



*McKenzie Kelley & Fuerst Hit were one of many champions crowned on the final day of competition at the Great American/USDF Region 7 & CDS Championship Show.
Photo: Jennifer M. Keeler*

Another Record-Setting Competition Comes to a Close at Great American/USDF Region 7 & California Dressage Society Championship Show

By Yellow Horse Marketing for the California Dressage Society

Despite triple-digit temperatures, more than 300 competitors found a way to beat the heat and celebrate a final day of outstanding championship competition at the 48th Annual California Dressage Society (CDS) Annual Championship Show and Great American Insurance Group/United States Dressage Federation (USDF) Region 7 Championships, being held September 17-20, 2015 in Rancho Murieta, Calif.

“We had a great turnout at this show and the quality just gets better and better,” said USEF “S” judge Brent Hicks, who judged all levels from Training to FEI over the course of the weekend. “We had a great panel of judges and saw lots of good horses who were very well-trained and ridden, and it was also fun to see so many juniors on mounts of all sizes. It’s wonderful to see that dressage continues to be so strong here on the West Coast.”

The Great American Insurance Group/USDF Region 7 Championships concluded with plenty of opportunities for Juniors and Young Riders to compete across a multitude of divisions. One of those competitors was 21-year-old McKenzie Kelley of Napa, Calif. who was enjoying her final season in the JR/YR division with her five-year-old Oldenburg gelding Fuerst Hit. Their weekend got off to a flying start on Saturday with the clinching of a CDS Horse of the Year title, and today the pair also won the Great American/USDF Region 7 Junior/Young Rider First Level Championship with 72.941%. "He's got a little bit of a lazy side despite being so young, but we woke him up a little bit and we had a great ride. Our canter work in particular is always a highlight," said Kelley, who is a senior at Chico State when not in the saddle. "We didn't get to go to these championships last year so I was excited to come back, and I'm already hoping to return again next year."

At Third Level, Nila Venkat (Hayward, Calif.) rode Emily Pollard's Trakehner gelding Skyler Ace to victory with a score of 64.103%. D'Re Murray of Petaluma, Calif. followed up yesterday's CDS Horse of the Year title with another win aboard her Hanoverian gelding Dernier Cri in today's JR/YR Prix St. Georges Region 7 Championship with 67.566%. The Young Rider Team Test Championship was earned by Katharine Cassidy of Rancho Santa Fe, Calif. thanks to a lovely test with the Hanoverian gelding Pellegrini (69.342%), while Ariel Thomas from the East Bay chapter also finished off her weekend with a win in the JR/YR Intermediaire II division aboard her Oldenburg gelding Heraldik Star on a score of 66.250%.

In the Region 7 Open First Level Championship, Hilda Gurney of Moorpark set an early mark of 73.971% with her young Oldenburg mare Iris, which looked as if it would remain atop the leaderboard for the duration of the class. Ultimately the only person who could beat Gurney was herself, as she returned to the ring with her freshly-crowned CDS Futurity Champion Lotta Silver (five-year-old U.S.-bred Trakehner gelding) to edge out his stablemate with a winning score of 74.044%. Susan Martin's long drive north from the Los Angeles chapter of CDS proved worthwhile as she wrapped up her weekend by winning the Region 7 Open Fourth Level Championship on a score of 71.836% with Janelle Frazer's Oldenburg gelding Dominus, while Nancy Szakacs of Hollister, Calif. rode her charming Westfalen gelding Rudi Regali to the win in the Adult Amateur division with a score of 70.667%. Leslie Webb of Bakersfield and Harmony's Armani (Dutch mare owned by Harmony Sporthorses) have won their share of blue ribbons at this annual championship show, and today they added the Region 7 Open Intermediaire I title to their resume on a score of 74.803%. Meanwhile in the Adult Amateur division, Adrienne Bessey of Thousand Oaks won the Intermediaire I Regional Championship for the second straight year by earning a score of 69.611% on her Danish mare Dido.

The last round of coveted CDS Horse of the Year titles were awarded and in a division where the top nine finishers all scored over 70%, the four-year-old CDS Futurity champion Dehavilland (U.S.-bred Oldenburg gelding) came through for owner/rider Sarah Lockman of Calimesa, Calif. one more time, earning a combined two-test score of 76.639% to win CDS Open Training Level Horse of the Year honors and the Peter and Bonnie Lert Perpetual Trophy. Madora Daniel of Minden, Nev. also scored a victory with her elegant Hanoverian Ronaldo in the Adult Amateur Training Level championship to earn an overall 70.350% and claim the Melissa Creswick Perpetual Trophy. Daniel and her promising five-year-old gelding qualified for the Championship Show via automatic qualification from the Equine Insurance/CDS Regional Adult Amateur Competitions (RAAC), and she encouraged other riders to take advantage of the same opportunity. "We had a tough start to the show but he settled in and we were able to put in two

nice performances, so I'm really happy with how it ended up," she explained. "Next year we hope to move up to First and Second Levels, and our ultimate long-term goal is to get into the FEI ring and present him in the Developing Horse program. I think we're off to a great start."

