



A TRIBUTE TO Show Jumping Icon **WILLIAM "BILL" C. STEINKRAUS**

BY REBECCA WALTON

*W*hen discussing the history of show jumping in the United States, there is one name that is synonymous with the sport: William "Bill" C. Steinkraus. A five-time Olympian, four-time medal winner and first U.S. show jumping individual gold medalist, Steinkraus boasted one of the most decorated equestrian careers in U.S. history. He was well known for his meticulous, detail-oriented style, his incredible intellect and his athletic ability, but most importantly he was known for his passion and love of the horses and the sport.

On Nov. 29 at the age of 92, the legendary equestrian passed away surrounded by his family and loved ones, and the sport lost one of the best there ever was.



Steinkraus was a teammate, a coach and a friend to all who had the opportunity to work with him and see him compete. Jimmy Wofford commented, "It's very unusual that someone's intellectual capacity and their athletic capacity match at that level, but he was someone who completely and thoroughly understood and could do the sport."

Growing up in Darien, Connecticut, Steinkraus began riding at the age of 10 with Amud Thompson. He was a member of the Ox Ridge Hunt Club and became more involved with the sport when he began training under the tutelage of esteemed horsemen Gordon Wright and Morton W. "Cappy" Smith. In 1941, Steinkraus made history by winning the coveted Maclay National Championship

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*William Steinkraus and Snowbound
Individual Gold Medalist
1968 Mexico City Olympic Games*

Photo courtesy The Chronicle of the Horse





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"We must never forget, every time we sit on a horse, what an extraordinary privilege it is: to be able to unite one's body with that of another sentient being one that is stronger, faster, and more agile by far than we are, and at the same time, brave, generous and uncommonly forgiving." — William C. Steinkraus

Dear Friends:

In late November, we lost William C. "Bill" Steinkraus. Bill was a dear friend and an iconic member of our United States Equestrian Team. Always a true gentleman, he was a legendary ambassador of our sport and our country.



He rode in five Olympic games and was America's first athlete to win an individual gold medal in any equestrian discipline—all as a self-proclaimed "weekend rider." Bill was also a Yale graduate, a gifted violinist, and a member of the United States Cavalry during World War II. While riding in the Olympics and raising his three boys, he maintained a successful career on Wall Street and later in publishing. He was the author of several critically acclaimed books on riding. Bill was Chairman Emeritus of the USET Foundation and gave us valuable advice and steady guidance. He was a consummate lifelong learner and never lost his love for and connection with our sport.

I was fortunate to spend some time with Bill recently. We shared wonderful lunches, which ended with long talks at his home on Great Island. We communicated regularly via email and, at age 92, he would critique online videos of my rounds from his desk in Connecticut. This fall Bill reviewed my round from the Hampton Classic and his short comments reveal the clarity of his teaching: "There are lots of good things on your tape, the best yet, but before you jump a fence you should put your horse on the bit and everything will improve. Regards, Bill." I am forever grateful for these moments with Bill, and his feedback made me a better rider and person. This experience was not unique to me but rather very familiar to all who knew him.

Bill's wisdom remains with us in his books and lessons and the memories we have of him. His guiding principles read as a combination of horsemanship and life lessons: Always be willing to try something new. Never punish a horse's mouth. Ride good approaches. Be patient. Know when enough is enough. Be emotionally prepared to attack the first fence. Use more leg and less hand. Know when to resist and when to reward. Flatwork, rails, and cavalletti isolate and expose a horse's problems and weaknesses. Performance depends on a combination of physical equipment, talent, and temperament. The harder you work the luckier you get. Bill would urge us always to put the horse first—and be a lifelong student.

In this newsletter you will hear from other legends in our sport—George Morris, Kathy Kusner and Jimmy Wofford—all of whom were fortunate to ride on U.S. Equestrian Teams with Bill. Their memories provide a glimpse into the mind of this incredible man. Bill was loved and revered by his teammates, friends, and followers, and we will all greatly miss him.

Philip E. Richter

USET Foundation Trustee & Treasurer

William Steinkraus

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trophy at the National Horse Show in addition to winning the Good Hands Finals in saddle seat equitation.

"When I was 14 years old, I watched Billy at the Ox Ridge [Hunt Club]," said Olympic teammate George H. Morris. "He would come and school Mrs. Ferrell's horses before [competing at Madison Square Garden]. I remember so clearly watching him school the horses — the hunters — because he rode quite differently for that era. He was more collected and had more contact, he sat deeper and he sat more upright. In modern day, it would not look out of place, but in those days, it was fascinating because the hunters had a long rein and bent their horse to the outside and ran at the jumps. That's where I first remember Billy."

Steinkraus attended Yale University in New Haven, Connecticut, before enlisting in the Army's cavalry branch. From 1943 to 1945, he served as a member of the 124th Cavalry Regiment in the China-India-Burma theater of operations during World War II.

Upon graduating from Yale in 1949, Steinkraus returned to focusing his efforts on his show jumping career. At his 1952 Olympic Games debut in Helsinki, Steinkraus helped secure the bronze medal for team show jumping. A few years later, he would go on to help the U.S. attain two silver medals in team show jumping during the 1960 Olympic Games in Rome and the 1972 Olympic Games in Munich. Steinkraus made history once again as the first American to win an individual gold medal in show jumping aboard Snowbound at the 1968 Olympic Games



William Steinkraus and Fleet Apple

in Mexico City, where he "won over one of the biggest courses that has ever been built," according to Wofford.

Many noted that it was Steinkraus' attention to detail that set him apart from the rest and made him so successful.

"There was nothing left to chance with Bill Steinkraus," explained Wofford. "He thought about everything — how the gloves were constructed, how much the riding whip should weigh, what shape the spurs should be. There was no detail that escaped his notice."

Morris added, "Billy mentored me. His attention to detail, his equipment, the

horse, the shoeing — there was nothing too detailed for Billy.

"One of the greatest things I ever learned from Billy is when a horse raises its head, raise your hands," continued Morris. "Nobody teaches that but me, and that's from Billy Steinkraus. That's why I don't need draw reins because I can get a horse's head down quickly. When you raise your hands and you stay above his mouth, very quickly he realizes if he drops his head you drop your hands. Things like that I learned from Billy."

Kathy Kusner also had the opportunity to work with Steinkraus and said, "He was



Photo by Cantor

William Steinkraus wins the 1941 Maclay Championship



Queen Elizabeth presenting a trophy to William Steinkraus

William Steinkraus

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such a favorite, and I just couldn't believe my luck when I was in the position where I could ask and talk and watch the things Billy was doing. I found talking about technique and how to do this or that with him really interesting. He was terrific.

"He rode better than anybody else," she added. "It's just that simple. Whoever is doing the best and riding the best [is who] you're watching and copying. I was lucky enough to be a good friend of Billy's so I would also watch and ask him questions all the time."

It was also Steinkraus' love of the horse that helped him achieve greatness in the sport.

"Billy was a very sensitive man. He was a musician, he loved his wife, he loved his sisters and he loved his family," said Morris. "He loved the sport — he was an artist. He loved his horses, and I tell people that whether you're cleaning a stall, braiding, grooming or riding, it's all for the horse. He had great empathy for the horse."

Steinkraus retired from showing internationally in 1972, but remained heavily involved in the sport acting as a judge, TV commentator, clinician, coach and author. For 17 years, he was the team captain of the U.S. show jumping team.

A founding member of the USET, Steinkraus served as a well-respected president and chairman of the organization for two decades, serving as Chairman Emeritus for the past 25 years. Steinkraus was the first equestrian to be inducted into the Fairfield County Sports Hall of Fame in 2016, joining notable athletes such as baseball player Jackie Robinson and basketball player Calvin Murphy.



William Steinkraus and Sinjon



William Steinkraus and Sinjon

A gifted violinist, Steinkraus enjoyed classical music and played in the Connecticut Symphony. In 1960, he married Helen Ziegler Steinkraus, fondly known as "Sis," who enjoyed a successful Grand Prix dressage career. Mrs. Steinkraus eventually became a highly-respected FEI judge and served as vice president of the American Dressage Institute. She was instrumental in bringing dressage to the U.S. and helped with its growth in popularity. She also excelled in the sport of fox hunting and worked hard to improve horse shows both in Long Island, New York, and in Wellington, Florida. Mrs. Steinkraus played a critical behind-the-scenes role in helping and supporting her husband as his illustrious career flourished. Sadly, in 2012, Mrs. Steinkraus passed away after 51 years of marriage due

to an illness. Upon her death, Steinkraus said this of his wife, "She was always open to new challenges, new people and new experiences. All in all, she had an extraordinary range of interests, a lot of courage and a lot of determination."

One of Morris' favorite memories of Steinkraus included "Sis." Morris explained, "Billy lived in Darien and I stayed with my parents in New Cannan often. Sis Steinkraus was a very good friend — she knew my sister well. They were about the same age; they ran with the same crowd in Darien and New Canaan so I actually knew Sis before I knew Billy."

