Championship and the USEF National Combined Driving Pony Team Championship. The picturesque Carolina Horse Park played host to the National Championships during the Southern Pines CDE on April 12-14, 2013.

USEF National Combined Driving Single Pony Championship

Tracey Morgan, (Beallsville, MD) is no newcomer to winning a national championship. She swept the USEF National Combined Driving Pair Pony Championships each year from 2003 to 2009, but this year, for the first time, she claimed the Single Pony Championship.

She and her own 12-year-old German Riding Pony, Fuego 88, finished on a three-day total score of 130.59. Following the dressage and marathon phases, Morgan and Fuego 88 sat in second place behind eventual Reserve Champions Paul Maye (Fairfield, VA) and Harmony Sport Horses' Markus. Morgan knew that in order to win she had to turn in impressive rounds in the third and final phase – the cones phase. She did just that, driving skillfully to one of only two double clear rounds.



Tracey Morgan and Fuego 88

"I knew I needed to do that (drive double clear), to have a shot. That double clear is always so important; it was my first of the year," explained Morgan. "We kept fighting our way up from third after the dressage all weekend."

Maye left all of the balls in place on the cones, but drove just a little too conservatively, incurring 8.32 time faults, cementing his position as the reserve champion behind Morgan and Fuego 88.

"Fuego 88 was wonderful. He did everything I asked him to do," said Morgan. "It was fantastic to win the National Championship; it was good friends and good competition."

USEF National Combined Driving Pair Pony Championship



Jennifer Matheson with Bax and Cees

For the third year, Jennifer Matheson (Aiken, SC) drove away with the national title in the USEF National Combined Driving Pair Pony Championship. Matheson stood on the podium in Lipica, Slovenia as the U.S. clinched Team Bronze at the 2011 FEI World Driving Championship, and she brought that same level of competition to the Southern Pines CDE.

Matheson posted the quickest times in five of the hazards during the marathon phase with ponies Bax and Cees, and with Matheson at the lines the newly united pair led the way going into the cones phase.

In the final phase, Matheson received a score of 8.90 after incurring six faults for two balls down and 2.90 time faults. The faults were not enough to keep her from the top of the leaderboard as she finished the weekend with a total score of 145.15 and another national title.

"It's great to win the National Championship; this makes three," said Matheson. "It really solidifies to me that I can represent my country."

Finishing in the reserve champion position was last year's National Champion, Wendy O'Brien (Aiken, SC). O'Brien led the field after the dressage phase and stayed close behind Matheson in second throughout the weekend before earning the reserve national title.

USEF National Combined Driving Pony Team Championship

Lisa Stroud tied the record in 2013 for most consecutive National Championships, earning her eighth consecutive and ninth overall title this year at the Southern Pines CDE. Stroud is no stranger to success on the world stage, having represented the U.S. five times in World Championship competition, including winning Team Bronze in both 2007 and 2011. This spring, she drove her trademark team of grey ponies straight to the lead following the

dressage phase and only lengthened her margin from there.

Stroud (West Grove, PA) and her team won five of the hazards in the marathon phase to earn a score of 115.63 and total two-day score of 165.87. Behind her by nearly 22 points going into the final day was Heather Schneider (Palm City, FL) with a two-day score of 187.24. "I was thrilled with the dressage; I was hoping to break 50 this spring and I did 50.24 so I'll take the .24."

In the final phase, Stroud drove with great precision to complete the weekend with a cones score of 4.24 and an overall score of 170.111. Schneider earned the Reserve Championship on a three-day total of 201.98, after scoring 14.74 on the cones (one ball down and 11.74 time faults). ■ – *Emily Riden*



Lisa Stroud with Sir Patrick, Mystic, Kilkerin Edward and With Flair

Wrigley-Miller Drives Away With USEF National Pairs Championship

Last year's USEF National Pairs reserve champion Misdee Wrigley-Miller returned to the USEF National Pairs Championships this year with her sights firmly set on securing her first national pairs championship title. On March 24 at Live Oak International, following three days of top competition, Wrigley-Miller did just that.

