

NEWS RELEASE

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2010 FTI Winter Equestrian Festival Week Five Wrap-up: February 10-14, 2010

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Jennifer Wood for Jennifer Wood Media, Inc.

Wellington, FL - February 16, 2010 - The 2010 FTI Winter Equestrian Festival (WEF) had a great fifth week of competition on February 10-14. The week featured the \$150,000 FEI World Cup, CSI 3* presented by Spy Coast Farm, along with a full schedule of hunter, jumper, and equitation classes. The week five title sponsor was Spy Coast Farm.

Spy Coast Farm specializes in the breeding and development of top quality performance horses with bases in Setauket, NY, Lexington, KY, and Wellington, FL. Along with owning top show jumpers and a show horse operation, the Louries have created a breeding operation in Kentucky and young horse training program in Setauket. Their show horse operation, which spends summers in Kentucky and winters in Wellington, is led by trainers Ali and Shane Sweetnam of Sweet Oak Farm. Their five-star facilities feature new barns, state-of-the-art equipment, and dedicated staff. For more information, please visit www.spycoastfarm.com.

Along with their week five title sponsorship, Spy Coast Farm was the presenting sponsor of the \$150,000 FEI World Cup, CSI 3* on Saturday, February 13, and is the overall circuit sponsor of the 1.40m Jumper division.

Pablo Barrios of Venezuela stepped into the winner's circle for the first time in a major FTI Winter Equestrian Festival (WEF) grand prix in the \$150,000 FEI World Cup™ Grand Prix, CSI 3*, presented by Spy Coast Farm. He led the victory gallop in front of 4,800 show jumping fans on G&C LaGran, owned by Gustavo and Carolina Mirabal. The other double clear round for second place went to Jeffery Welles (USA) on Armani, owned by Abigail Wexner and Triton Ventures. Darragh Kenny (IRL) and Trade Winds Farm's Obelix continued their solid World Cup performances with third place.

Richard Jeffery of England designed the course. In a class of 44 entries, there were six clear rounds that went on to contest the jump-off. Welles and Armani competed fourth in the jump-off, planning on going to the lead with a clear round. They produced just that, in a time of 45.54 seconds to take lead, but would eventually finish in second place. Right after, Barrios and G&C LaGran went in knowing they had to go clear and just a touch faster to take the lead, which is exactly what they did. Barrios was able to push G&C LaGran through the course with a great turn back to the triple bar jump, and they stopped the timers in 41.75 seconds to take the lead.

"This was his first grand prix here for this season," Barrios said of LaGran. "Everything ended up good, with a victory! I tried to stay just a little faster than Jeffery and tried to be clear."

Kenny and Obelix started the jump-off with speed by doing one less stride down the opening line. They kept up the quick pace and were on track to take the lead, but they dropped a rail at the second to last vertical jump on course. They finished with the fastest time of the night in 39.78 seconds, but their four faults left them in third place.

Kenny said, "The horse felt really good. I tried to be as quick as I could, but it didn't pay off. That's the way it happens."

For Welles and Armani, the class was a good indicator of Armani's readiness for the USEF WEG Show Jumping Trials, which run from February 25 through March 5. "I was really thrilled with the way he jumped in the first round," Welles said. "The trials are really my goal. He feels great and ready for the trials."

Barrios also has his sights set on the Alltech FEI World Equestrian Games (WEG) this year and is not planning on the World Cup Finals. He and LaGran, an 11-year-old Oldenburg gelding by Lancer II xx Grannus, have had top grand prix finishes. He said of his horse, "He's very adjustable. I can change my mind in seconds, and he reacts very good."

Of his first major WEF grand prix victory, he said, "The win feels very good. It's my first grand prix win in Palm Beach in a Sunday or main class. I've been second and third before, but it's my first victory here. I've been here eight years. It's not easy winning here!"

Jumper Highlights: Wednesday through Sunday

Beezie Madden (USA) her new mount Mademoiselle, owned by Abigail Wexner and C&S Partnership LLC, produced a flawless round in a time of 67.897 seconds to capture the win in the Sentient Jet \$8,000 1.45m Jumper class on Wednesday. Second place honors went to Lauren Hough (USA) on Casadora owned by Laura Mateo. Ali Nilforushan (IRA) on his mount Pegasus, owned by Stal Thijssen BV, captured third place.

2008 Olympic gold medalist Eric Lamaze (CAN) and his young mount Coriana van Klapscheut, owned by Artisan Farms LLC, rode to victory in Thursday's \$30,000 WEF Challenge Cup Round Five. The grand prix competition had a full afternoon of entries, as riders took part to be one of the top 45 finishers to qualify for Saturday's grand prix. Following Lamaze in the victory gallop was Mario Deslauriers (USA) on Urico, owned by Jane Clark, in second place and Peter Charles (GBR) with Murka's Rubert R, owned by Olga White, for third place.

