Championship Action Wraps Up on Final Day of California Dressage Society Championships

By Yellow Horse Marketing for the California Dressage Society

Final championship ribbons were presented Sunday 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.

Officials and competitors were pleased with their championship experience. "I love coming out to California, and it's a great experience working with CDS and this management team," said judge Jeanne McDonald from Pennsylvania. "They have strong numbers here, and the quality of horses and riders here is always very good." Intermediaire II-competitor Christine Stephenson drove nine hours from Mission Viejo, CA to ride her Dutch Warmblood gelding "Markant" to a third-place finish in her CDS division. "The footing was excellent, everything was organized so well, the horses are happy, and the evening activities were great," said Stephenson. "It's been a super show! We came a long way to compete and I'm so glad we did."

Competition for CDS Horse of the Year awards is always fierce, and competitors once again had to bring their best rides to the Murieta Equestrian Center on Sunday to earn a top placing. Following her Saturday evening freestyle victory, Whitney Harrington of Agoura Hills, CA and Irmgard Friedberger's Austrian gelding "Laredo 183" claimed the Rubinstein Memorial Trophy for the Adult Amateur Grand Prix

class (70.51%). Brian Hafner of Templeton, CA expertly rode his long-time partner "Lombardo LHF" to a score of 68.026% to win the Pelton Family Trophy for Intermediaire II. Chermaine Hurtado of Moorpark, CA repeated Thursday's USDF championship successes by going two-for-two in today's CDS Horse of the Year divisions with Ardean Bennett's "Feiner Fritz" and her own Hanoverian mare "Winter Nebel" in the First and Second Level Freestyle classes, scoring 68.167% and 71.667%, respectively, and the CDS and Dawn West Perpetual Trophies. Adding to her previous day's USDF championship in the FEI Junior division, 16-year-old Stephanie Early of Watsonville, CA danced her way to a score of 69.167% and another victory in the CDS Third Level Freestyle (De Medici Perpetual Trophy) with her own Hanoverian mare "Panash".

Jaye Cherry will smile for the duration of her six-hour drive back to Burbank, CA as she takes home the Peter and Bonnie Lert Trophy for CDS Horse of the Year at Open Training Level with Marta Kauffman's four-year-old Oldenburg gelding, "Santana" (72.432%). The five-year-old Westfalen gelding "Rudi Regali" has proven to be unbeatable all weekend, claiming today's CDS titles in the Adult Amateur Training Level division (Melissa Creswick Trophy) and also at First Level (Full Cry Trophy) with scores of 74.357% and 70.342%, respectively for owner/rider Nancy Szakacs of Hollister, CA. Lisa Johnston and her Oldenburg gelding "Venzerro" were the strongest performers in the Adult Amateur Second Level division, winning Two-Tone Malone Trophy on an overall score of 68.051%. At Third Level, adult amateur rider Jan Bauman of Diablo, CA rode to a score of 67.276% to win the Stanford Dressage Club Trophy with her Hanoverian gelding "Cobra", while Louise Koch from Westlake Village, CA and her Westfalen stallion "San Shivago" partnered for another championship title, winning the Judith Elias Perpetual Trophy for CDS Open Third Level Horse of the Year with 69.090%. Adult amateur Katrina Christy and her Hanoverian "Winterstarr" earned 70.610% to dominate their Fourth Level division and take the Fox Run Perpetual Trophy home to Los Altos, CA.

Great American Insurance Group/USDF Region 7 Championships also concluded, with titles awarded at First, Third, Fourth, and Intermediaire I levels, as well as for Young Riders. In a highly-competitive Open First Level Championship, the top three horse/rider combinations scored over 71 percent; but ultimately emerging victorious was Kathleen Jaraczewski of Santa Rosa, CA, riding her own Oldenburg gelding "Wallander 14" to a top score of 71.774%. Juniors and Young Riders contested Third Level, with the Hanoverian gelding "Daimler Bo" (owned by Diane De Los Reyes) carrying Jessica Pierce of Ramona, CA to victory with 66.154%. Fullerton, CA's Amy Miller claimed the Open Fourth Level win (69.500%) with her Dutch Warmblood gelding "Waterloo SE", while Katrina Christy won her second championship of the day with "Winterstarr", scoring 64.500% to win the Adult Amateur class. In the Open Intermediaire I division, Kim Elsner of Moorpark continued to collect tricolors with Hilda Gurney's Trakehner gelding "Luminence", winning with 69.342%, while in the Adult Amateur division, Charlotte Jorst of Reno, NV collected one more title with the Dutch Warmblood gelding "Tristan" (owned by Skagen Holdings) on a score of 66.579%. Grace Goodby of Oakland, CA and her Westfalen gelding "Montfleury" returned from their trip to the USEF Festival of Champions in Gladstone, NJ to claim the Young Rider Team Test Championship (67.632%). Wrapping up the day was the Dressage Seat Medal Semi-Final (14-18 division), won by veteran FEI Junior/Young Rider competitor Genay Vaughn of Elk Grove, CA on the Hanoverian mare "Waranja" with a score of 79.000%.

Competition manager Glenda McElroy was pleased with recent improvements to the Murieta Equestrian Center, site of this year's championships. "Many changes have been made to upgrade this facility, and every time we come here it gets bigger and better," said McElroy. She also had high praise for volunteers who turned out en masse to assist with the show. "We had over sixty volunteers this week, who helped us out even during set-up on Wednesday and in the rain on Thursday," McElroy noted. "It's unusual to have this many

people so generously donate their time, and we are incredibly grateful to have had their help."

"What struck me the most about this weekend is the impressive scope of these championships," said CDS President Peggy Klump. "The atmosphere and camaraderie here was wonderful, reminiscent of the 'old days', and it was so great to see everyone celebrate coming together here as part of the CDS family."

Complete results and event coverage for 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: *Jaye Cherry & "Santana" win the CDS Horse of the Year title for Open Training Level. Photo: Jennifer M. Keeler*

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