USA TRIUMPHS IN TRYON!
Dear Friends,

It was an incredibly rewarding experience to be in Tryon earlier this fall and watch our United States Equestrian Teams compete against the best riders, drivers and vaulters from around the globe. The United States delegation, made up of athletes, horses, coaches, owners, team managers, grooms, veterinarians, farriers, physiotherapists and doctors was 245 strong and truly world-class. While most people just see the athletes competing, the logistical undertaking of sending eight disciplines had been in the works for several years and fine-tuned every step of the way to ensure as few distractions for our athletes, and to provide a performance enhancing environment maximizing the opportunity for success.

The careful and comprehensive planning resulted in our U.S. Equestrian Team making history, not once but six times – our athletes returned home with a total of 12 medals; Show Jumping captured team gold, Driving won team gold, Dressage took team silver and Laura Graves individual silver, and Para-Dressage won four individual medals for the first time at a World Equestrian Games! In addition, Reining continued their domination of the sport seizing the team gold and individual silver and bronze, and Chester Weber won the individual silver medal.

I would like to refer you to the final pages of this newsletter to recognize and thank the “team behind the team!” These individuals are extraordinary and their knowledge, experience and commitment to the “team” is unmatched.

The other critical component to their success, is you! Our loyal and generous donors who are with us each and every year, ensuring that we are funding development programs to continually strengthen the pathway and build depth in number of athletes that can compete at the championship level, hire coaches that can mentor and lead, have the best veterinarians, farriers, and physiotherapists keeping our equine partners in top competitive form. Without you, none of this is possible!

Thank you for your support and for making the 2018 FEI World Equestrian Games a great success. Wishing you and your families a happy and healthy holiday season.

Sincerely,

W. James McNerney, Jr.
President and CEO
The long drought has ended, thanks to the incredible talent and grit of the NetJets® U.S. Show Jumping Team at the FEI World Equestrian Games™ (WEG) in September.

Composed of anchor McLain Ward and Clinta, Laura Kraut with Zeremonie, Adrienne Sternlicht aboard Cristalline and Devin Ryan with the reins on Eddie Blue and led by Chef d’Équipe Robert Ridland, the squad secured victory to mark a significant milestone in American show jumping. Though teams from the U.S. have captured medals in the Olympic Games, Pan American Games, Nations Cups and other premier contests across the globe, a top podium finish in world championship competition has eluded them for 32 years. Against all odds, the standings were decided by an unprecedented head-to-head jump-off for the gold medal, with the crowd favorite Americans nail-bitingly edging out the Swedish to capture the coveted honors as well as an automatic slot in the 2020 Tokyo Olympic Games.

“It was unbelievable. This is our sport at its best. First off, the odds were minuscule that there would be a jump-off for first place, but we did see that ahead of time. When we were looking at the points, we saw Sweden was lurking. We realized this was a possibility. It wasn’t what we were looking for, but the sport doesn’t get any better than that. It’s unbelievable — this is what we do it for,” commented Ridland following his team’s success.

Over the course of two preliminary days of riding, the initial pack of 124 contenders performed over designer Alan Wade’s (IRL) foreboding 1.65m tracks in an
attempt to qualify for the team and individual grand finales. Of the original 25 teams, the final day of team riding saw the field whittled down so that only the top 10 nations remained, with all four American pairs earning team and individual slots. Throughout the afternoon, the 40 partnerships still in the running for a medal took turns navigating the lofty 14-obstacle track, and by the time the fourth quarter of exhibitors from each nation were set to ride, it was clear that the teams from the USA, Sweden and Germany were poised to have the greatest medal chances.

First to ride for the home team earlier in the day, Ryan and LL Show Jumpers LLC’s Eddie Blue laid down a solid performance with only 4 faults accrued against them during their first major team championship. In similar form, WEG newcomer Sternlicht and Starlight Farms 1 LLC’s Cristalline knocked down the same fence as their teammates, putting pressure on counterparts Kraut and Ward to carefully pilot their mounts to fault-free rides to keep the Americans in contention for the top spot on the scorecard. No stranger to high pressure situations, Olympic veteran Kraut delivered for her team by directing Old Willow Farms LLC’s Zeremonie to a textbook trip sans penalties.

By the time Ward and Clinta, the mare he co-owns with Sagamore Farms, entered the ring, the squad sat exactly four points ahead of Sweden, meaning a clear ride would clinch gold, a 4-fault ride would instigate a jump-off and an 8-fault or more ride would push the USA down the rankings. With the weight of the gold medal on their shoulders, Ward and Clinta carefully maneuvered the track for what they hoped would be the final time, but unfortunately lowered a fence to catalyze a historic jump-off with Sweden — each team holding a composite score of 20.59.

With the overall scores of the two leading teams incredibly tied after all three rounds of competition, the final barrier separating the USA from the top podium spot was a jump-off over Wade’s abridged track. In historic fashion, each of the four duos from Sweden and the USA prepared to return for one last ride around the U.S. Trust Arena. With only six more fences to assert their dominance, laying down an error-free performance was crucial from each combination. Nearly 300 rides took place over the three-day tenure of the team competition, but in the end it came down to the final two exhibitors of the day as Sweden’s anchor Fredericson and Ward would be forced to battle it out for team gold, with each team going fault-for-fault after the first six combinations.

As the current No. 7 and No. 2 ranked athletes in the world, talent was not in short supply between the two hungry competitors. Carrying the hope of the Swedish, Fredericson and H&M Christian K expertly navigated the short course, challenging Ward and Clinta with yet another penalty-free jump-off ride. If the final American pair accumulated any faults, the team would slip into the silver medal position, and a clean ride would force the tiebreaker to be split by the composite time of all four contenders from each nation. After the drop score, Sweden was sitting on cumulative marks of 102.72 seconds after all four athletes, while the Americans’ clock had ticked to 68.09 seconds, allowing Ward and Clinta only 34.63 seconds to complete the course.