The 2011 FEI World Pair Driving Championship veteran, positioned herself for the win early on with a dressage score of 41.41. The Lakewood Ranch, FL resident executed an accurate and expressive dressage test to take the first day lead with her nine-year-old KWPN gelding Riant W and her seven-year-old KWPN gelding Beau.

"I love the extension with this pair. They're really there and explosive and then they come immediately back and are flexible," Wrigley-Miller said.

The second phase of competition saw a new winner, Lisa Singer of Chadds Ford, PA. Singer has represented the U.S. in World Championship competition seven times, and she showed that level of skill and finesse as she navigated her team through the seven obstacle course of the marathon phase. The eight time USEF National Pairs Champions finished the day with a score of 133.07, putting her less than two points ahead of Wrigley-Miller who headed into day three with a score of 134.24.

It all came down to the cones phase for Singer and Wrigley-Miller, and only a single ball down and 2.61 time faults would guarantee the victory for Wrigley-Miller with three day score of 139.85. Singer finished the cones phase with three balls falling and 9.05 time faults for a total of 18.05 penalties for the day and an overall score of 151.12.

"I'm over the moon. I've broken my demon," said an ecstatic Wrigley-Miller following her impressive win. ■ – *Emily Riden*



Misdee Wrigley-Miller with Riant W and Beau

THREE TIMES A CHARM

for Flarida in the Kentucky Reining Cup CRI3*

Brown Wins Second World Freestyle Championship

The Kentucky Reining Cup, and an international CRI3* competition held April 26-27 at the Kentucky Horse Park in Lexington, KY, featured a star-studded list of riders negotiating their horses through patterns of turns, spins, sliding stops and flying lead changes. The incredibly popular World Freestyle Championship featured audience engaging choreographed musical performances, all set within the Alltech Arena.

Shawn Flarida of the U.S. defended his title for the third year in a row and earned the win of the \$100,000 Kentucky Reining Cup at the Kentucky Horse Park, riding Wimps Quixote Cody, a 2006 buckskin gelding owned by Keri Sigman of Liberty, MO. The winning horse and rider team performed brilliantly, yielding a score of 226.5. Andrea Fappani and Star For The Chicks nabbed the second place prize with a score of 224.5 and Tom McCutcheon aboard Pretty Peppy Chec captured third place scoring 221.0.

With Flarida's high score, the Ariat



Boots team stormed into first place past the six other competing teams with a total score of 657.5. This was the first time Flarida has been a member of the winning team at the Kentucky Reining Cup. Flarida is a two-time World Equestrian Games team Gold Medalist (2002 & 2010) with an Individual Gold Medal (2002), and an FEI World Reining Masters Gold Medalist (2006).

The Apex Ranch team of Tim McQuay, Mandy McCutcheon and Sean McBurney earned a score of 652.0, placing them in second place; the Cosequin team of Tom McCutcheon, Dell Hendricks and Mandy McCutcheon scored 650.5 to finish third.

"I thought tonight I showed him really, really well," said Flarida, reining's first-ever \$4-million athlete. "He's so quiet that

you can really push him on the fast circles."

Flarida noted that many of his competitors, including Fappani and McCutcheon and their mounts, had participated in an important show in Texas the week before. Flarida stayed home in Springfield, OH, to prepare for the Kentucky Reining Cup.

"Wimps Quixote Cody came here rested, and that may have been a bit of an advantage tonight," said Flarida.

Tom McCutcheon had never ridden Pretty Peppy Chec, a 2005 bay stallion, before the competition. "He's been a good show horse all his life, and he went through there pretty good tonight," said the third-place finisher.

