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Riders Celebrate Winning Ways on Third Day of California Dressage Society Championships

By Yellow Horse Marketing for the California Dressage Society

Both the weather and the competition continued to heat up at the Murieta Equestrian Center in Rancho Murieta, CA for the 44th Annual California Dressage Society Championship Show presented by HorseShow.com, in conjunction with the 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. A full day of championship action wrapped up with competitors celebrating their achievements and enjoying an evening of complimentary hospitality and entertainment, featuring freestyles, Western drill team, costume Iberian quadrille, disc dogs, and the famous Brian O'Connor and "Sydney" dressage demonstration.

The conclusion of the CDS Young Horse Futurity, showcasing the five- and six-year-old divisions, once again featured stellar fields of up-and-coming talent. By mid-morning, a crowd had gathered outside Ring 4 to watch Alice Womble-Heitman's talented stallion "Sanceo" dominate the five-year-old division. Earning a score of 79.134% today with rider Sabine Schut-Kery of Thousand Oaks, CA, the bay Hanoverian (San Remo x Rivera by Ramiro's Son II, bred in Germany by Gerhard Dustmann) finished with an overall two-day average of 79.133%. Judges Natalie Lamping and William Warren were delighted with Sanceo's performance. "This horse is so pleasant to judge, because he's so light, willing, forward, and good in the contact," noted Lamping, while Warren added, "This pair is the picture of harmony; during the test, you find yourself hardly saying anything, but instead just enjoying the lovely ride."

The six-year-olds contested Second Level Test 2 for their division title, and "Luke Skywalker" impressed the judges to receive a score of 71.184% (71.164% overall). This bay Oldenburg gelding (Lauterbach x Teja by Beach Boy, bred in Germany by H. Bloemer) is owned by Peter Younger and ridden by Gundi Younger of Walnut Creek, CA. "Second Level tests can be tough because of the introduction of collection, but these were lovely horses which were well ridden today," said judge Natalie Lamping. Judge William Warren agreed. "I enjoyed the challenge of having one good horse after another in this class, it makes judging exciting." In the Adult Amateur divisions of the Futurity, Nancy Szakacs of Hollister, CA rode her own Westfalen gelding "Rudi Regali" (Riccoone x Rubina by Rubiluh) to a First Level Test 2 score of 69.324% to claim their Futurity title with an overall score of 69.576%, while the six-year-old class was won by the Hanoverian gelding "Funtango" (Waldorf x Eisa) with owner/rider Matthew Walley from San Francisco, CA with 62.895% (63.376% overall).

CDS Horse of the Year titles were awarded at First, Second and Fourth Levels, as well as Intermediaire I. In a hotly contested Open First Level division, Sandy Savage rode Teree and Rick Castanias' five-year-old Hanoverian gelding "Stradivarius" to take the McLeod Perpetual Trophy home to Sacramento, CA with an overall combined score of 74.154%. The Bengt Lungquist Memorial Trophy for Open Second Level Horse of the Year with an overall score of 71.059% was "Harmony's Armani", a six-year-old Dutch Warmblood mare ridden by Leslie Webb of Bakersfield, CA for owner Harmony Sporthorses. Meanwhile, Amy Miller of Fullerton, CA guided her own eight-year-old Dutch Warmblood gelding "Waterloo SE" to victory in the Open Fourth Level championship with 67.654% to claim the Pal Kemery Perpetual Trophy. Rebecca Rigdon of Encinitas, CA put in another strong performance to win the CDS Open Intermediaire I Horse of the Year Trophy with her Holsteiner mare "Solei" (70.395%), while the Adult Amateur division and T.D.I. Systems Perpetual Trophy was earned with a score of 69.605% by "Tristan", a Dutch Warmblood gelding ridden by Charlotte Jorst of Reno, NV for owner Skagen Holdings.

Additional CDS Championships were awarded in the Intermediaire I and Grand Prix Freestyle divisions as part of evening entertainment. Charlotte Jorst and "Tristan" continued to be unbeatable in their division, claiming their third championship sash of the weekend by winning the Lilian Van Dahn Trophy for CDS Intermediaire Freestyle with a score of 71.000%. "He's such a great horse," said Jorst of her mount. "It's all about having fun, and they can feel your enthusiasm." The audience couldn't contain their excitement during the performance of Whitney Harrington and Irmgard Friedberger's Austrian gelding "Laredo 183", who made the long drive from Agoura Hills, CA worthwhile by winning the Lt. Col Hans Moeller Trophy for their Grand Prix freestyle with a score of 68.625%. "I had a lot of horse

tonight, but it was so great to ride in front of this crowd," exclaimed Harrington.