Proving why he is consistently ranked as one of the top athletes on the globe, Ward dominated the track with Clinta, leaving the course intact and breaking the beam in a quick 32.58 seconds to secure the gold medal for Team USA for the first time in 32 years. The last time was at the 1986 World Championships in Aachen, Germany, before the inception of the World Equestrian Games. The Swedish team settled for silver, an accomplishment in its own right considering the country had not won a medal in 16 years, and the team from Germany nabbed the bronze medal position.
“The main goal was reached. I’m proud of this team. It was a great championship for us. There were two chances to try and win this thing, and I’m very grateful to have such a great team also delivering great scores. Laura was clutch today. I got a second opportunity to help our team win it,” remarked Ward.

Boasting a powerful reputation with his go-to mare HH Azur in global competition, Ward added another jumping queen to his list of leading ladies with Clinta, the 11-year-old grey mare he navigated to top honors during her championship debut.

“I thought Clinta was brilliant. I always hoped she could do it. I knew she had the quality and was an incredible trier. With the ease that she has jumped this very big championship, I couldn’t be more proud of her and I’m excited. She is going to come out of this stronger and better than she was coming into it. I think with a little good fortune, this mare is going to win a gold medal in Tokyo. She’s on the way up,” praised Ward.

The World Equestrian Games gold medal is just one in a long list of awards in the trophy case for Ward and Kraut, both having garnered multiple medals and standout results at the Olympic and international levels, with Ward recently claiming fourth place at the Longines FEI World Cup™ Jumping Final in Paris, France. Ryan and Eddie Blue were catapulted into the limelight over the past year after winning the $216,000 Longines FEI World Cup™ Jumping New York CSI4*-W at the American Gold Cup in fall 2017 and placing second at the Longines FEI World Cup™ Jumping Final this spring. The youngest on the team and new to world championship competition, Ward-trained Sternlicht and Cristalline will certainly consider their WEG...
podium finish to be the highlight of their competitive career thus far and have added to their reputation as a formidable pair.

“I have tears of joy. My best friends and family are here and I am just looking at them like, ‘What just happened?’ You really don’t want to be woken up from this dream. I love my horse so much and to be able to do it with her is so special. McLain [Ward] has been the most unbelievable mentor for me, and such an important part of my life. For me, it’s been a battle of overcoming my own mind and I’m so grateful that Robert [Ridland] trusted me and trusted McLain enough to put me on this team,” said Sternlicht.

“To have been on a team with Laura, Devin and McLain, who are three riders that I have honestly looked up to my whole life for various reasons, was an invaluable experience and I can only grow from this. I’m so grateful for this opportunity.”

Ryan echoed his teammate’s sentiments, stating, “There has been a lot of change for me in the last 12 months, and Eddie proved himself. He is a super horse and I think people have noticed that. It was certainly my breakthrough year; no one knew who I was. I have just been working my way up the ranks and building a business. I have learned a lot along the road, especially today and this week. It was my first real championship. This year was my first year riding on a team for horse sport. It’s a big difference and the team starts with my family, my owners and all of these guys sitting with me.”

In addition to claiming the world title in front of a thunderously loud home crowd on home turf, the wonder team had even more reason to celebrate considering the relative cumulative inexperience of the eight human and equine athletes. Kraut and Zeremonie are seasoned international championship contenders and U.S. stalwart Ward is almost always a sure thing, even with
his newer mount, Clinta. Though the partnership is newer, Clinta has maneuvered international courses with ease, rarely touching a rail. Coming off a series of major achievements, Ryan and Eddie Blue hoped to continue their winning momentum and delivered with multiple steady trips. At only 25 years old, Sternlicht, aboard her mare Cristalline, was more of a gamble, but the pair proved themselves and then some with stellar performances during their inaugural championship.

“For us, this journey really began when we started the selection procedure last June. At that time, I felt that we had a tremendous group of veteran and young riders and that if we could really prepare them through the lead up to this and test them with fire that we had a good chance. I really believed we had that kind of depth,” commented Ridland. “You don’t win the first day but you sure can lose it, and it’s the last day when you win it. I didn’t realize it at that time, but it was going to be really tough to win it on the last day!”

In the individual competition on the final day of the two weeks, nine nations out of the initial 49 appeared in the final contest. Proving why they deserved the team gold medal that was earned earlier in the week, the U.S. team qualified all four pairs within the top 20 and three pairs within the elite top 12, more than any other nation. Ward and Clinta finished their WEG tenure in fourth place as the leading American horse-and-athlete combination, followed by Kraut and Zeremonie in 10th overall. During their rookie WEG debut, Sternlicht and Cristalline clinched 11th place, and Ryan and Eddie Blue earned the 16th position. The only other country represented more than once in the closing round was Switzerland, thanks to Martin Fuchs and Steve Guerdat.

“I don’t know many championships where four riders [from one team] make it on the final day, and then to have three in the final 12 was great. That just goes to show we had a really great week with four riders in the top 16. That’s really incredible out of 124 starters. We have a lot to be proud of,” reflected Kraut. “To be here in our own country and to win against such great competitors is amazing. It was hard fought all the way to the last rider. It is an amazing sport. Thanks to everyone here, and all of our supporters and owners. I’m going to brag. I think we have the best support system in the world for sure. They are incredible. I still can’t believe it.”

With a new world championship to their names, the members of the NetJets® U.S. Show Jumping Team can now claim to be part of an elite group into which so few gain entrance. Watched by thousands onsite and across the world, the new WEG gold medalists proved that the future of American show jumping is bright.

— Elaine Wessel
After a 16-year hiatus, The Dutta Corp. U.S. Dressage Team has returned to the silver medal podium position after their exciting performances at the FEI World Equestrian Games™ Tryon 2018 (WEG) in North Carolina. The 2002 WEG in Jerez, Spain, with Guenter Seidel, Debbie McDonald, Lisa Wilcox and Susan Blinks was the last time the Americans stepped that high onto a world championship podium. This year’s team success is due to the culmination of talented and dedicated horse-and-rider combinations, revitalized initiatives and extensive support teams.