Morris continued, "Sis had a dressage prospect named Impala, who's actually on the cover of my last edition of *Hunter Seat Equitation*, but he was a beautiful chestnut gelding who always won the hack. He was

almost undefeated under saddle. He had a very successful run as a first and second year green working hunter. That was a great honor. He was a lovely horse and it was a great compliment to be able to show that horse. We had a great time together."

Steinkraus will be deeply missed and remembered for his incredible achievements and contributions to the equestrian community. He is survived by his three sons, Eric of Sandy Hook, Connecticut, Philip and his wife Stefanie of Rhinebeck, New York, and Edward and his wife Beth and three grandchildren, Grace, Abigail and Griffin, of Darien, Connecticut. Steinkraus also had two sisters, Ruth Steinkraus Cohen and Marjorie Steinkraus. The family held private services and asked for donations in Steinkraus' name to be made to the USET Foundation.

Morris concluded, "Billy was always leading — he was always ahead, even up to his death. He was always mentally one step ahead of everybody. We don't have theorists or historians now like Billy. Billy would dissect your little finger in the shoulder-in. It wasn't just about Aachen or Dublin or Pan-Am and Olympic gold medals, Billy was a theorist. I would say that, coupled with his being such a detailed horseman, is what really influenced me and the sport."



Photo by Rebecca Walton / Phelps Media Group

Frank Chapot, William Steinkraus and George H. Morris at the USET Foundation Courtyard Dedication in 2012



Photo by Nancy Jaffer

(L to R back row) Mark Leone, Armand Leone, Eric Hasbrouck, Joe Fargis and Chris Kappler
(L to R front row) – Jimmy Torano, Neil Shapiro, Peter Leone, Chrystine Tauber, Mary Chapot, Bill Steinkraus, Bezie Madden, Robin Rost, Leslie Burr Howard, Anne Kursinski, Joy Kloss, McLain Ward, George Morris, Laura Chapot, Linda Sheridan, DD Matz and Michael Matz

Finding Grit and Rediscovering Passion with Paralympian

MARGARET 'GIGI' MCINTOSH

When Margaret 'Gigi' McIntosh was a developing rider early in her equestrian career, she thrived on the thrill and excitement of cross-country. However, after a tragic jumping accident in spring 1999 that left her initially paralyzed from the chest down, no one thought she would return to the saddle and ultimately ride down the Paralympic centerline less than 18 years later.



Margaret McIntosh and Rio Rio

McIntosh started riding around the age of 7 and every summer during high school and college she was a dedicated working student for event riders May and Denny Emerson. After graduating in 1976 from Cornell University with a psychology degree, McIntosh worked as the barn manager for renowned dressage trainers Gunnar Ostergaard and Ellin Dixon before moving to Germany to apprentice with George and Inge Theodorescu.

Upon her return to the United States in 1983, McIntosh focused on competing in the sport of eventing and worked her way up to the international 3* and 4* level with the help of Bruce Davidson.

"I never really aimed for the Olympics when I was eventing — I knew very well that I was just an amateur," McIntosh said. "Riding in the 4* three-day events seemed a distant but more attainable goal for me at the time."

She was long listed for the United States eventing team for the Pan American Games and was invited to participate in multiple U.S. training sessions throughout the late 1990s. She continued to gain vital experience competing at the top of the sport and finished

the prestigious Rolex Kentucky Three-Day Event CCI4* in 1997 and 1998 aboard her Thoroughbred Flashy Turn in addition to completing at the Fair Hill International CCI3* competition.

McIntosh purchased a talented younger mount named Fred to continue to move up the levels with in spring 1999, and the pair entered at the intermediate level for the horse trials at Morven Park Equestrian Center in Leesburg, Virginia. Little did she know that life as she knew it was about to change forever.

"When we came to a formidable ramp jump, unfortunately Fred stood off and I asked him to take off way too far from the jump," McIntosh explained. "His front legs cleared the jump but his back legs got caught in the top of the jump like a rabbit in a snare. It just grabbed his feet and he fell on his shoulder. My head hit the ground with a lot of force and the next thing I knew I was lying there and Fred had run away and I couldn't get up."

McIntosh broke her C-6 vertebrae at the base of her neck resulting in incomplete quadriplegia. Doctors were worried about her survival during the first week in the hospital as some who suffer from the injury die, but McIntosh rallied her strength for what

the nurses called a miracle recovery. She spent six weeks in the hospital with intense physical therapy before she was released for nine months of outpatient therapy.

Though many with her injuries would be relegated to life in a wheelchair, McIntosh was determined to get back in the saddle though she was dispirited she would never ride at the level she had dreamed of.

"Having been totally preoccupied with my horses for the previous 10 years, I faced a void after my accident," McIntosh said. "I was lost without the daily relationship with a horse and I was so afraid that if I started to cry I wouldn't be able to stop."

Only six months after the accident, McIntosh mounted back up during a hippotherapy program at the Cort Center for Therapeutic Riding at Pleasant Hollow Farm in Pennsylvania. For the next few years, she focused on building muscles by working out at the gym and pushing the capabilities of her body.

Inspired by McIntosh's drive, her good friend Jan Smith, who was also a longtime supporter of Davidson, offered McIntosh her Selle Français gelding, Idalgo. Idalgo was one of Davidson's 4* mounts that was retired from eventing, but found the perfect job as McIntosh's first para-dressage mount due to his calm disposition.

After receiving recommendations from friends, McIntosh began training at Blue Hill Farm with Missy and Jessica Ransehausen.

"As an able-bodied rider, I often competed with two horses on my own without any help," McIntosh explained. "One of the hardest things to adjust to, after my accident, was the realization that I needed a lot of help! I am eternally grateful to those who have enabled my equestrian obsession from my family to Jane Cory, who started out walking beside me, to Missy, whose classic riding ability makes it all possible."

McIntosh was soon encouraged to buckle down and get serious about competing in the sport of para-dressage, and she set her sights on the 2012 London Paralympic Games. Unfortunately, Idalgo did not have a spectacular walk and the pair missed a spot on the team by only .01 percent. With the goal of being more competitive for international championships, McIntosh purchased Rio Rio, a Rheinlander mare, in 2013.



Margaret McIntosh and Flashy Turn



Margaret McIntosh and Flashy Turn

During an exciting summer training and competing in Europe, McIntosh wanted to gain much needed international mileage before the 2014 World Equestrian Games (WEG) in Normandy, France. Though the trip initially started smoothly, McIntosh started experiencing agonizing back pain at the trot before their CPEDI in Belgium. She requested to be reclassified from Grade 1b to Grade 1a, which includes the most impaired riders. Though she was granted permission to compete in the Grade 1a division by the European classifiers, she ran into an issue at the WEG selection trials. Her reclassification was not confirmed thoroughly in Europe and she was forced to forfeit her spot on the WEG team.

"The process of getting reclassified by the FEI was really difficult and a much more daunting project than I imagined," McIntosh said. "I had to provide very thorough medical documentation and I received stringent examinations to prove that I could not compete in the trot. Later that year, I got an MRI which gave the diagnosis of scoliosis, stenosis and atherosclerosis, and I earned a permanent Grade 1a classification."

Though the new pair were disappointed about missing the World Equestrian Games, they turned their focus on the selection trials for the 2016 Paralympic Games. McIntosh explained that the first test during the trials may have been one of the worst dressage tests she'd ever had, but they stepped it up to win the Grade 1a Freestyle and Grade 1a Championship, solidifying their place on the Paralympic team alongside Rebecca Hart, Annie Peavy and Sydney Collier.

"The Paralympics was the culmination of all my hard work," McIntosh explained. "The amazing thing was that the event was not only an equestrian goal, but the world's top athletes. Walking through the village, there was a lack of self-consciousness and you didn't notice others' disabilities, but their bright and happy attitudes."

"I was delighted and proud to be there," she continued. "I was truly impressed by the attention to detail and support from US Equestrian and the USET Foundation. When people started chanting, 'USA, USA,' it was so inspiring."

Upon returning home from Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, McIntosh and her team made the decision to return Rio Rio and begin the process of searching for her next top mount. With the collaboration and guidance of many friends and coaches, including U.S. Equestrian's Director of Sport Programs, Will Connell and their new head of para-equestrian coach development Michel Assouline

Margaret McIntosh

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Photo courtesy of Margaret McIntosh

Margaret McIntosh and Rio Rio

and his wife, Mette, she found Heros, a 13-year-old Danish Warmblood mare in Denmark.

"I bought Heros in June of this year — she was imported to England and was in quarantine for three weeks and I trained with Mette at her farm in Colne Engaine, Essex, U.K.," McIntosh explained. "We decided to compete at the CPEDI3* at Bishop Burton with my U.S. teammate Annie [Peavy]. I managed to make every common mistake in our first outing — going off course, pausing to poop and whinnying. Our subsequent tests showed steady improvements culminating in a lovely freestyle for second place behind London Paralympic medal winner, Laurentia Tan. Despite my mistakes, Michel Assouline liked what he saw in the first test, stating, 'The pieces are all there.'"

