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MEDIA CONTACT: JENNIFER KEELER, YELLOW HORSE MARKETING,
jennifer@yellowhorsemarketing.com

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California Dressage Society Championships Get Underway at Rancho Murieta

By Yellow Horse Marketing for the California Dressage Society

Dressage competition got underway Thursday at the Murieta Equestrian Center in Rancho Murieta, CA for the 44th Annual California Dressage Society Championship Show presented by HorseShow.com. With more than \$29,000 in prize money and awards, this show features the popular CDS Young Horse Futurity (including the Cal-Bred Futurity), the Great American Insurance Group/USDF Region 7 Dressage Championships, and the Great American Insurance Group/USDF Breeders Championships West Coast Series Final. An esteemed panel of judges from across the country are on hand to officiate, including FEI officials Natalie Lamping ("I" Florida USA), Joan Macartney ("I" CAN), Jeanne McDonald ("I" Pennsylvania USA), and Lorraine Macdonald ("I" CAN), in addition to Sandra Hotz ("S" Colorado); Paula Lacy ("S" California); Michael Osinski ("S" Washington); Sue Mandas ("S" Ohio); William Warren ("S" Massachusetts); and Kristi Wysocki ("S" Colorado).

The week's first Great American Insurance Group/USDF Regional Championship titles were presented in four musical freestyle divisions. Chermaine Hurtado of Moorpark, CA went two-for-two with Ardean Bennett's "Feiner Fritz" and her own "Winter Nebel" in the First and Second Level divisions, scoring 66.883% and 67.767%, respectively. In the Third Level Freestyle Championship, Robert Kelley of Soquel, CA rode his own Swedish Warmblood gelding "Nikko" to top the class with a score of 64.900%, while Kimberly Noon-Fishel from Walnut Creek, CA and "Casino Royale" danced to a James Bond-themed freestyle to win the championship ribbon for Fourth Level with 65.500%.

The CDS Futurity for four, five, and six-year-olds began this afternoon, when horses in each division competed in the first of two tests which will be compiled to determine the overall champions. In the Amateur divisions, Melissa Mulchahey rode "Outrageous" to a score of 68.750% in Training Level Test 2 to claim the first test of the four-year-old futurity, while Nancy Szakacs and five-year-old "Rudi Regali" earned 69.828% at First Level Test 1 and Matthew Walley and "Funtango" rode Second Level Test 1 to 63.857% to take the lead in their respective divisions. In the Open divisions, more than 30 horses are vying

for top honors. Craig Stanley rode the California-bred "Caliente DG" to a high score of 69.107% in the four-year-old class, while Alice Womble-Heitman's Hanoverian stallion "Sanceo" and Sabine Schut-Kery took a commanding lead over the five-year-old field with a score of 79.483% from judges Natalie Lamping and William Warren. Six-year-olds finished the day's activities as Gundi Younger guided "Luke Skywalker" to a winning score of 71.143%.

Daily results and complete information about the 44th Annual California Dressage Society Championship Show presented by HorseShow.com is available on the CDS website, www.california-dressage.org.

The California Dressage Society, formed in 1967, is a non-profit organization devoted to furthering interest in dressage. It is one of the largest dressage organizations in the nation with more than 4,000 individual members in its 36 Chapters and a rich history of equestrian sport on the West Coast.



PHOTO CAPTION & CREDIT: Robert Kelley and "Nikko" won the GAIG/USDF Region 7 Third Level Freestyle Championship. Photo: Jennifer M. Keeler

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