“We’ve had strong groups representing the United States for the past decade and we were especially strong for Rio in 2016 [finishing with team bronze],” Robert Dover, the U.S. dressage chef d’équipe, explained. “However, this current group of Laura Graves, Kasey Perry-Glass, Adrienne Lyle and Steffen Peters rivals the best! They are an amazing group of individuals and they really get along superbly with each other. It’s been a great journey with them and it’s gratifying that they’re the silver medal team of the world.”

Aiming for redemption after just missing the podium with a fourth place team finish in 2014 at WEG, the U.S. team was eager to prove their prowess in the dressage ring with a medal this year. Only Graves returned with a WEG-veteran mount in the form of Verdades, while Peters and Lyle were in the irons aboard new-
comers Suppenkasper and Salvino, respectively. Perry-Glass and Goerklintgaards Dublet were both rookies to the WEG competition, but displayed their worth to the team with the second best scoring test of the American rides. The team’s silver medal finish also qualified them for a coveted slot in the 2020 Tokyo Olympic Games.

On the opening day of team competition, the first two members representing the U.S., Lyle and Peters, took to the U.S. Trust Arena. Lyle and Elizabeth Juliano’s 11-year-old Rheinlander stallion Salvino earned 74.860 percent for their efforts.

“I feel so lucky. It is really those years off [of being on a U.S. team] when you are working the hardest trying to bring your next horses up to this level,” Lyle said. “I feel so incredibly honored and happy to be here. There is top competition and to go in and ride in front of a home crowd is amazing. The crowd cheers for everyone, but they definitely cheer a little louder for the U.S. riders.”

Piloting one of his newer and greener mounts, Peters directed the 10-year-old gelding Suppenkasper, owned by Four Winds Farm, to marks of 73.494 percent which placed the U.S. team in the bronze medal position heading into the second day of team competition.

“He was a bit nervous coming in [to the arena],” Peters explained. “The crowd is always very excited to see the first American horse in there, and I’m very happy with how he handled it. He is an extremely kind-hearted horse. He is the sweetest horse that I’ve ever dealt with. He wants to be a little puppy dog. At this point in my career, to get a horse like this is a lot of fun.

“He’s the most inexperienced horse on the team and most likely the one that produces a drop score but if a 73.5 is your drop score, you have a heck of a team!” Peters continued. “The plan is to peak around Tokyo. We are hoping when he’s 12 or 13 years old he will be in his prime. At the end of the day, he needs to see venues like this so he gets used to it.”

As the final contenders to take to the U.S. Trust Arena on the second day, Graves and the fan-favorite Verdades, co-owned by Laura Graves and Verdades, owned by Graves and Curt Maes.
Graves and Curt Maes, were challenged to break up the current one-two rankings of the two top Germans, Isabell Werth and Sonke Rothenberger. Undoubtedly one of the most decorated horse-and-rider combinations in dressage today, Graves and the 16-year-old gelding lived up to their deserved reputation with a stellar performance to the tune of 81.537 percent, making them only the third pair of nearly 80 original competitors to break the 80-point threshold. With their score, Graves and “Diddy” edged out Rothenberger and Cosmo by less than one-tenth of a point to capture the second best individual score of the Grand Prix phase and help her team clinch the silver medal.

“I was feeling a bit under the weather, so I was a little nervous about that going in more than anything, but adrenaline is such an amazing thing,” Graves explained about her performance. “From the second I got in the saddle, I felt totally ready to go. Sure, it’s a lot of pressure, but it’s an amazing team to ride on. No one would ever hold a hard feeling because we all know we’re riding our best and it’s the best competition in the world — very top horses, top riders and we all know what we’re capable of. We’re all going to push for that, but we also know this is horse sport and this is what makes it so interesting. I’m really proud of what we were able to accomplish at WEG.”

Fellow teammate Perry-Glass navigated mother Diane Perry’s 15-year-old Danish Warmblood gelding Goerklintgaards Dublet to the team’s next highest percentage of 76.739 percent.

“Our Grand Prix felt great!” Perry-Glass said. “He was 100 percent in the warm-up and I really felt like he brought the power and everything that we were looking for in the test. I always expect him to get a little bit pumped up once everyone starts cheering, and I feed off of it. Right when we went into the test he calmed down because he knows his job and is really happy working together as a team.”

Following a hard-fought battle for the top honors at WEG, it was the team from Germany that ultimately reigned supreme, defending their 2014 title. Riding on home turf, the Americans garnered the silver medal, and Great Britain hoisted the bronze. The individual phase followed the Grand Prix team competition with only the top 30 combinations advancing to the Grand Prix Special to vie for an individual medal. All four members of the U.S. squad qualified for the Grand Prix Special.

Graves navigated Verdades expertly throughout the 10-minute test to reap 81.717 percent from the seven judges, hoping to claim another medal along with the...
team silver already added to her trophy case. Though their score was overtaken by Werth aboard Bella Rose, Graves’ success broke records as the first individual silver medal ever awarded to a U.S. dressage rider at a global championship. A few weeks following the WEG, Graves and Verdades continued to make history by becoming the first American combination to ever be ranked No. 1 on the FEI Dressage World Rankings.

“I think when you’re looking at scores this high, it really has to be a test that, from start to finish, is pretty flawless,” Graves said following her ride. “I’m lucky enough to be on a horse that really wants to do his job and, especially in this heat, I think it’s a real test of a horse’s character. You ask them to go and they show up for you, and my horse certainly did that today. Both today and yesterday he has trotted me himself in there, like he knows he has a bunch of fans and he’s ready to show off.”

Perry-Glass and Dublet also had a standout performance in the Grand Prix Special, ending the competition individually in sixth place with a 78.541 percent.
“Every time I talk about that horse I get emotional, he’s special,” Perry-Glass said. “He is the first horse that I’ve had at this level and I couldn’t have asked for a better horse. He’s perfect on the ground and on his back. I knew [the Grand Prix Special] was going to be a fight for us, but he gave it all and he was right there with the power and the elasticity that he always has. I’m just so proud of him.”