"One of the most useful competitive tips I gleaned from my stay at the Assoulines Brick House Farm in the U.K. was to insist on square halts from Heros, in every circumstance!" McIntosh continued. "Whether mounting, dismounting, practicing halts or adjusting tack, everything had to start from a square halt. As Michel explained, 'With three halts in every test at 10 points each, times five judges, it is worth it to get it right!'"

Most recently, McIntosh and Heros took home the 2017 USEF Para-Equestrian Dressage Reserve National Championship and a first place finish in their Grade I Para-Freestyle from the USEF Para-Equestrian Dressage National Championships.

"I didn't know what to expect at the national championships," McIntosh explained. "Heros improved with every test. She's been a model of exemplary behavior. The freestyle is old. I didn't have time to make a new one with her. It felt like putting on an old shoe and Heros just fit right into it."

At the end of the day, McIntosh believes she is quite lucky to have the support of her family, her husband Brian and her two grown children, Charlotte and Cameron, plus the love of horses every day. In 2018, McIntosh aims for high scores in her CPEDIs at the Adequan® Global Dressage Festival in order to qualify for

the World Equestrian Games in Tryon, North Carolina, in the fall.

"The time I had in England training in the Assoulines' program and competing this summer was priceless," McIntosh said. "It's so important to get exposed to that level of riding and watch the top Paralympians train and compete. In order to up your game you have to compete where the best riders are. The show jumping, dressage and event teams get sent to the biggest events all over the world, and I hope that our para-program can continue to grow to that level and compete more in Europe. Going forward, our competitive advantage and experience depends on the horse owners and supporters."

McIntosh believes this is no doubt an exciting time to be a para-rider because of the multiple new elite programs as well as the increase in the ability for para-riders to compete in Europe. According to McIntosh, the para-rider sport has grown more so in competitive ability rather than just pure numbers.

"I think we currently have the nicest horses we've ever had and some of the most serious athletes we've ever had as well," McIntosh said. "I wish more people would come to watch para-dressage because the communication between the horse and rider is so incredible. There are riders with no legs and they ride an entire test on the bit. There are people who ride with one leg but they ride so beautifully you don't even realize they are handicapped. It is the same movements that abled riders do. The element of trust between the rider and the horse is monumental."

To all the riders who are driven to succeed but worried about the journey ahead, McIntosh recommends, "Never, ever give up! Whatever disaster, small or large, that gets in the way, you have to figure out a way around it. If you know what your goal is there is always a way to get there. I've always stayed positive regarding something I want to do. There is a quote from Henry Ford that I love, 'Whether you think you can or you think you can't — you're right.'" — *Annan Hepner*



Photo courtesy of Margaret McIntosh

Margaret McIntosh and Rio Rio with Missy Ranshousen

U.S. Paralympian Angela Peavy Wins 2017 USEF Para-Equestrian Dressage National Championships

The Tryon International Equestrian Center proudly hosted the 2017 USEF Para-Equestrian Dressage National Championships which kicked off on Sept. 15, drawing the nation's most talented para-equestrians together to vie for the national title. In the end, it was Grade IV athlete and 2016 Paralympic team member Angela Peavy of Wellington, Florida, and Royal Dark Chocolate who claimed the top prize.

felt just right on with me, excited for the music but listening to every aid. She is used to the arena now so we could just go and show everyone what we could do.

"We have only had [the freestyle test] for a month or two now so I have only ridden it a handful of times," Peavy continued. "I was nervous but riding it was the most fun for me. The music started and she just felt right on with every transition and with the music so, for me, it was definitely



Angela Peavy and Royal Dark Chocolate

Peavy and the 9-year-old Oldenburg mare, owned by Rebecca Reno, earned the title after placing second in the Grade IV FEI Team Test scoring 69.375 percent, first in the Grade IV FEI Individual Test with a score of 70.122 percent and first in the Grade IV FEI Freestyle Test scoring a 76.458 percent.

The freestyle test garnered the pair the highest score of the show. They finished out the weekend performing their freestyle to music from the French musical *Chocolat* to earn an overall score of 71.090 percent.

"I was very pleased with [Royal Dark Chocolate] throughout the whole weekend, but especially today because we have been developing our freestyle and at each show it changes just a little," Peavy said. "The music excites her a little bit, but today she

the most exciting ride of the weekend."

Fellow 2016 Paralympian Margaret McIntosh of Reading, Pennsylvania, and her 13-year-old Danish Warmblood mare Heros took home the title of Reserve National Champion with an overall score of 70.747 percent. The horse-and-rider combination was close behind Peavy for the duration of the competition, winning the Grade I FEI Team Test with a score of 70.476 percent, placing second in the Grade I FEI Individual Test with a score of 70.475 percent and once again winning the Grade I FEI Freestyle Test with a score of 71.833 percent.

"I didn't know what to expect here today," McIntosh said. "I bought Heros in June and rode her for a little while in England with Michel and Mette Assouline.



Margaret McIntosh and Heros

She was imported at the end of July and spent three weeks in quarantine so this was a leap of faith coming here.

Athlete Laurietta Oakleaf of Coatesville, Pennsylvania, and Niekele Fan Busentiz, a 13-year-old Friesian stallion, finished in third place in the national championship with solid performances all weekend. The pair scored 69.899 percent in the Grade II FEI Team Test, a 68.529 percent in the Grade II FEI Individual Test and a 71.389 percent in the Grade II FEI Freestyle Test. Taking first place in all of their classes, Oakleaf and Niekele Fan Busentiz totaled an overall score of 69.649 percent for the weekend.

"His strongest test was today," Oakleaf said. "We got him a little more round in the back and a little more through in the bit. He had a little bit more push from his hind end today. I think it was about consistency and each day asking for the same thing and adjusting or changing what we needed. I was really proud of him today. He had a really good test." – Emma Miller



Laurietta Oakleaf and Niekele Fan Busentiz

All photos by REM Photography.com/USEF Equestrian

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ USET Foundation Hosts Revamped Dressage Development and Emerging Athlete Programs ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Another page was added to the storied history of polishing talent at the United States Equestrian Team (USET) Foundation's headquarters when dressage riders, aspiring to compete at the top level, came to Gladstone, New Jersey, to participate in the U.S. Equestrian Development Program Training and Evaluation Session.

The four-day October event was led by U.S. Dressage Development Coach Debbie McDonald, who is an Olympic and World Equestrian Games (WEG) medalist, along with other key professionals such as Olympian and dressage judge Charlotte Bredahl-Baker.

The workshop, hosted at the Gladstone facility where so many Olympians have trained over the years, offered an important step for those seeking to represent their country someday. The program, which also runs in other regions, is part of a revamped effort to link the elite horse-and-rider combinations competing at the Olympics, WEG, World Cup Finals and Pan American Games with those on the rise at lower levels — serving as a pipeline for cultivating talent to proceed through the ranks.

Emily Donaldson of Pennsylvania was thrilled she and her two horses, a 12-year-old who just started at the Prix St. Georges/Intermediate I level and an 8-year-old still working on flying changes, could participate. Donaldson, who is fighting breast cancer and undergoing chemotherapy, worked hard and pushed herself to make sure she could take advantage of the program and, in the end, believed it made a difference for her and her mounts.



Debbie McDonald and Charlotte Bredahl-Baker with Missy Fladland and Sundance 8

"It's just been amazing. You think, 'If I could do this every week, what would happen with my training?' You have to be a sponge and soak every bit of it in and sort of run with it when you go home," said Donaldson. "My goal is to be a team rider. As a professional, it's hard to find time for yourself. Just being here has been amazing."

Yet McDonald remembers when development programs too often were under-funded and money originally allotted "would get pulled because it was an Olympic or WEG year." While that was "totally understandable" to McDonald, it also was frustrating.

Through support from USET Foundation trustee Akiko Yamazaki and the Red Husky Foundation as well as Elizabeth Juliano, the comprehensive October event included a physiotherapy initiative, represented by Andy Thomas, a session with a sports psychologist as well as analysis of dressage tests from Bredahl-Baker.

The new, revamped program includes evaluation as well as training. As US Equestrian's managing director for dressage, Hallie Griffin, explained after the session, some people may be selected for program membership that will enable them to obtain grants. In the past, athletes applied for grants, but there was not a lot of individual follow-up with those who were chosen.

Now, once they have been selected, the areas where they need more help are identified and they are put in touch with experts in those fields, whether it is physiotherapy, statistical analysis or others. The process also calls for a six-month review to determine whether they have reached their target goal — perhaps moving up a level or achieving a certain score.

"Every year I do this," said McDonald. "I get a bigger vision of where this could go. I might still want to tweak it a little bit, but this year, I feel so much more engaged with the riders and I feel like I'm helping them set goals and future plans."

Riders came from as far away as Iowa and Illinois to take advantage of the program. However, not every region has an abun-



Debbie McDonald and Morton Thomsen with Michael Bragdell and Sternlicht

dance of resources for dressage, which makes the program doubly important.

"Finding some good eyes on the ground is difficult in some of the places where people live," said McDonald, who also observed how the participants' own trainers worked with them.