Great American Insurance Group/USDF Region 7 Championships were also presented in a multitude of divisions, including several in the Junior/Young Rider ranks. At Training Level, Katherine Biehn, hailing from Livermore, CA, earned a top score of 66.400% with her adorable Haflinger gelding "Mufasa". The Second Level Championship and score of 63.452% was awarded to "Zodessa", a seven-year-old Dutch Warmblood mare ridden and owned by Gabriela Glumac from San Ramon, CA, while NAYRC Region 7 team member Stephanie Early of Watsonville, CA rode her own Hanoverian mare "Panash" to claim the Junior Team Test Championship (67.568%). Juniors and Young Riders also contested their Prix St. Georges Championship, with Georgia Wren-Russ of Calabasas, CA and her Wurtenberg gelding "Saphiro" winning on a score of 65.132%.

Topping a large field of Adult Amateurs at First Level was Nancy Szakacs, who continued to build upon her CDS Futurity success with "Rudi Regali" by earning 71.613% to claim another championship title. In the Open Third Level Championship, Louise Koch of Westlake Village, CA claimed both the Champion and Reserve spots with her own Westfalen stallion "San Shivago" and Dutch Warmblood gelding "Valiant", scoring 69.103% and 67.692% (respectively), while the Adult Amateur division at this level was claimed by Reno, NV's Hilari Fleming with her Oldenburg gelding "Rubicon SF" on a score of 68.718%. In the FEI divisions, topping the leader board in the Open Prix St. Georges Championship was Kim Elsner of Moorpark, CA, riding Hilda Gurney's Trakehner gelding "Luminence" to a winning score of 68.816%. As last year's CDS champion at the Adult Amateur Prix St. Georges level, Ruth Shirkey of Los Gatos, CA, this time claimed the Regional Championship title in this division, earning 65.395% with her Oldenburg gelding "PEC Womanizer". Leslie Webb and Harmony Sporthorses' Oldenburg gelding "Harmony's Sandro" remained unbeaten at the Grand Prix level, winning the Open Region 7 Championship with a score of 67.447%, while Whitney Harrington added another title to her roster by winning the Adult Amateur Grand Prix class with a score of 63.298% on "Laredo 183".

In addition to a full day of championship rides, in-hand sport horse breeding competition was also featured with the Great American Insurance Group/USDF Breeders Championships - West Coast Final presented by Arenus. Kevin Reinig of Wilton, CA presented the yearling Hanoverian "Wyleigh Princess" (Weltmeyer x EM Heiress B by His Highness) to claim the Filly Championship for owner Ruth Shirkey, earning a score of 78.350% from judges Jeanne McDonald and Sue Madden-Mandas. In the Colt/Gelding Championship, Brian Bodarke brought his striking two-year-old Holsteiner colt "Donaly BRB" (Dolany x Oeuvre by Cicero) from Chico, CA to win the division title with a score of 70.650%. Jillian Riese of San Jose, CA showed the colorful six-year-old ISR mare "City Girl" (Sempatico x Sage) to win the Mare Championship with a score of 69.000% for owner Dove Butler. In the Current Year Foal Championship, Shelley Housh of Blue Jay, CA handled her own "Nairobi Silver SH", a grey Shagya filly (Sterling Silver x Nicolatina Star by Starwalker), to a score of 70.350%, while the Stallion Championship was awarded to the four-year-old Oldenburg "Don Francisco" (Daddy Cool x SPS Leanra by Lafitte), owned by Carol Di Maggio from Walnut Creek, CA. The day's sport horse breeding champions were celebrated during a unique "Parade of Champions" during the evening performance.

Championship competition concludes on Sunday with final divisions of Regional and CDS Championships. 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: *Sabine Schut-Kery and "Sanceo" win the CDS Young Horse Futurity for Five-Year-Olds. Photo: Jennifer M. Keeler*

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