While the Grand Prix Freestyle was cancelled due to inclement weather caused by Hurricane Florence, the overall success at Tryon 2018 for The Dutta Corp. U.S. Dressage Team was one for the history books. During Dover’s tenure as chef d’équipe, he developed his “Roadmap to the Podium,” which included initiatives to develop a pipeline that supports high performance, talented riders up from the grassroots level. While Tryon 2018 was the final world championship he would serve as chef d’équipe before passing the reins over to McDonald, Dover is thrilled with the growth the team has shown from only six years ago.

“It’s been one of the great honors of my life being the chef d’équipe and technical advisor for the U.S. for the past six years and I’m thrilled that Debbie [McDonald] is taking my place because she and I are so alike in everything — the way we think and feel about horses, riders and philosophies,” Dover said. “I feel like the future is very bright for American dressage.”

– Annan Hepner
On the final day of the FEI World Equestrian Games™ (WEG), the U.S. Driving Team took their turn in the spotlight and made history by clinching the USA’s first-ever four-in-hand team gold medal. The team of James Fairclough, Misdee Wrigley-Miller, Chester Weber and their respective groups of horses ended with 353.39 penalties following three phases of competition: dressage, marathon and cones. Claiming the silver medal was the Netherlands on 356.79 penalties, while Belgium took home the bronze medal with 364.089 penalties.

“This was brilliant — unexpected really. Everyone played their part; a true team effort,” said U.S. Driving Team Chef d’Équipe Barry Hunter.

In addition, Weber also secured his second career individual WEG silver medal with 163.38 penalties, after first earning individual silver at the 2014 WEG in Normandy, France. Australia’s Boyd Excell won gold with 154.14 penalties and Belgium’s Edouard Simonet rounded out the podium with 174.15 penalties.

Driving competition kicked off with the dressage phase — the U.S. team’s strongest phase — where Fairclough with Bento V, Caletta 5, Citens and Dapper were the first to drive down centerline for the U.S. Fairclough’s solid test earned him a score of 53.15 to position himself in 11th place heading into the marathon phase.
Wrigley-Miller with Beau, Bravour 54, Bolino D and Daan 8 completed the test next and finished on a score of 42.00 to put her in fourth place individually and the only female driver to break the top eight.

WEG veteran Weber and his experienced team of Asjemenou, Splash, First Edition and Boris W put the U.S. contingent solidly in the lead and Weber in second place individually with a score of 35.10.

“I am really pleased with the horses,” said Weber. “We have been working towards this result all season with scores hovering around the 40-mark and I couldn’t be more pleased with 35 at the [WEG]. The horses felt really good. I’m over the moon about it.”

Entering into the marathon phase with an overall score of 77.10, the U.S. Driving Team successfully navigated Richard Nicolls’ marathon course to maintain their lead ahead of the final phase of competition. Fairclough and Bento V, Citens, Dapper and Zenden weathered the course well to end on a score of 189.52 and 12th place individually. Weber and Wrigley-Miller were the second and third drivers on course for the U.S. with back-to-back runs. Weber expertly guided his team of Asjemenou, First Edition, Reno and Boris W to finish with a score of 160.61, holding on to his second place position individually.

Wrigley-Miller with Beau, Bravour 54, Bolino D and Calipso 86 finished a clean course, despite her carriage becoming tangled in an improperly buried timing cord at obstacle six. The team persevered and cleared the obstacle safely to finish on a score of 197.94 for 15th individually.
Leading the way from the start following the dressage and marathon phases and heading into the final cones phase, the U.S. Driving Team sat in the gold medal position on 338.55 penalties.

Wrigley-Miller, one of only three female drivers to ever be named to a four-in-hand combined driving U.S. team and competing in her second WEG, was the first to navigate Nicoll’s challenging cones course with her team of Beau, Bravour 54, Bolino D and Calipso 86. Although she added 32.93 penalties to her score to end with 230.87 for 16th place overall, she provided her teammates valuable insight into the technicalities of the course.

“It was wild in there — really tight,” said Wrigley-Miller. “My horses were so responsive and wonderful and made the most of a really tough course.

“It has been an amazing journey learning about horsemanship, finding the right combination of horses and learning new skills,” added Wrigley-Miller on her 2018 WEG experience. “It has been so much fun. I’ve put my life on hold this past year because this was my goal and focus. It was worth every second.”

Next up on course was Fairclough and his team of Bento V, Citens, Dapper and Zenden. As a result of the left wheeler breaking a noseband on course, they dropped two balls and added a total of 12.07 penalties to their score to end on 201.16 penalties for 11th place overall.

Reflecting on his time at WEG and the United States’ performance, Fairclough said, “I hope this is going to really inspire a lot of people to come forward and try for the team. I think it’s a great boost for us to win this medal here on home turf. I think we had a little bit of an advantage being in our home country but I think everyone else got a feel for what we have to go through to go over to Europe to compete, where the heart of the sport seems to be. We can do it and I hope people realize that and try and make it grow here in America.”

Once Weber entered the ring as the anchor driver for the U.S. with horses Splash, First Edition, Reno and Boris W, the team had slipped down into the bronze medal position. The pressure was on to deliver a clear round with as few penalties as possible, and Weber did just that. Adding only 2.77 time penalties, he secured the historic gold medal for the U.S. Driving Team and individual silver in an epic grand finale for the United States in Tryon, North Carolina.

“I’m so proud of myself and all of my teammates here at WEG,” said Weber. “We’ve all worked very hard to get here and do well. Thank you to the USEF Foundation and all of their donors who have helped make this happen. Without their valuable support, we wouldn’t be able to compete at this level.”