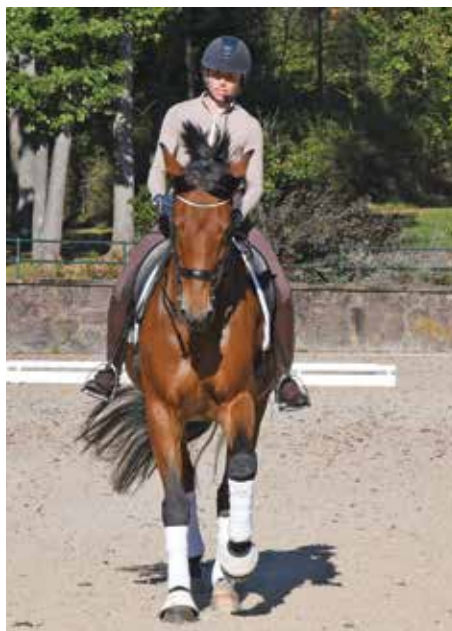


Allison Kavey and Cacharel

Former U.S. dressage Chef d'Équipe Jessica Ranshousen was on hand with Donaldson, who is her student. When Ranshousen was leading the U.S. squads, there was no program comparable to this and it was hard for many people to find a pathway to the top. Ranshousen appreciates the availability of such former top competitors as McDonald and Bredahl-Baker.

"The riders in the development program are going to talk to their friends who are then going to want to come into a program like this. It's going to get bigger and bigger. We want to encourage those riders who have already been to the top to put some time into it," said Ranshousen, discussing the way veterans can reach out to those aspiring to achieve a higher level of performance.

Another participant, Missy Fladland, who is based in Iowa, called the clinic



Emily Donaldson and Audi

"top-notch" and said, "The experience has been great. We're meeting not only other professionals that we can connect and network with but Debbie and Charlotte both have an ability to fine-tune the little things in the rider and horse to make it look seamless. Where the program is going to go for the U.S. and the future of dressage is just unstoppable. For me, this experience has been amazing and unbelievable."

The US Equestrian Development Program Training and Evaluation Session was preceded by the all-new Discover Dressage™ USEF/USDF Emerging Athlete Program, which is aimed at up-and-coming dressage athletes under the age of 25.

Held at the USET Foundation's headquarters Oct. 13–15, the new pathway program launched with a High-Intensity Training Session (HITS) and was directed by US Equestrian Dressage Youth Coach George Williams and Bredahl-Baker, who serves as the assistant youth coach. The emerging athlete component is part of the same initiative that offers a clear road map for getting to the top.

"The aim of a pathway is to make sure there is education, coaching and competition support at every level, and a clear vision of what it takes to get to the next step," said US Equestrian director of sport Will Connell. "You plant a tree and you watch it grow. This is about finding people who are starting out in their international career and helping them grow."

– Nancy Jaffer



Cesar Parra and Fashion Designer OLD



Missy Fladland and Sundance 8



Anna Stovall and Frankie

All photos by Nancy Jaffer

JACQUELINE B. MARS

NATIONAL COMPETITION AND TRAINING GRANT RECIPIENTS

Linstedt, Smith and Helffrich

Find Success at The Dutta Corp. Fair Hill International CCI2* and CCI3*

In October, the 2017 recipients of the USET Foundation's Jacqueline B. Mars National Competition and Training Grants, Jordan Linstedt, Tamra Smith and Alexis Helffrich, made their way to the East Coast to attend The Dutta Corp. Fair Hill International CCI3*.

Held in Fair Hill, Maryland, from Oct. 12–15, the event provided a unique opportunity for the three athletes to hone their skills by learning under the watchful eyes of top coaches in the sport and ride head-to-head against some of the biggest names in eventing including Buck Davidson and two-time Olympian Boyd Martin.

On the opening day of competition, Linstedt, who is an international top-level CCI4* event rider, earned a dressage score of 45.2 penalties aboard Barbara Linstedt's 14-year-old Hanoverian Revitavet Capato, whom she has been riding for nearly eight years.

Linstedt, who hails from Duvall, Washington, said, "The test felt fantastic. I think it's the best test we've had and I thought he felt phenomenal from beginning to end. [Tomorrow], I think the terrain is going to play a huge part. Capato is a phenomenal cross-country horse though and I am excited to have my first run here!"

Following the Fair Hill International CCI3* cross-country phase, Linstedt was able to maintain her 11th place position from day one.

"Capato felt phenomenal all the way around," Linstedt noted. "Towards the end, he felt a little bit of the terrain so I didn't focus



Jordan Linstedt and Revitavet Capato



Jordan Linstedt and Revitavet Capato

too much on the time. I just wanted to jump a nice clear, which we did. He's just truly an amazing cross-country horse. He gives me everything I ask for. It was a smooth run from start to finish. Tomorrow, hopefully I can ride accurately and not feel too much pressure so I can help him jump a good round."

Linstedt and Revitavet Capato ended up finishing among the top 10 during the Fair Hill International CCI3* event, and was grateful for having the chance to focus on her training.

"Being a grant recipient has been a huge part of being able to be really successful out here," Linstedt said. "It enabled me to focus on my riding and our training. For riders trying to get to the national and international level, it's huge to have that support and come out here and be successful.

"This is the first big grant I've received so it's a big deal for me," continued Linstedt. "It's unbelievable to get the opportunity to do what I love to do and travel. A huge thank you to the USET

Foundation and Jacqueline Mars for making these opportunities available to us.”

Smith, of Murrieta, California, is an ICP Level IV certified instructor with over 25 years of experience and numerous accomplishments under her belt. She guided her two mounts, Kevin and Gretchen Baumgardner’s 14-year-old Dutch Warmblood gelding Wembley and her own 8-year-old Holsteiner mare Fleeceworks Royal, in the dressage phase to scores of 44.20 and 46.70, respectively. Both of Smith’s horses also executed fast rounds over the second day’s challenging cross-country course.

“It’s a huge honor to be able to receive a grant like this,” said Smith. “It’s really beneficial because we’re away from our businesses while traveling. To be away for a month to go to the East Coast is not only financially taxing but also hard on our businesses as well. You feel like you’re picking the right horses and doing the right things when you get validation by receiving a grant like this so it’s really exciting. I’m very honored and very excited. Thank you to Jacqueline Mars for the investment she’s put into the sport. It really means a lot to have been a recipient of something like this.”

In addition to competing in the Fair Hill International CCI3* during her trip east, Smith also represented the United States during the Fair Hill International CCI2*, where she earned the victory with Sunsprite Warmbloods’ Sunsprite Sirius after finishing on her dressage score of 40.90 penalties.

Helffrich, who is originally from France but now calls Pleasanton, California, home, brought Pamela Williams’ London Town to The Dutta Corp. Fair Hill International CCI2* and CCI3* competition. Licensed to teach through advanced level eventing and Fourth Level dressage, Helffrich has been named to the United States Eventing Developing Rider List and is currently competing at the 3* level. Helffrich and the 10-year-old Thoroughbred/Warmblood gelding earned a score of 46.90 penalties in the dressage phase.

For Linstedt, Smith and Helffrich, the event was well worth the trip from the West Coast to Maryland as they gained valuable tools that they will carry with them for the remainder of their careers.

– Caroline Nickolaus 



Tamra Smith and Fleeceworks Royal



Alexis Helffrich and London Town

Hermès U.S. Show Jumping Team Secure Silver Medal AT LONGINES FEI NATIONS CUP™ JUMPING FINAL



McLain Ward and HH Azur

After claiming bronze in 2016, the Hermès U.S. Show Jumping Team continued their climb up the podium in 2017, taking home the silver medal in the Longines FEI Nations Cup™ Jumping Final, the highly-anticipated conclusion of the FEI Nations Cup™ Jumping series, at CSIO5* Barcelona Sept. 28–Oct. 1.

The U.S. team, who are part of the North America, Central America and Caribbean league of the FEI Nations Cup™ Jumping series, qualified for the final in Barcelona after clinching silver at CSIO4* Ocala in February and CSIO4* Coapexpan in May as well as gold at CSIO4* Langley in June.

With Olympic veterans Lauren Hough and Ohlala, Laura

Kraut and Confu, Beezie Madden and Darry Lou and McLain Ward and HH Azur, led by Chef d'Équipe Robert Ridland, the team finished with a total of 4 faults after Saturday's final round, while the Netherlands took home the gold medal with 1 time fault.

"Last year third, this year second. It was tremendous," said Ridland. "Beezie [Madden] is on a young horse, a new combination, and it is fabulous. Same thing with Laura [Kraut] — that is a relatively new combination, and the other two, [Hough and Ward] — perfection. We knew we were coming with a good team. There is no question about that. We had four veteran riders out there, but the combinations themselves were relatively new; we really couldn't be happier."

Fifteen teams competed in Thursday's qualifying round, which would determine the top eight teams returning for Saturday's final round. The U.S. team got off to a strong start, with clear rounds from Ward and Hough, to finish in second on Thursday, tied with the Netherlands, France and Germany on 4 faults, securing their spot in Saturday's competition.

Although Saturday's final round began with a two-hour delay due to technical issues with a stadium light, the team persevered and remained focused with their eyes on the prize.