Coriana was clear in a previous WEF Challenge Cup, so Lamaze felt she was ready to compete for time in the jump-off. "She's very tiny, so she has a huge heart. She had great success in Europe jumping all of the Seven-Year-Old classes, which is what made her ready as an eight-year-old. It sounds young for this class, but when you get to compete in Europe in the biggest arenas, they learn quite quickly. That's where her experience comes from," he commented. "This is a class that I chose for her. I felt she was ready to handle a little bit of speed at this height. She's really, really special."

Marie Hecart (FRA) and Ryan Star du Rezidal, owned by Ashland Stables, scored their second win in the \$6,000 Spy Coast 1.40m Speed Challenge on Friday. The duo won this same class during week two, and they outraced Richard Spooner (USA) on his and HRH Lama Al Saud's Ninno and Yann Candele (CAN) with Susan Grange's Game Ready.

The \$25,000 Suncast 1.50m Classic ran first on Sunday morning, and it was Ireland's Shane Sweetnam on Zamiro 16, owned by Spy Coast Farm LLC, who brought home the win over Lauren Hough (USA) on Laura Mateo's Casadora and Ashlee Bond (USA) on Little Valley Farm's Chivas Z.

Of his win this week, where his owners Spy Coast Farm are the title sponsors, he said with a smile, "It's good to win! I was very happy with Rolette last night (in the World Cup grand prix). It would have been nice if I could have won that, and it was close. But even to win today is brilliant, especially with everyone from Spy Coast Farm here."

In the \$25,000 G&C Farm Grand Prix on Sunday afternoon, David Arcand of Montreal, Quebec, Canada captured the win on Santo's Utopia. He was also third on Tarzan. Second place went to Clementine Goutal on Wintina Deus, owned by Senarmont Management. The \$25,000 G&C Farm Young Riders Grand Prix was the inaugural event for the best up-and-coming riders in the world ages 16-21. There were 43 entries in the class, and seven produced a clear round.

The victory for Arcand was special for him since it was with a horse that he knows well. "I bought him when he was six years old, so I've owned him forever. I know him by heart," he smiled. "It's really nice to win. I'm really happy that I won here."

Hunter Highlights: Thursday through Sunday

This week saw increased hunter entries in the professional divisions, as competitors are making their final preparations before taking center stage in the International Arena next week during the AHJF Hunter Spectacular week.

Louise Serio piloted Bright Star 158 LLC's mount Kid Rock to the championship in the Second Year Green Working Hunter division, sponsored by Western Hay and Suncoast Bedding. The pair won both classes over fences on Wednesday, and took home the first and second place ribbons over fences on Thursday to secure the championship this week. The reserve championship was awarded to Valentino, owned by Margaret Shank Benjamin, and ridden by Caroline Weeden.

Serio contributed her success this week to her mount's consistency, and noted, "All of his rounds were exactly alike. He got three scores of 86 and one 85, so I think that's a really good week when you can produce that many rounds that are consistent." Serio continued to compliment her horse and said, "He's always the same horse. He tries hard, and he's really fun to ride."

Amateur and Junior Hunter competition commenced on Friday at the FTI Winter Equestrian Festival (WEF), and Leah Schwendeman and her own Gisele dominated the Amateur-Owner 3'3" Hunter division this week. They won three classes over fences, and placed fifth in the under saddle to lock up the championship. The reserve championship was awarded to La Fayette, owned and ridden by Deborah Perkins.

Swendeman has had the ride on Gisele since the middle of the summer when her trainer, Heidi Fish, first spotted the mare. "She is the sweetest mare I've ever seen. She's got plenty of step, has a good jump, and does good lead changes. She's so brave and is really a lot of fun," Schwendeman said her six-year-old Swedish Warmblood.

Sloan Brown dominated the Illustrated Properties Adult Amateur 36-50 Hunter division, claiming the championship and reserve championship with her mounts Stella Blue and Dark Star, respectively.

Stella Blue and Dark Star are full sisters, and are Swedish Warmblood crosses out of Aristos B and a thoroughbred mare named Julia. Trainer Rodney Bross bred both horses, and Brown has owned Stella Blue since the mare was three years old.

This was Stella Blue's first show since a year and a half ago when she was forced to undergo two colic surgeries. The twelve-year-old mare did not seem at all rusty this week when she placed first, second, and third over fences to secure the championship. Brown noted Stella Blue's comeback as "a miracle." "I'm so proud of her. I'm probably her biggest fan," Brown went on to say. Brown normally leases Stella Blue to her friend Visse Widdell, but wanted to take over the reins for the mare's debut back in the show ring.

For full results, please visit www.shownet.biz or www.equestriansport.com.