– Taylor Rains
The U.S. Reining Team turned in an epic performance to start the FEI World Equestrian Games™ (WEG) Tryon 2018 on a high note for the U.S. contingent. Under the guidance of Chef d’Équipe Jeff Petska, the team of Casey Deary and Heavy Duty Chex, Dan Huss and Ms Dreamy, Jordan Larson and ARC Gunnabeabigstar and Cade McCutcheon and Custom Made Gun clinched the fifth consecutive team gold medal for the U.S. with a score of 681.0.

In the morning session, Deary (Weatherford, Texas) and Heavy Duty Chex laid down a solid run to kick-off the competition for the U.S. Reining Team. Hilldale Farm’s 7-year-old Quarter Horse stallion showcased his strength with Deary in the saddle to score 223.5. Next up, 18-year-old McCutcheon (Aubrey, Texas) made his WEG debut a memorable one by wowing the crowd with his run on Custom Made Gun. McCutcheon and Tim and Colleen McQuay’s 7-year-old Quarter Horse stallion executed the pattern with ease and were rewarded with a score of 229.0 from the judges.

“I was really nervous, but having all of these guys at the gate with me really helped,” McCutcheon said of how he handled the newfound pressure. “Their words of encouragement made a big difference.”

Huss (Scottsdale, Arizona) and Ms Dreamy headed into the arena midway through the afternoon session and did not disappoint. Huss and Frederick R. Christen’s 8-year-old Quarter Horse mare gave an excellent effort to earn a score of 226.5. Larson (Valley View, Texas) and ARC Gunnabeabigstar closed out the U.S. team performances with a bang. Larson and HDC Quarter Horses USA LLC’s 7-year-old Quarter Horse stallion showed off their great style and flair to earn a score of 225.5, in spite of a minor bobble.

Petska expertly explained the reason for the United States’ success over the year, saying, “The strategy was obviously to mark all you can mark [in the pattern], but the heat was a factor. The riders are tremendous horsemen and they know their horses well. In this situation, we really have to give credit to Dr. John Newcomb and our grooms. They do such a great job monitoring these horses, keeping them cool and comfortable and doing all of those little things. We have been very fortunate to win the gold medal five times, but I think what separates us is the horsemanship of our riders and, obviously, the quality of these horses. We are talking about training and maneuvers, but the vet and grooms are talking about if the horse is happy, comfortable, a little too fresh, a little too tired — all of those little subtle things that make such a difference at this level.”

Photo by Erin Gilmore for Shannon Brinkman

**U.S. REINING TEAM**

Golden at Fifth Straight WEG

Jordan Larson and ARC Gunnabeabigstar, Cade McCutcheon and Custom Made Gun, Casey Deary and Heavy Duty Chex and Daniel Huss and Ms Dreamy
An electrifying crowd and highly competitive runs from 22 combinations proved to be just the atmosphere needed for Huss and McCutcheon as they fought for their spot on the podium Saturday evening in the Individual Reining Final. Huss and McCutcheon were the final U.S. runs of the night, going back-to-back as the home crowd waited in anticipation to see if the U.S. would claim not one, but two medals.

Huss and Ms Dreamy laid down a competitive run as the home crowd cheered them on. They needed a score better than 225.0 to land a spot on the podium. With easy precision and smoothly executed lead changes, the athletic, sorrel mare and Huss slid into a score of 226.5 to sit in the silver medal position. With just McCutcheon to follow, Huss and Ms Dreamy had secured at least a medal in their first individual competition at a WEG.

“I loved the reining here,” said Huss about his first experience at WEG. “The enthusiasm and support you get from the audience and your fellow competitors, and also your teammates — it’s a feeling you don’t get a lot of.”

McCutcheon and Custom Made Gun followed just behind Huss and his mare. Having led the team event with a score of 229.0, the combination loped into the show pen looking to lay down another flawless run. However, with a few small mistakes in the circles, McCutcheon and Custom Made Gun scored a 225.0, tying with Brazil’s João Felipe Andrade C S Lacerda and Gunner Dun It Again for third. A run-off of the same pattern would determine the bronze medal.

McCutcheon was second to go after watching Lacerda lay down a clean run that earned him a score of 227.0. With the home crowd behind them, McCutcheon and the palomino stallion entered the covered arena to a thunderous applause from U.S. fans. The cheers of support seemed to propel the combination as they executed a nearly flawless pattern, tipping their hat as the crowd roared and a final score of 228.0 sealed the bronze medal victory.

“I was a little disappointed in my first run, but I just had to flip the page and go try again,” said McCutcheon. “I didn’t do anything different with [Custom Made Gun]. I just tried to let him catch his breath, head into the arena and be safe in spots. I talked to my dad a lot because he was in the same situation in 2002 and he helped me. Pretty much everyone around me had a word of advice for me. I took it all in and it helped.”

Earlier in the evening, Deary and Heavy Duty Chex put in a solid performance, earning them a score of 219.0. Larson and ARC Gunnabeabigstar also put on a show for the crowd with their last ride together before the stallion’s retirement, earning a score of 215.0.
The U.S. Para-Equestrian Dressage Team, presented by Deloitte, made their country proud at the FEI World Equestrian Games™ (WEG) in Tryon in September, riding to the best of their ability and taking home several historic individual medals. The team, comprised of Rebecca Hart of Wellington, Florida; Angela Peavy of Wellington, Florida; Kate Shoemaker of Peoria, Arizona; and Roxanne Trunnell of Rowlett, Texas, put in countless hours of training prior to the selections for the WEG. By the time September came and the team made the trek to North Carolina for the championships, they were poised and ready to make their presence known on the global stage.

Two members of the U.S. Para-Equestrian Dressage Team took to the ring on the first day of para-dressage competition. In the Individual Test for Grade IV, Peavy and Royal Dark Chocolate, Rebecca Reno’s 10-year-old Oldenburg mare, finished in sixth place with a 68.902 percent, while her teammate Shoemaker placed right behind her with a 68.707 percent on Solitaer, the 10-year-old Hanoverian stallion she owns with Craig and Deena Shoemaker.