The Full Cry Perpetual Trophy for Adult Amateur First Level was awarded to Meike Petry (Portola Valley, Calif.) who bested almost 30 other competitors to finish with an overall top score of 71.252% with the young Oldenburg gelding Luigi. Another newly-crowned CDS Futurity Champion, the six-year-old Dutch gelding Empire, claimed yet another victory today with owner/rider Melissa Rogers of Sonoma in winning Second Level for Adult Amateurs and the Two-Tone Malone Trophy for CDS Horse of the Year on an overall score of 70.006%. Adult amateur Kimberly Frederick will go home to Lincoln, Calif. with the Stanford Dressage Club Trophy for Third Level thanks to a winning performance with her Dutch gelding Caribbean Veluw (67.917%), while Sarah Lockman earned her second CDS Horse of the Year title of the day, this time aboard her lovely gray Holsteiner gelding Calimero to win the CDS Open Third Level Horse of the Year division and the Judith Elias Perpetual Trophy by a comfortable margin with a combined two-test score of 71.378%.

In the CDS Horse of the Year division for Adult Amateurs at Fourth Level, Amalia Boyles of Carlsbad, Calif. rode Donna Richardson's Hanoverian gelding Welt Erbe to take a commanding lead in the first round of competition, and a flowing mistake-free performance today in the challenging Fourth Level Test 3 cemented the overall win and the Fox Run Perpetual Trophy with a combined score of 68.833%. "This means so much to me because it's my first championship win as an adult amateur," said Boyles. "Welt Erbe is teaching me about Fourth Level and Prix St. Georges which I'd never done before, so it's all very new for me. It's not easy, and the first few months I even came off a few times! He works hard and as long as I'm working hard too, it all works out but he doesn't give it for free. He's quirky, but he's a good match for me."

In a fitting finale before his likely retirement, Whitney Harrington's Austrian gelding Laredo 183 carried rider Lindsey Schulz to a final victory in the CDS Adult Amateur Grand Prix Horse of the Year division to win the Rubinstein Memorial Trophy on a score of 65.100%. Half Moon Bay's Anke Herbert earned the Pelton Family Trophy for Open Intermediaire II with her Bavarian gelding Fandango R.S. (67.763%), while in the Adult Amateur division, Adrienne Bessey (Thousand Oaks, Calif.) wrapped up her weekend with one more blue ribbon aboard Hilda Gurney's Oldenburg gelding Wintersnow on a score of 69.539%.

Juniors and young riders also competed for top honors in their CDS Horse of the Year divisions. Peyton Lesser of Concord earned the top spot in the Training Level division with a winning two-test average of 67.229% with Carol Di Maggio's Arabian stallion Tarim TZ, while Celsiana William of Trinidad, Calif. and her German Riding Pony gelding Heart Throb SVS continued their winning ways by claiming the CDS JR/YR Second Level title with 69.072%. At Third Level, Marcy Morse of Lafayette, Calif. rode Christy Cadwallader's Dutch gelding Sante to a winning performance and an overall two-test average score of 67.244%, while Brianna Relucio (San Ramon, Calif.) found herself leading the victory lap for the Fourth Level championship on a combined score of 66.111% with her Hanoverian gelding Wynsum. In the CDS Dressage Seat Equitation Challenge for riders 13 and under, Lily-Rose Bacon of Atherton, Calif. rode her pony gelding Turbo Diesel to win the blue ribbon with a score of 79.000%, while Isabella Macchioni of Livermore, Calif. remained undefeated in the weekend's USDF and CDS equitation classes for the 14-18 division with her Hanoverian gelding Danatelo on an impressive score of 83.200%.

Final CDS Horse of the Year Freestyle titles were awarded for First, Second, Third and the Intermediaire levels. Dove Butler's flashy pinto Oldenburg stallion Argentum BSH showed his lovely true colors in winning the First Level Freestyle championship thanks to a huge score of 79.233% earned with Katie Hoefs-Martin of Hollister aboard. After earning the USDF Region 7 Second Level Freestyle championship on Thursday, Anne Howard of Watsonville, Calif. also earned the CDS equivalent today with her own Bulgarian gelding Apel on a score of 76.283% for their Celtic-themed performance, while Shelby Rocereto of Livermore, Calif. won the CDS Third Level Freestyle with a mark of 80.133% aboard her Dutch mare Chapeau.

"Every year CDS strives to improve this show and put on a world-class event, and this year I think we went above and beyond," said CDS President Kevin Reinig. "We had new and exciting sponsors come on board, the Murieta Equestrian Center continues to improve their already outstanding facility, and show management did an incredible job as always. Local chapters and volunteers stepped up to help with this huge event, and it was great having so many CDS Board members here to assist – it was a true team effort. The overall atmosphere was fantastic, everyone had fun, we saw great sportsmanship and camaraderie, and the feedback I received from competitors was amazing. We're on a trend where this show just gets better and better each time, and this year was no exception."

For complete Day Four results, [click here](#). For more information about the California Dressage Society Championship Show, including news, schedules, ride times, and results, visit the [CDS website](#) and follow along with behind-the-scenes updates and photos on the [CDS Facebook page](#).