Once competition was finally underway, Hough and The Ohlala Group's Ohlala, a 13-year-old Swedish Warmblood mare, were the first to compete for the U.S. Team under the lights at the Real Club de Polo, proving their experience and finishing clear around the challenging course, designed by Santiago Varela, for the second time during the week's competitions.

"I've actually never had that happen before," said Hough of the competition delay. "I had to get the horse ready twice, and it was a lot of sitting around. I had to stay focused without letting that nervous energy bunch up too much. [Ohlala] was absolutely perfect. I'm thrilled, I'm absolutely thrilled."

"[Ohlala's] been amazing this week, I'm so proud of her double-clear," continued Hough. "There was a lot of waiting so under the circumstances I'm absolutely thrilled and so proud to be part of such an extraordinary team. Everyone performed brilliantly. Both Laura and Beezie are on younger horses, but they are incredible riders and they kind of held their horses' hands. We are thrilled with the result today."



Lauren Hough and Ohlala

Following Hough, both Kraut and St. Bride's Farm's 10-year-old Holsteiner gelding Confu and Madden and Abigail Wexner's 9-year-old Dutch Warmblood stallion Darry Lou, produced solid efforts but added 4 faults each from their rounds.

Heading in to the fourth and final rotation of riders, the U.S. team sat on 4 faults, dropping Kraut and Confu's score, tied with Belgium, Germany and Switzerland.

Although the Netherlands sealed their fate with just 1 time fault as their final combination, Harrie Smolders and Don VHP Z, produced a clear round prior to U.S. anchors Ward and Double H Farm and François Mathy's 11-year-old Belgium Warmblood mare HH Azur, the 2017 Longines FEI World Cup™ Jumping Final champions raced against the clock to deliver their second clear performance of the week and secure the U.S. the silver medal over Belgium, who took the bronze medal. Ward and Hough made up two of the six riders to complete the week with double-clear efforts.

"It felt like Rio all over again," said Ward. "In that situation, you fight to be the best you can be on the day — that is my job, particularly as anchor, to be able to handle that. I knew that the time was going to be the factor so I tried to think about that during my round, and Azur performed beautifully. She felt really good. She felt brilliant the other day and brilliant today, maybe even better."

Following their runner-up finish at the 2017 Longines FEI Nations Cup™ Jumping Final, Ridland and the Hermès U.S. Show Jumping Team are now shifting their focus towards the upcoming FEI World Equestrian Games™ (WEG) to be held in Tryon, North Carolina, in September 2018.

"It was an unbelievably consistent week," said Ridland. "We couldn't be happier. This was one of our big priorities of the year. We feel we are on the right path, and at this point in time we start looking forward to WEG." — Taylor Renner



Laura Kraut and Confu



Beezie Madden and Darry Lou

All Photos by Libby Lam Photography

★ ★ GIRLS RULE! ★ ★

All Female U.S. Team Tops Dublin Nations Cup



Photo courtesy of FEI

Laura Kraut, Lillie Keenan, Lauren Hough and Beezie Madden

The Hermès U.S. Show Jumping Team was the only team to finish with a fault-free total, securing a definitive victory and claiming the gold medal honors in the eighth and last leg of the Europe Division 1 league in the 2017 FEI Nations Cup™ Jumping series. In the 91-year history of the series, this was the first all-female team triumph as the American women vied for the world-famous Aga Khan Cup at the Dublin Horse Show CSIO5* in Ireland on Friday, Aug. 11.

Together, Lauren Hough, Lillie Keenan, Beezie Madden and Laura Kraut accumulated six out of eight possible clear rounds, while Kraut and Hough secured two out of the four double-clear rounds in the competition leaving the United States with a clear scorecard. France finished with 5 faults, followed by the Netherlands with 7 faults.



Photo courtesy of FEI

Laura Kraut and Confu

"The Aga Khan Cup is probably the most coveted trophy in the sport. When we have the opportunity to compete at Dublin, we make it a big priority," said U.S. Chef d'Équipe Robert Ridland. "This was an incredibly exciting competition as it went down to the last round, but our riders compete under pressure very well. All four riders were unbelievable today; they were aware of the pressure, but as great riders do, they rose to the occasion."

Tom Holden's (IRL) difficult track tested riders over 15 efforts at 1.60m in height with the time allowance of 80 seconds proving to be one of the most problematic elements of the course. Madden and her new 9-year-old mount, Darry Lou, displaced one rail at the final fence to become the drop score for the United States in the first round, with all other riders finishing clear. The U.S. sat tied with home team Ireland on 0 faults, while France and the Netherlands followed with 1 and 2 faults, respectively, heading into round two.

Returning in reverse order, the Netherlands' first two combinations went clear adding pressure on the U.S, but finished with 5 faults for a 7-fault total. Hough piloted The Ohlala Group's 13-year-old mare, Ohlala, to a double-clear effort, while Madden followed with an additional clear round for the United States. Keenan had an error at the first element of the double combination and incurred 1 time penalty with Chansonette

Farm LLC's Super Sox for a 5-fault finish. With threats from France, who finished on a 5-fault total, it came down to Kraut who had to cross the finish line with 4 faults or less. Aboard St. Bride's Farm's 10-year-old Holsteiner gelding, Confu, Kraut entered the ring as the American anchor and the competition's final rider. The pressure did not affect the double-Olympian as she bested the course once again, with a powerful, clear run to leave a 5-fault margin between the winning U.S. team and the French, who claimed the silver medal.

Upon their gold medal Nations Cup victory, the four American women made history at the 144th Dublin Horse Show with an impressive display of girl power as the first all-female equestrian team to accomplish this feat. – Barre Dukes



Photo by Tori O'Connor

Lauren Hough and Ohlala



Photo by Tori O'Connor

Beezie Madden and Darry Lou



Photo by Tori O'Connor

Lillie Keenan and Super Sox

The Hermès U.S. Show Jumping Team clinched the gold medal in the BMO Nations Cup in front of more than 80,000 show jumping fans in the International Ring on Saturday, Sept. 9, during the Spruce Meadows 'Masters' CSIO5* Tournament.

The victorious U.S. team consisted of Lauren Hough, Charlie Jacobs, Lillie Keenan and Beezie Madden, led by Chef d'Équipe Robert Ridland.

Eight nations turned out for the first round of competition, where the United States kicked things off as first in the order-of-go to test one of the toughest courses of the season, designed by Venezuela's Leopoldo Palacios. Madden and Abigail Wexner's Darry Lou produced the only clear finish of the first round, while the rest of the team incurred 4 faults each against a difficult but fair track, thus concluding round one with 8 faults after dropping one 4-fault score.

The top six teams returned for round two, which included the United States, Brazil, Belgium, France, Canada and Germany.

Sitting in third place tied with Canada and having completed Palacios' enormous track once already, the U.S. horse-and-rider combinations returned for the second round of Nations Cup competition confident and ready to perform their best in order to move up in the standings. Madden and Darry Lou, Jacobs and CMJ Sporthorse LLC's Cassinja S and Hough and Meredith Mateo's Waterford all finished clear, while Keenan and Chansonette Farm LLC's Fibonacci 17 collected 4 faults to be the drop score. As a result, the United States added no faults to their name and finished round two on a total of 8 faults from round one.



Charlie Jacobs and Cassinja S

In an exciting turn of events, the team from Brazil also concluded the second round of competition with 8 faults, forcing a jump-off between the two nations to determine the winner.

Success at Spruce Meadows for Hermès U.S. Show Jumping Team



Lauren Hough, Charlie Jacobs, Beezie Madden and Lillie Keenan with COO of BMO Financial Group, Darryl White, and Chef d'Équipe Robert Ridland

It was Madden who was chosen to represent the U.S. in the jump-off. Aboard the 9-year-old Dutch Warmblood stallion, Madden crossed the finish line with no faults in a quick time of 39.21 seconds to finish the competition with a triple-clear scorecard. Brazil's Pedro Junqueira Muylaert and Prince Royal Z MFS followed with another clear round, but just missed Madden's time, finishing in 39.75 seconds and propelling the United States to the top of the podium.



Beezie Madden and Darry Lou

early on, but that's why it's a two round class and they did the job."

Prior to the start of the BMO Nations Cup, the United States added another accolade to their trip north as athlete Lucy Deslauriers was awarded the Xerox Junior Rider of the Year award for her top performances in 2017. – Taylor Renner



Lauren Hough and Waterford

This gold medal finish was the USA's eighth Nations Cup podium appearance at Spruce Meadows and fourth gold medal of the year.

"For Beezie to clinch this in a jump-off is indescribable," expressed Ridland. "My team delivered. We had to crawl up the ladder a little bit. Brazil really set the bar



Lillie Keenan and Fibonacci 17

All photo by Cathy Tetley



At 21 years old, Robinson nabbed the championship in her last year of eligibility, making for a successful conclusion to her career status as a young rider.