“She’s great at home and I live in Wellington, so we’re used to working in very hot conditions,” Peavy explained. “She’s a mare, so she has her opinions, but she’s really starting to bond with me. I can take her out and she is calm, but then she can really fire up in the arena.

“It’s an honor to be riding for the U.S. and to be the first para-athlete in the arena,” continued Peavy. “You can feel the energy with the spectators in the arena in your home country. Everyone is so excited for you, no matter what happens.”

Teammate Shoemaker earned a Grade IV seventh place in her Individual Test aboard Solitaer 40 on the first day of competition as well. Shoemaker expressed her excitement to have the championships on American soil, giving para-dressage the opportunity to step into the spotlight and become more widely known.

“I think it’s bringing more awareness [to the sport],” Shoemaker said. “As a sport we’ve been a little bit misunderstood. People think, ‘Maybe para means paralyzed or maybe it’s for paralyzed riders,’ and that’s not the case. We have the five grades for the different disabilities. Giving people the chance to see this, I think, has been wonderful and it’s already bringing a lot more attention to it.”

Continuing with the individual competition the following day,
Hart and her mount El Corona Texel, Rowan O’Riley’s 9-year-old Dutch Warmblood gelding, put in an impressive performance to secure a bronze medal in their Grade III Individual Test with a score of 72.235 percent.

Having previously been fourth at the 2010 WEG in Lexington, Kentucky, and again at the 2012 London Paralympic Games, Hart was on cloud nine to have finally earned a podium finish as well as the first-ever WEG para-dressage medal for the U.S. To add to their bronze achievement, the pair also earned a personal best score in the Grade III Individual Test, breaking the score of 71.618 percent they set over the winter during the Adequan Global Dressage Festival CPEDI3*.

“I’m really enjoying my home WEG,” Hart said. “My family is incredibly supportive but have never been able to watch me in an international CPEDI before. My dad got to watch that ride, so it was emotional because it was his first one. To have it go so well at your home base — it’s just super.”

The U.S. Para-Equestrian Dressage Team, presented by Deloitte, continued to make history by adding three more individual medals to their collection to wrap-up the week. Hart, Shoemaker and Trunnell increased the medal tally for the U.S. at the WEG on Saturday in their respective Freestyle divisions.

Hart and El Corona Texel won the Grade III silver medal for the Freestyle with a score of 73.240 percent, moving up on the podium from her bronze medal performance earlier in the week. Shoemaker in the Grade IV division and Trunnell in the Grade I, riding Shoemaker’s 6-year-old Hanoverian gelding Dolton, earned their first WEG bronze medals with scores of 73.230 percent and 75.587 percent, respectively. Additionally, Peavy earned a score of 71.660 percent in the Grade IV division. All scoring above 70 percent, the
four combinations showcased their consistency and progression against some of the best para-dressage athletes in the world.

“It’s an unbelievable feeling to end [a home WEG] with four medals,” said Chef d’Équipe Kai Handt. “This is the best [performance] we have had in terms of medals. I want to thank all of our staff and supporters: our team leader Laureen Johnson, [US Equestrian director of sport] Will Connell, Michele Assouline, our fantastic sponsors and the support team standing behind these athletes.”

Saturday’s medal count began when Shoemaker and Solitaer 40 executed an elegant test to a mixed composition featuring music from *Jurassic Park* choreographed by Tom Hunt. It was one of the pair’s best Freestyle scores to date, something that Shoemaker was proud to end with at her first WEG.

“Today’s ride was everything I could have asked for,” Shoemaker said. “Soli had one of his best rides. I am super proud of my horse and everyone on my team. I’m somewhere above cloud nine.”

Trunnell and Dolton boosted the U.S. team’s medal count with a heartwarming routine set to the music from *Forrest Gump*. The combination have only been working with the music for a year, but their bronze medal score, an all-time personal best FEI score for them, further validated they are on the right track with their routine.

“The test was awesome and he [flowed] with the music. It fits him perfectly,” Trunnell explained. “It feels good to be part of the U.S. team. Everyone has been working so hard and it’s finally paying off.”

Capping off an already emotional day, Hart wrapped up the para-dressage competition at the WEG as the final Freestyle performance of the day. Hoping to finish with a spot on the podium, Hart and El Corona Texel held the U.S. fan base in suspense as she and the gelding danced to an “ethereal” musical number by Marlene Whitaker.

“I didn’t know I won the [silver] medal [right away],” Hart said. “I thought they were lying. It’s absolutely fantastic. We have amazing support from US Equestrian and the United States Equestrian Team Foundation. The quality of horses and the support of our own individual teams is amazing.”

Peavy and Royal Dark Chocolate were the first combination to head down centerline to begin the Freestyle competition. She and the mare finished their WEG experience on a high note, earning their highest score of the week and placing seventh in the Grade IV division. They performed their test set to the music of *Chocolat*, a special piece of music that Peavy thought suited her mare nicely.

“I was really pleased with my ride today in the Freestyle,” Peavy said. “She felt calmer and was still listening to me and on the aids [more than] she has ever been at a show before. Thank you to the USEF Foundation donors for helping us get here and be able to ride at this fabulous venue and event. It’s been amazing.”
In front of an enthusiastic home crowd, the U.S. Vaulting Team, led by Chef d’Équipe Emma Seely, concluded competition at the FEI World Equestrian Games™ (WEG) with the World Squad Vaulting Championship, where the USA’s Pacific Coast Vaulters secured a personal best in the final freestyle competition for fourth place overall, just narrowly missing the podium.

The squad, made up of Kristian Roberts, Haley Smith, Audrey Kiernan, Emily Rose, Margaret Long and Daniel Janes, along with gold medalist lunger Carolyn Bland on the line for Diva 506, executed flawless and graceful performances in their final free-style routine, which depicted trees changing season, ultimately posting scores in the nines and resulting in a final score of 8.000. Germany took home the gold medal with a final score of 8.638, while Switzerland and Austria claimed silver and bronze with scores of 8.433 and 8.198, respectively.