The spectators' favorite event, the World Freestyle Championship, was held the following evening in the Alltech Arena. For the second time in three years, Shane Brown won the coveted competition aboard Shepherd Star and earned the title. A panel of three judges awarded the pair 228 points, just one point ahead of three horse and rider



Shawn Flarida and Wimps Quixote Cody

Photo by Ben Radwanji

combinations who tied for second with a score of 227—Aaron Ralston on Blue Taris Glo, Drake Johnson on Sonic Chic Dream, and Pete Kyle on A Ruf Gal.

Brown, of Elbert, CO, rode the talented gray stallion to country star Montgomery Gentry's ballad, "Gone." It was a moving freestyle he performed to win at the Dodge Invitational Freestyle in Denver in 2008 in homage to the simpler, low-tech times.

"The song has a lot of speed up and slow down, and it fits this horse—he's very powerful, so I didn't want a soft and mushy song for him," said Brown.

Ralston rode to the 2012 smash hit "Gangnam Style," Johnson rode to "Amazing Grace," and Kyle rode with a ring full of about 30 dancing fans to "Harlem Shake."

Ralston explained his pink polka-dot outfit and extra-large pink sunglasses. "I went to Target today," he said. "It's hard for me to do anything that's real serious, and some friends and clients talked me into the song."

Johnson shared that he longed to perform a freestyle to 'Amazing Grace.' "I finally had the horse that had the style and the elegance to make it look smooth and pretty," he said.

Kyle, a U.S. athlete, was inspired by his children's high school. "I saw them do the 'Harlem Shake,' and I thought it was just too fun," he said. "So I asked a friend who works for Rolex Kentucky to recruit people from the stands. I didn't know how many she'd gotten until I walked out there, and I thought, 'Holy smokes, is there anybody still in the stands?'"

Kyle is a five-time USEF Freestyle Gold Medal winner and the 2012 World Freestyle Champion, a two-time USEF Don Burt award winner and Silver Medalist, USEF National Championship winner (2012). He won the World Championship Freestyle in 2012 on A Ruf Gal, the same horse he rode in the Kentucky Reining Cup.

The U.S. competitors included three members of the United States' 2010 Gold Medal World Championship team and four-time Grammy Award winner Lyle Lovett.

Among those entered to compete were:

- Lyle Lovett, a country music legend, renowned reining horse breeder, veteran of the 2011 and 2012 Kentucky Reining Cup CRI competitions and owner of the famed stallion Smart N Shiney
- Tom McCutcheon, a two-time World Equestrian Games team Gold medalist (2002 and 2010), with World Equestrian Games (2010) and FEI World Reining Final individual Gold Medals (2010) and an individual Silver Medal (2002)
- Tim McQuay, 2006 and 2010 World



Shane Brown and Shepherd Star

Equestrian Games Team Gold Medalist with a 2006 Individual Silver Medal, and two-time FEI Masters Finalist

- Shawn Florida, a two-time World Equestrian Games Team Gold medalist (2002 and 2010) with an Individual Gold medal (2002) and FEI World Reining Masters Gold medal (2006)

In addition to these stars, many more of the sport's leading riders from the U.S. and abroad entered the event. The competition featured four international eventing riders vying for spots in their own reining division on horses lent to them by reining competitors. Shepherd Star emerged the winner of this division too, scoring 211.0 points with Allison Springer.

Her score edged out Sinead Halpin

on Blue Taris Glo, who earned a 210.5 and David O'Connor on Starbuck Summer who scored 210.0.

"I really didn't know what I was going to have to do until about an hour before the competition began," Springer said. "I got nervous because I didn't get to practice until after Shane rode him, so I didn't mess up his horse, I'm sure. But that made me really nervous. I almost fell off the horse in my first halt in practice."

Springer added that she was amazed that Shepherd Star could interpret her mud-dled aids.

"It reminded me of when you were growing up and all the other girls would say, 'Oh, she just has a wonderful horse. She can't really ride.' Well, that was me tonight!" said Springer with a laugh. ■ **Marty Bauman**



Tom McCutcheon and Pretty Peppy Chec

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