The Platinum Performance/USEF Show Jumping Talent Search Finals – West provides an opportunity for young riders to highlight their early abilities as potential future American representatives of international equestrian sport. The Talent Search Program plays a key role in preparing young riders for the future as countless veterans of the historic program have successfully competed in the fall final and continued on to achieve national and global success. Emphasizing the principle that “form follows function,” riders are expected to navigate their horse over a jumper-style course, while also maintaining the forward style of riding and demonstrating both correct equitation as well as speed and precision.

Judges and course designers Andre Dignelli and Patricia Griffith called on previous experience, having both competed in the final as juniors, to hone their judgement of the riders. Dignelli fittingly won the elite class in 1986, and Griffith earned the reserve championship under Dignelli’s tutelage at the 1998 event. For the first portion of the competition, riders were divided into three groups and asked to display their mastery on the flat, demonstrating an efficient half-pass, counter-canter, flying lead change and other exercises. The secondary gymnastics phase posed a challenge for plenty of riders, but the cream of the crop rose to the occasion, led by Robinson and Caracas 89.

Boasting a commanding lead at the conclusion of the first day of competition, Robinson had pulled in a total score of 217.5 entering the jumping phase, a whole 16 points ahead of the next closest contender. With another textbook ride during the third phase of competition, she easily coasted into the final work-off, where she was joined by Jayme Omand, Emma Catherine Reichow and Natalie Dean. For the final phase of competition, the remaining young riders would each be challenged to ride their mount over an abridged track, followed by a trip on each of the other three horses. Over the course of 16 total trips from the four top riders, Robinson solidified herself as the 2017 champion with four standout performances.

“[This final] is a real riding test — it’s not a contest of who has the nicest horse. As a working student, that was something that I could always really appreciate,” said Robinson. “I just always wanted to get in the final four and have my experience of riding anything with four legs hopefully pay off!”

Robinson was trailed by reserve champion Omand, while third place on the podium was swept by Reichow, a rookie to the Talent Search Program. Dean rounded out the top four.

– Elaine Wessel 

HALIE ROBINSON

Captures 2017 Platinum Performance/USEF Show Jumping TALENT SEARCH FINALS – WEST

Halie Robinson proved that the third time really is the charm with her 2017 victory in the Platinum Performance/USEF Show Jumping Talent Search Finals – West after two top five finishes in past years. Robinson piloted Elvenstar’s Caracas 89 to the clear lead throughout the four-phase competition, ultimately dominating the final work-off phase ahead of the pack with her precise riding to claim the title spot atop the leaderboard.



(Not listed in order) Halie Robinson, Jayme Omand, Emma Catherine Reichow, Natalie Dean, Kaitlyn Lovingfoss, Natalie Templeton, Gabriela Pattinson, Christina Vail, Carolyn Salas, Clea Caddell, Bianca Jenkins, Tali Dejong, Emma Crosbie, Grace Peek, Jacqueline Vail, Emily DiRaffaele, Carley Drinco, Cecily Katherine Hayes

McKAYLA LANGMEIER

CLINCHES 2017 PLATINUM PERFORMANCE/USEF SHOW JUMPING TALENT SEARCH FINALS – EAST



Jenny Iverson Schwartz, TJ O'Mara, Kenneth Langmeier, Sandy Nielson Bauman, Linda Langmeier, Talent Search Finals – East winner McKayla Langmeier and Skyfall, Missy Clark, Danielle Miranda, Steven Morrissey, Emily Smith, Jimmy Torano, McLain Ward, John Brennan, Joanna Seaver, DiAnn Langer and Lizzy Chesson

Following several top finishes and a Reserve championship at the 2015 finals, McKayla Langmeier finally led the victory gallop aboard mother and trainer Linda Langmeier's Skyfall at the 2017 Platinum Performance/USEF Show Jumping Talent Search Finals – East. Langmeier climbed the ranks to overtake the early leader and outshone the top contenders in the world championship-style fourth and final phase to secure first place honors ahead of more than 50 of the nation's top junior riders. With her win, Langmeier can now add a new accolade to her resume and joins the ranks of past talent search finals champions including international United States competitors such as McLain Ward, Charlie Jayne and Lauren Hough.

Judges Ward and Jimmy Torano wasted no time testing riders in the initial flat phase of competition, asking for an extensive series of tests including the counter-canter and haunches-in, among others. Langmeier represented herself well from the onset, garnering a score of 91 from the judges' panel to put her in the early third place position. Ward and Torano's combination-heavy gymnastics track asked riders to navigate their mounts over multiple bending lines off of both leads and in varying amounts of strides. Langmeier once again laid down a strong ride to earn a respectable score of 86 and secure the fourth place position heading into the second day of competition with a cumulative score of 220, trailing leader Taylor St. Jacques' high marks and score of 235.

On the final day of competition, the third phase jumping course offered horses and riders the opportunity to highlight their skills once more in an attempt to earn a coveted spot in the final work-off phase. Ultimately, Langmeier was joined in the ride-off by St. Jacques, who was still in the lead after phase three, as well as Abigail Brayman and Taylor Griffiths, who ascended from the 10th and 12th place positions, respectively, with their nearly faultless trips.

Entering the final phase with clean slates, riders Langmeier, St. Jacques, Brayman and Griffiths pulled in diverse scores ranging from the low score of 63 to the high score of 90 from the watchful eyes of the judges. With her

four consistent trips, Langmeier outtrode her counterparts to emerge victorious with her cumulative score of 331 in the fourth phase.

"I was surprised. I knew I was going to be somewhere in the top four obviously, but I really didn't know where I was going to end up. It's nice to finally win after being so close in the past!" said Langmeier.

St. Jacques took the reserve spot with a total tally of 326, followed by Griffiths in third place and Brayman in the fourth spot. Heritage Farm's Charisma was awarded the Grappa Trophy, deemed by the judges to have been the best horse of the competition over the course of the two days.

– Elaine Wessel 



The top 10 horse-and-rider combinations awaiting results during the 2017 Platinum Performance/USEF Show Jumping Talent Search Finals – East

All photos by Elaine Wessel / Phelps Media Group

50 years

Dedicated Donor Madeline Gage

RECEIVES TRIP TO ROLEX CENTRAL PARK HORSE SHOW for 50 Years of Support

For half a century, 72-year-old Madeline Gage, of New York has been contributing to and supporting the United States Equestrian Team (USET) Foundation. As one of the most dedicated donors to the USET Foundation, Madeline was honored with a special trip to the 2017 Rolex Central Park Horse Show, where she had the incredible opportunity to meet Olympian McLain Ward and watch the international show jumping competition from the VIP area overlooking the ring and city.

Madeline was first introduced to the USET while in high school when her mother took her to the National Horse Show at Madison Square Garden in New York City, and she has been a dedicated supporter ever since.


"I officially became a member of the USET in 1966," said Madeline. "I used to love to stand on the rail at Madison Square Garden and shoot pictures of Bill Steinkraus, Kathy Kusner, Mary and Frank Chapot and so many others. The original U.S. equestrian team did not receive any funding from the Olympic committee. People, like me, who wanted to see the U.S. represented in the Olympics and in international competition donated to the team. I consistently have been a member of this organization and I love it."

Madeline was taught to ride by her mother in Brooklyn, New York, when she was very young, and although she does not ride anymore, her love of horses and the equestrian sport never faded. Madeline has treasured her involvement with the USET Foundation over the years and boasts an impressive collection of historical memorabilia to prove it.

The United States is one of the only countries in the world that does not receive government funding for its equestrian teams. Although the United States Olympic Committee does provide approximately 30 percent of US Equestrian's annual high performance budget, athletes still rely heavily on the support of fans and donors nationwide to help finance their Olympic and Paralympic dreams.

Madeline has made her own history by becoming the first consecutive 50-year donor to the USET Foundation, but she's made an even larger impact on the history of the sport by continuously supporting U.S. equestrian athletes and giving them the chance to represent the U.S. on the world stage.

"I'm very proud to be a supportive member of the U.S. equestrian team," said Madeline. "To me, it's very important that this country be represented in equestrian events. It's an honor to be a member of the USET Foundation, it really is, and I will be a contributor for as long as I can."

— Rebecca Walton 



McLain Ward and Madeline Gage



Vicki Lowell, Bonnie Jenkins, McLain Ward, Madeline Gage and Jim Wolf

Photos by David Handschuh

Throughout the year, show jumping superstar Kent Farrington might have grown accustomed to the world No. 1 title preceding his name, as he now holds the top spot on the Longines Rankings list for the eighth month in a row with 3,228 points to close out 2017. In addition, fellow American athlete McLain Ward rounds out the competition year as world No. 2 with 2,933 points.

"I actually don't think about the rankings too much. I think it's more a consequence of results going well. My focus is always on doing what's best for the horses I have to ride at that given time. I try to plan the schedule around what's best for my team of horses and the goals I set. Wherever the rest of it comes out, that's fine with me," said Farrington.

A Rio Olympic silver medalist, Farrington overtook Ward to jump up to the No. 1 spot for the first time in May. Featured prominently in the rankings since 2013, his victories in the 2017 Antwerp Grand Prix CSI5* with Sherkan D'Amaury and Global Champions League Final CSI5* in Miami Beach with Creedance boosted his points tally to finally clinch the coveted world No. 1 slot.