“I think that was the best round we’ve ever done in competition,” said Long on the squad’s final freestyle performance. “I’ve never seen straight nines like that for technique, I’m so happy,” added Roberts.

The U.S. Vaulting Team also achieved more personal bests and finished with top performances in the World Individual Male and Female Vaulting Championships at WEG. The U.S. individual female athlete-and-horse combinations consisted of Tessa Divita and Romeo, Mary McCormick and Paris and Elizabeth Osborn and Atterupgaards Sting, while Roberts and Sir Charles, Colton Palmer and Zygo and Janes and Palatine represented the U.S. in the individual male competition.

Osborn and Atterupgaards Sting, lunged by Krista Mack, secured the highest overall individual female result for the U.S., placing 11th with a final score of 7.734. McCormick and Paris, along with lunger Christian Ramos, finished 13th overall on a final score of 7.361, while Divita and Romeo, lunged by Christoph Lesing, placed 14th with a score of 7.282.

Subsequently, Palmer, lunged by Maurit de Vries, finished 14th overall in the World Individual Male Vaulting Championship on a final score of 7.678, while Roberts, lunged by Bland, finished in 15th place with a final score of 7.263.

“Thank you to the USF Foundation donors for helping us achieve this monumental goal of representing the United States here on our home turf in Tryon,” said McCormick.

Earlier in the week, the World Pas de Deux Vaulting Championship saw Kathryn Keville and Florence Rubinger as well as Janes and Smith compete for the U.S. Vaulting Team with their mounts Revlon and Diva 506, respectively. Performing their freestyle routine to songs from the movie Pitch Perfect, Keville and Rubinger, along with lunger McCormick, finished in ninth overall with a score of 7.538. In addition, with an overall score of 8.244, Janes and Smith, lunged by Bland, finished in sixth place. Janes was also the only vaulter to represent the U.S. in all three vaulting championships at WEG (squad, individual and pas de deux).

“I’m really happy with the result — not just with the scores but with how we felt. It was absolutely what I wanted to show,” said Janes following his final pas de deux freestyle performance with Smith. “Thank you to the USEF Foundation for giving us the funds to come and compete here [at Tryon]. It made my job so much easier and I really appreciate it.”

Reflecting on the week’s competition at WEG, Chef d’Equipe Seely said, “The U.S. Vaulting Team did incredibly well this week. I’m proud of all the members — individual, pas de deux and the squad. It has been an awesome journey full of experiences and emotions. I feel privileged to have been chef d’équipe to this amazing group of athletes.”

— Taylor Rains
During the World Eventing Team and Individual Championships at the FEI World Equestrian Games™ (WEG) Tryon 2018, the Land Rover U.S. Eventing Team fell just shy of their goal for Olympic qualification with less than a rail for an eighth place finish. However, Olympic bronze medalist Phillip Dutton and Z finished in the top 15 individually, earning a score of 34 that ranked them 13th and the top placing U.S. combination.

“I’ve been through nearly a year cycle with the athletes and their horses,” said U.S. eventing Chef d’Équipe Erik Duvander. “This whole 10 months [with the team] has really been about learning as much as possible, and having a very clear picture of what we need to do to put this [squad] together to be a world-class team. There are many elements — eventing is quite complex — that we need to get right or be better at. That is a fact. At the end of the day, we know where we are as a country and we need to put in a lot of work.”

Dutton (West Grove, Pennsylvania) and Z gave a solid performance in front of the home crowd. The 10-year-old Zangersheide gelding owned by Thomas Tierney, Simon Roosevelt, Suzanne Lacy, Caroline Moran and Ann Jones was in excellent form and put in two clear rounds during the event, finishing fault-free during cross-country and show jumping. As the youngest horse on the squad, Z proved his resilience and reliability throughout the competition.

“I think Z is the best horse I’ve ever had,” noted Dutton. “We are going to work on his fitness. It’s not that natural for him to gallop for 10 or 11 minutes yet, but it’s like marathon runners: over time I think he’ll get better and better. He loves it and there hasn’t been a day since I’ve had him that he hasn’t improved. He’s great and he has a great work ethic.”

The designated pathfinder for the team was Will Coleman (Charlottesville, Virginia), who was aboard Conair Syndicate’s 11-year-old Thoroughbred gelding Tight Lines. The pair began the weekend with a solid dressage performance, but penalties during cross-country and show jumping would earn them a total of 99.2 penalties over the weekend. Boyd Martin (Cochranville, Pennsylvania) and Tsetserleg, Christine Turner’s 11-year-old Trakehner gelding, also had difficulties during cross-country and show jumping to finish on 70.7 penalties.

After beginning their performance with an excellent dressage score of 28.3 penalties, Lynn Symansky (Middleburg, Virginia) and Donner turned in a clear cross-country round. However, the 15-year-old Thoroughbred gelding owned by The Donner Syndicate, LLC struggled during the show jumping phase, adding 12 penalties to their score for a total of 40.3 finishing 25th individually.

The Land Rover U.S. Eventing Team will now need to utilize the 2019 Pan American Games in Lima, Peru, as their qualification opportunity for the 2020 Tokyo Olympic Games.

“The first part of it is planning — planning the horses’ immediate futures and further out,” said Duvander. “I didn’t have the chance to do that this time. When I came in, the plans were already set. This is an opportunity for me to put a two-year plan together [with the athletes] for the Olympics and a four-year plan for the next WEG. I think that is essential so that we have all of the horses prepared and have checked all the boxes before we go to a championship.”

— Rebecca Walton
Congratulations to the United States Equestrian Teams and their “team behind the team.”

Will Connell .................................Chef de Mission
Steven Morrissey .........................Asstistant Chef de Mission
Andy Thomas ..............................Human Physiotherapist
Mark Hart .....................................Team Doctor
Kenneth Bark ................................Farrier
Julian McPeak ..............................Press Officer
Laura Roberts ...............................Staff
Gemma Stobbs ................................Staff
Christina Vaughn ...........................Staff
Codie Mott .................................Staff
Jillian Erlemeier ...........................Staff
Meredith Monti ..............................Staff
Katie Brown .................................Staff

Dressage

Robert Dover .................................Chef d’Equipe
Hallye Griffin ................................Team Leader
Debbie McDonald ...........................Coach
Dr. Cricket Russillo .........................Veterinarian
Thomas Meyers ............................Equine Physiotherapist
Dr. Carole Holland .........................Physiotherapist
Laura Graves ...............................Athlete
Adrienne Lyle ...............................Athlete
Steffen Peters ...............................Athlete
Kasey Perry-Glass ..........................Athlete
Emmalie Clapp .............................Groom
Dorte Sorensen ..............................Groom
Eduardo Garcia Luna .......................Groom
Holly Gorman ...............................Groom
Curt Maes .................................Owner
Elizabeth Juliano ..........................Owner
Akiko Yamazaki & Jerry Yang ............Owner
Diane Perry .................................Owner

Photo by Annan Hepner / Phelps Media Group
Driving

Barry Hunter ................................Chef d’Equipe
Danielle Aamodt .......................Team Leader
Dr. Brendan Furlong ...............Veterinarian
Dr. Jonathan Furlong .............Veterinarian Assistant
Mieke van Tergouw .............Coach
Boyd Excell............................Coach
Koos de Ronde .................Coach
Chester Weber .......................Athlete
Misdee Wrigley-Miller .........Athlete
James Fairclough .............Athlete
Luc Astegiano .........................Groom
Pernillha Engstrom ..........Groom
Kristof Osztertag ............Groom
Adine Pettersson Soderstrom .Groom

Para-Dressage

Kai Handt ................................Chef d’Equipe
Laureen Johnson .................Team Leader
Michel Assouline .................Head of Para Coach
Dr. Duncan Peters ............Veterinarian
Heather Blitz .........................Coach
Andrea Woodard .................Coach
Janet Smaldone .................Human Physiotherapist
Jean-Pierre Hourdebaig ....Equine Physiotherapist
Roxanne Trunnell ...........Athlete
Rebecca Hart .......................Athlete
Taren Lester .........................Groom
Paige Lautzenheiser ..........Groom
Amber Lester .......................Groom
Sara Simmons ......................Groom
Celine Fabre .........................Groom
Camille Guerette .................Groom
Emily Hagstedt ...............Groom
Lucas Martin .........................Groom
Olof Larsson .........................Groom
Jose Sendra .........................Groom
Gary & Barbara Coe ...........Groom
Jane Forbes Clark ...............Owner
James Miller .........................Owner

Photo by Rebecca Walton / Phelps Media Group
### Endurance

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### Eventing

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### Reining

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<td>&amp; Anne Meyer</td>
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Show Jumping

Robert Ridland ..................................Chef d’Equipe
Lizzy Chesson .................................Team Leader
Dr. Tim Ober ....................................Veterinarian
Janus Marquis ................................Physiotherapist
Roger Gelissen ..............................Team Assistant
Mclain Ward ....................................Athlete
Laura Kraut ....................................Athlete
Devin Ryan .....................................Athlete
Adrienne Sternlicht ..........................Athlete
Bezie Madden .................................Athlete/Traveling Alternate
Sean Kissane ....................................Groom
Virginie Casterman ..........................Groom
Dale Hailstones ...............................Groom

Vaulting

Emma Seely ..................................Chef d’Equipe
Hannah Niebielski ............................Team Leader
Jennifer Arntsen .............................Assistant Chef d’Equipe
Dr. Wayne Browning .......................Veterinarian
Lori Bidwell ..................................Equine Physiotherapist
Daniel Janes ....................................Athlete
Kristian Roberts ..............................Athlete
Emily Rose .....................................Athlete
Margaret Long ................................Athlete
Haley Smith ..................................Athlete
Audrey Kiernan ..............................Athlete
Cameron Brown ..............................Athlete
Colton Palmer ...............................Athlete
Geoffrey Woolson ............................Athlete
Haley Smith ..................................Athlete
Daniel Janes .................................Athlete
Elizabeth Osborn ............................Athlete
Mary McCormick ............................Athlete/Lunger/Owner
Tessa Divita ....................................Athlete
Kristian Roberts ..............................Athlete
Daniel Janes .................................Athlete
Selvin Osmin .................................Groom
Emma Chapman .............................Groom
Clark Shipley .................................Groom
Lee McKeever ..............................Groom
Rich Heise ....................................Owner
Juliann Benson ..............................Owner
Steve & Lori Larrabee ........................Owner
Mimi Sternlicht ..............................Owner
Barry Sternlicht ..............................Owner
Abigail Wexner ..............................Owner
Deborah & Brian Sweeny ..................Owner
Susie Keller .................................Owner
Kathryn Keville ..............................Athlete
Florence Rubinger ..........................Athlete
Krista Mack .................................Lunger
Christian Ramos ............................Lunger
Julie Divita ....................................Lunger
Maurits de Vries .............................Lunger
Christoph Lensing ..........................Lunger
Carolyn Bland ...............................Lunger
Erica Meitz ..................................Attendant
Isabelle Parker ...............................Attendant
Kimberly Palmer ............................Attendant
Katie Congreve ..............................Groom
Jessica Garrod ..............................Groom
Jane Robinson ..............................Groom
Brittany O’Leary ............................Owner
Moritz Steffans .............................Owner
Sean Keville .................................Owner
Jim & Linda Bibbler ........................Owner
Jill Palmer .................................Owner
Kevin Palmer ...............................Owner
“LUXURY isn’t just lofty aspirations, it’s lofty EXPERIENCES.”

Her extraordinary story notwithstanding, Salamander Hotels and Resorts CEO Sheila C. Johnson has infused her own sense of luxury into every one of her properties. She’s curated the kind of experiences that defy convention. Because when it comes down to it, you don’t just stay at a Salamander destination for how it looks. You stay for what you’ll remember.

Salamander. Now this is luxury.
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