Ever since, he has been unstoppable, headlining horse show news with countless wins on multiple mounts, most recently winning his first Rolex Grand Prix CSI5* at CHI Geneva with his own and Robin Parsky's Gazelle.

"It's been a long time in the making," remarked Farrington on his Rolex Grand Prix win. "I believe I have a strong team of horses right now and I hope that I can continue that. I think it's important to not be asleep at the wheel. I'm proud of the results that we have, but my focus is always on the future — what's coming next, where do I want to go, what's my current team of horses and what do I need down the road. That's my mindset. It's always been that way. It takes a long time to do and a long time to build — especially when you started near zero."

Farrington and Gazelle, a 11-year-old Belgian Warmblood mare, claimed notable FEI wins throughout the year including the \$380,000 Rolex Grand Prix CSI5* at Tryon Fall V, the €300,000 Grand Prix of Valence CSI5*, the €300,000 Longines Global Champions Tour Grand Prix of Madrid CSI5*, the \$380,000 Fidelity Investments® Grand Prix CSI5* at the Winter Equestrian Festival (WEF) and three victories at Spruce Meadows, to contribute to his unreachable point total.

With a string of impressive horses, Farrington says, "It depends on a large number of factors, [who I choose to com-

U.S. Show Jumping Athlete **KENT FARRINGTON** **RANKED WORLD NO. 1**



Kent Farrington and Gazelle

Photo by Merrick Hayden

pete]. Everything from the venue to the footing to the horse's condition at that time to their age to what shows they've done recently or what shows are coming after. It's a lot of variables and I try to take as many of them into account as I can and then build the best strategy from there."

Farrington has also found success with Amalaya Investments' 15-year-old Dutch Warmblood gelding and 2016 Rio Olympic mount, Voyeur. The pair captured the \$150,000 Longines FEI World Cup™ Jumping Toronto at the Royal Horse Show in November and the \$125,000 New Albany Classic Invitational Grand Prix CSI2* at the end of September.

Farrington and R.C.G. Farm's Creedance is known to be small, but mighty as he quickly began to consistently top the standings with Farrington throughout 2017. The 10-year-old Dutch Warmblood gelding recently led Farrington to victory in the \$216,000 U.S. Open Grand Prix CSI3* at the Rolex Central Park Horse Show, where the 36-year-old top athlete selflessly donated all of his earnings to the Direct Relief fund for hurricane victims.

R.C.G. Farm provided another top mount in the veteran 16-year-old Dutch Warmblood Uceko, who led Farrington to victory in the Prize of North Rhine-Westphalia at CHIO Aachen and the PwC Cup at the Spruce Meadows 'North American' Tournament over the summer. Farrington also had the help of Tanma Corp. and his own 10-year-old German Warmblood, Dublin, and the 11-year-old Selle Français gelding Sherkan D'Amaury, owned by Farrington, Daniel Crown and Haity McNeerney, to earn valuable points toward his top spot.

Farrington is a five-time Longines FEI World Cup™ Jumping finalist and also won team bronze at the 2015 Pan American Games in Toronto as well as at the 2014 Alltech FEI World Equestrian Games™ in Normandy in addition to team gold at the 2011 Pan American Games in Guadalajara.

"This is really a team sport. Not only do I need the horses to be able to do it but also a great team of owners and a great team of support staff," said Farrington. "For me to be able to do what I'm doing, I'm really living my dream from when I was a little kid. I feel very fortunate to have great people around me who are making this all possible. I couldn't do it without them. I think it's really important that's also recognized. I'm not a sprinter — I have to have a lot of people around me in order to make this go. It's not just me and my shoes on the track."

American show jumping athletes hold significant spots on the Longines Rankings world leaderboard with Farrington on top leading by 295 points, followed by Ward in second as well as the top two ranked female riders. Beezie Madden is the best ranked woman in the 25th spot, while Laura Kraut is close behind in 29th. — Barre Dukes





NIFTY HAMILTON

Captures 2017 USEF Single Horse Combined Driving National Championship

The USEF Single Horse Combined Driving National Championship took place at the Kentucky Horse Park in Lexington, Kentucky, Oct. 5–8 and played host to some of the country's top single horse drivers. In the end, it was Nifty Hamilton of Alva, Florida, who earned the title of national champion joined by her own and Milton Hamilton's Makari Design.

Hamilton and Makari Design, a 9-year-old KWPN gelding, made their FEI debut in 2016 with their first victory at the Little Everglades CDE and most recently claimed the Live Oak Plantation CAI2*-H1 in Ocala, Florida, in March. Hamilton has had Makari Design since he was a very young horse, but explained that the process of training him for competition has been much different than training the Morgan horses she previously had. Their slow and steady training method paid off, and while she claims he still has a lot to learn, Hamilton and Makari Design's winning streak could not be broken as they took home the 2017 national championship with a combined score of 143.31 after all three phases.

Hamilton and Makari Design broke out in the lead from the start as she secured first place in both the dressage and marathon phases of competition. Hamilton completed the cones course with 2.85 penalties, which put her in fourth place for that specific event,

but her victories in the two previous phases proved to be enough to secure the win.

"Misdee and James Miller are just fabulous, generous people to make this all happen" Hamilton said. "The event was terrific, everything ran smoothly and the marathon was amazing. Richard Nichol's course design for the cones and the marathon was very good; he always provides a lot of options. The Rolex Stadium is just amazing. It rained on cones day, but the footing is just so great that it didn't affect the cones at all."


Donna Crookston of Saltsburg, Pennsylvania, and her 9-year-old Dutch Harness gelding Viktor advanced from third to second place after being only one of three clear rounds in the cones phase, therefore resulting in no penalty points to account for. Crookston narrowly advanced over Leslie Berndt of Newcastle, California, with a 151.94 combined score after all three phases. Berndt, who was partnered with her 16-year-old Royal Dutch Warmblood gelding Uminco, secured third place with only 3.00 penalty points coming from the cones phase and a combined total score of 153.96. Crookston and Berndt previously competed as members of the U.S. team at the 2016 FEI World Driving Championships for Singles in Austria. – Summer Wessinger-Prehoda 



Photo by Eric Of You

Nifty Hamilton and Makari Design

KATIE WHALEY



Secures Top Ten Finish for USA at FEI World Driving Championships for Ponies

The three top U.S. combined driving athletes and their ponies headed to the 2017 FEI World Driving Championships for Ponies Aug. 15–20 in Minden-Kutenhausen, Germany. Competing as individuals, the U.S. team consisted of Katie Whaley, who contested in the FEI World Driving Championships for Pair Ponies division, while Miranda Cadwell and Tracey Morgan represented the U.S. in the FEI World Driving Championships for Single Ponies division.

Chef d'Équipe Jennifer Matheson and coach Thorsten Zarembowicz provided guidance and training for the U.S. team during their stay in Germany. Ultimately, Whaley of Paris, Kentucky, secured a ninth place overall finish in the pair ponies division, while Morgan climbed through a competitive field to end in the 16th position overall in the single ponies division.

A seasoned driving competitor, Whaley entered the 2017 world championships as the reigning 2016 and 2017 USEF Pair Pony Combined Driving National Champion and has competed in four world championships, both in the pairs division and the four-in-hand competition.

Whaley showed her own 14-year-old Tommy and 11-year-old Tanner as well as Barbara Sim's 17-year-old pony, Night Flyer. Whaley's own two ponies are both Welsh Cross geldings, while Night Flyer is a Welsh Section C gelding. Whaley and her ponies' best effort was in the dressage phase where they finished sixth with a score of 51.20. The tough track presented in the marathon phase would prove to be a slight setback for the team as they accumulated 111.42 penalty points to their overall score to finish 19th. However, the team showed great determination and only tallied 7.52 time penalties in the cones phase to finish 14th, which kept them high enough in the rankings to secure ninth place overall in a field of over 30 competitors and with a final score of 170.14.

In the single ponies competition, it was Morgan of Beallsville, Maryland, who would place among the top 20 and best more than half of the exhibitors. Hot off several wins earlier in the year including a victory in the CAI2*-P1 divisions at the Palm Tree Combined Driving Event and Live Oak International, Morgan and her own Fuego 88 started their competition strong with a score of 53.61 to



Katie Whaley with Tommy and Tanner

finish sixth in the dressage phase. They had a solid marathon performance, adding 116.18 penalty points to their score and finishing 27th in the phase. Morgan and the 2001 German Riding Pony gelding added nothing to their overall score in the cones phase by claiming one of seven double-clear rounds in the division. They finished seventh in the cones phase and 16th overall with a total score of 169.79.

Cadwell of Southern Pines, North Carolina, and her pony Cannon's Majestic Leyla, a 2003 Welsh Cross mare, were unfortunately unable to finish after hitting an obstacle in the marathon phase, but proved her perseverance and dedication to the sport by returning to the world championships for the first time since 2011 after being diagnosed with breast cancer followed by a year of intensive treatment in 2015. – *Summer Wessinger-Prehoda*



Tracey Morgan and Fuego 88



Miranda Cadwell and Cannon's Majestic Leyla

All photos by Kreszina Horvath

U.S. ENDURANCE TEAM

Races to Successful Finish

at 2017 FEI World Endurance Championships for Young Riders and Juniors

The Distance Depot/U.S. Endurance Team traveled to Valeggio sul Mincio, Verona, Italy, Sept. 22–24 to compete in the 2017 FEI World Endurance Championships for Young Riders and Juniors. Going up against 110 combinations from 33 nations all vying for top team and individual honors, Chef d'Équipe Mark Dial led the U.S. team of Katelyn Baldino, Ragan Kelly, Ainsley Suskey and Annie Whelan to a successful finish, with three riders completing the course, to end up in the 11th place position overall.

"Our goal was to complete a team so it was a successful day in a fantastic venue," said U.S. Chef d'Équipe Dial. "I am proud of the team and we're looking forward to seeing what they accomplish in the future. Thank you isn't enough to the parents, road crew, crew members, selectors and the veterinary advisory group for their unwavering support of the U.S. endurance program."

The U.S. endurance team set out on a four-loop, 120 kilometers (approximately 74 miles) race across the picturesque Italian countryside, where Suskey of Iola, Wisconsin, was the first U.S. athlete to cross the finish line with a time of 7:40:32 aboard Julie Jackson's Princess Deelites MHF, a 10-year-old Arabian mare.

Whelan of Louisa, Kentucky, and Amy Wallace-Whelan's Wallace Hill Leo, a 13-year-old Half-Arabian gelding, were next to complete the race for the U.S. in 8:16:38, while Kelly of Waco, Texas, and Tracy Kelly's HK Kruzier, a 10-year-old Arabian gelding, finished the trek just behind Whelan in 8:16:39 after overcoming a mishap at the second rest period.

In an unfortunate turn of events, the final U.S. combination of Baldino, from Marietta, Georgia, and Melody Blittersdorf's Synthetic, a 17-year-old Arabian gelding, were pulled from the competition, unable to finish the race, after Synthetic showed signs of lameness in the third vet check. Baldino returned to the 2017 championships with the most experience, having competed in the 2015 FEI World Endurance Championships for Young Riders and Juniors, while teammates Suskey, Whelan and Kelly were competing for the first time.

"The entire team showed a lot of maturity in their riding and professionalism throughout the competition," remarked Dial. "There were several obstacles and challenges that were overcome by the athletes and their support staff, which led to the success of finishing as a team. The entire team's preparation was outstanding and I can't say enough about their willingness to improve upon their previous successes."

Individually, Suskey finished 49th overall, while Whelan and Kelly finished back-to-back in 53rd and 54th.

The United Arab Emirates won the overall team title of the 2017 FEI World Endurance Championships for Young Riders and Juniors and Saeed Salem Atiq Khamis Almuhairei of the United Arab Emirates was named the individual world champion aboard Rabdan.

– Taylor Renner 



Ragan Kelly, Katelyn Baldino, Chef d'Équipe Mark Dial, Annie Whelan and Ainsley Suskey



Team USA at the 2017 FEI World Endurance Championships for Young Riders and Juniors

Equestrian Community Mourns Loss of Driving Chef d'Équipe Ed Young

The equestrian driving community lost one of its most prestigious members this year with the passing of driving mentor and advocate Ed Young. Young passed away after a five-year battle with cancer on Sept. 12 at the age of 69.

He was heavily involved in the driving community in many different forms from delegate to trainer, but it was his gift for teaching that he was known for best. Young originally started as an athlete in the sport, but after discovering the need for more officials, he put his training skills to good use. Young was a teacher by profession and guided participants in both North America and overseas to driving success for over 30 years.

Young was known for serving as a technical delegate, show manager or advisor in almost every combined driving

event or pleasure show in North America. He was qualified as a US Equestrian 'R' technical delegate, FEI Level 4 technical delegate and was appointed chef d'équipe for the U.S. for many FEI driving world championships as well as several World Equestrian Games.

When Young was not busy teaching or working as a technical delegate, he also served as chairman of the US Equestrian Driving Sport Committee, director of the Carriage Association of America and managed the largest pleasure driving show in North America — the Walnut Hill Farm Driving Competition.

In lieu of flowers, Young asked that his memory be honored by a donation to the U.S. Equestrian's Developing Driver Program.

— Summer Wessinger-Prehoda 

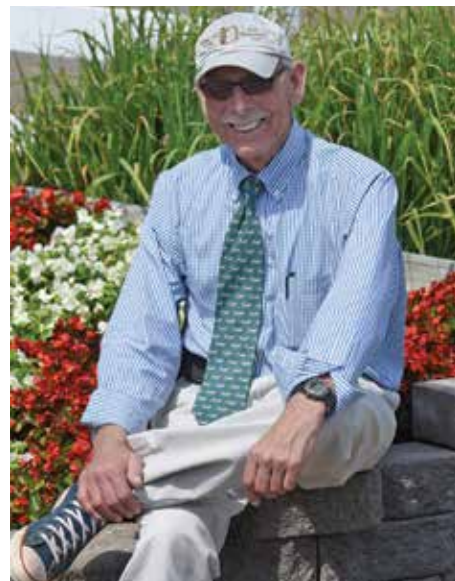


Photo by Pies Of You

Dedicated Equestrian Community Member Jimmy Mandala Passes at Age 48

A dedicated member of the equestrian community in Wellington, Florida, and facility manager of the Adequan® Global Dressage Festival (AGDF), Jimmy Mandala, passed away on Halloween at the age of 48. Mandala had battled pancreatic cancer for three years before his passing at the Talbot Hospice in Easton, Maryland. Pancreatic cancer was also the cause of death for Mandala's father, brother and uncle.

Mandala had contributed greatly to the equestrian industry throughout his life, working as a steward for the FEI, where he was able to travel to shows such as the Rolex Central Park Horse Show and the U.S. Dressage Festival of Champions in Gladstone, New Jersey.

Annie Cizadlo, Mandala's wife, expressed the impact he had on the equestrian world and all of the hard work he put in for the sake of the sport and those involved.

"He was an amazing person who overcame many obstacles in the short amount of time that I knew him," Cizadlo wrote in a Facebook post. "He was an incredible ring steward. He worked countless hours at shows across the country. I see his reflection in the AGDF facility in Wellington each and every time I am there."

Mandala and Cizadlo received tremendous support from the Wellington community during his cancer treatment. A fundraiser, organized by Michael Barisone of Barisone Dressage, even helped restore Mandala's truck when it needed repairs.


Earlier in 2017, Cohen Hodess presented Mandala and Cizadlo with the Global Dressage Visionary Award. Hodess described Mandala as a passionate, kind presence at the showgrounds, always encouraging her daughter who competed in dressage and all others around him.

"She would tear around the show ring on a pony, and I would be yelling," Hodess laughed. "Anytime I'd be melting down, he



All photos by Susan Stickle.com

knew exactly when to take her aside and give her a piece of candy or give her a ride in the golf cart."

At the beginning of 2018, a celebration of life dedicated to Mandala will be held in Wellington this winter. — Emma Miller 



Jimmy Mandala (11th from the right)
at the 2017 The Dutta Corp. U.S. Dressage
Festival of Champions in Gladstone, New Jersey



MACKENNA SHEA

Awarded Amanda Pirie Warrington Grant

The United States Equestrian Team (USET) Foundation is pleased to announce it has awarded the 2017 Amanda Pirie Warrington Grant to up-and-coming eventing rider Mackenna Shea of Temecula, California.

The Amanda Pirie Warrington Grant is awarded through the USET Foundation's Amanda Pirie Warrington Fund. This year's winner, Shea, has demonstrated her talent at many of the nation's top CIC3* and CCI4* events. At just 23 years old, Shea and her own Landioso, a 15-year-old Bavarian Warmblood gelding, who she has owned for 10 years, completed their first CCI4* during the Rolex Kentucky Three-Day Event in 2016, and later went on to win the Event at Rebecca Farm CIC3*.

Earlier in 2017, Shea, now 25, was named a recipient of the Karen Stives Eventing Endowment Fund Grant, which allowed her the opportunity to compete in Europe for the first time and participate in the Karen E. Stives European Emerging Athlete Tour.



Mackenna Shea and Landioso

Under the mentorship of British Olympic gold medalist, Leslie Law, Shea spent the month of May in Great Britain furthering her education and gaining valu-

able competition experience representing the United States on the international stage. As a result, Shea and Landioso successfully completed the 2017 Land Rover Burghley Horse Trials CCI4* in September.

"It's a huge honor and I was totally surprised," expressed Shea. "I had a really good year, but I had a lot of support and I have a really great horse. It's very rewarding to be considered for something like this and I hope next year is even better!"

As the recipient of the grant, Shea, who trains with Tamra Smith of Next Level Eventing, will receive up to \$5,000 to help offset expenses associated with her training over the next year.

"I am planning to go to Florida in late February and I hope to use the grant to help me get out there and pay for lessons," explained Shea. "That's going to be a huge benefit for me, not having to worry about how I am going to make it work. I am going to use that as preparation for Kentucky, hopefully." – Taylor Renner

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