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Mittleider Wins 5-year-Old Prize At Galway Downs International Three-Day Event

Temecula, Calif., Oct. 31, 2013 – The USEA Young Event Horse West Coast Championships crowned their 4- and 5-year-old winners at Galway Downs International Three-Day Event. In the 5-Year-Old class, Sara Mittleider and her own Code Name led from start to finish, while in the 4-Year-Old class, Jennifer McFall and Dragonfire Farm's Classic Twain jumped up to take the victory.

Mittleider was competing for more than just West Coast glory, as the 5-year-old with the highest score between the West Coast and East Coast Championships also wins the \$17,500 USEA/Holekamp grant to contest the FEI Young Horse Championship for 7-Year-Olds at the Le Lion D'Angers CCI** in France. The East Coast Championships took place two weeks ago in Maryland, and Buck Davidson and Mr. Bojangles were victorious there with a score of 82.53. But Mittleider garnered a score of 83.0 from the same judges, giving her both the win here and the grant for 2015.

The Presenting Sponsors of the Galway Downs International Three-Day Event are: Equine Insurance of California, Land Rover, Professional's Choice, the California Horse Trader and the PRO Tour.

Code Name, a bay Holsteiner (by Cormint--Mysteria, Heraldik xx), is a leggy and athletic horse who showed focus and class in the first two phases, to take a commanding four-point lead after the dressage and conformation phases. In the jumping and potential section, he started by lowering rails at the first two show jumps, but then rebounded with a confident round, highlighted by clever footwork and a balanced gallop.

Mittleider first spotted "Cody" as a 2-year-old on a trip to Germany, where she was training. He was a still a stallion, and she fell in love with him. When she returned the next year, the 3-year-old had been gelded, and Mittleider knew it was fate.

"I said, 'Dad, we have to find a way', and he did," she said.

She brought the youngster home, to Kona, Idaho, and rode him lightly in his 3-year-old year, but an awkward growth spurt and her return trip to Germany meant Cody spent most of his 4-year-old year growing in a pasture.

“He was very slow-maturing,” she said. “It took awhile for him to figure out his body. But from the beginning he had this fantastic disposition. The brain is very important, and he had it from day 1. He’s laid back, but not dead.”

This year Cody has competed through the training level, and he competed in one YEH class, where he placed third and earned a score that was good enough to qualify for the championships. So Mittleider was surprised to find herself at the top of the leader board.

“It’s funny, but I honestly just came down to present my horse,” she said with a laugh. “I’m very excited for the future with him.”

In the 4-year-old class, McFall and Classic Twain stood fourth after the dressage and conformation sections, but a truly outstanding jumping and potential round rocketed them to the top.

The flashy chestnut, Thoroughbred gelding (by The Twain – Sapphire Magic, Magical Mile) showed exceptional jumping ability and an outstanding, uphill gallop to score 76.8 and win commandingly over Tamra Smith on Fleeceworks Royal (74.1) and Erin Kellerhouse on Santos (73.1).

McFall was also surprised to win, considering how little mileage her youngster has. “I knew I was coming in here green – he’s only done one beginner novice two weeks ago, and the young horse classes,” she said. “I didn’t really ride him until this summer, but he’s got the kind of jump where you feel comfortable pointing him at anything. With his canter you can always tell what distance you’re getting, and even if you have a mistake, he doesn’t get quick and hurried.”

Classic Twain had been in training for racing, but the owner/breeder knew he wasn’t suited to racing and offered him for sale. McFall and her husband, Earl, who own Dragonfire Farm, were so impressed with their purchase, that they immediately went back and bought his sire, The Twain, and several other youngsters by him.

“They’re all smart, quiet, willing, and have that fabulous topline and balance,” said Earl.

Training Level Three-Day Event began their competition with dressage today. In section A, Kristi Nunnink and Lord Lombardi lead (29.6 penalties) over Lindsey Weaver on Sintra (29.7) and Joe McKinley on Romulus (30.0). In section B, Kiera Davis and Laconic lead with 30.6 penalties over Haley Abbot on Burberry (31.3) and Jordyn Horwitz on Nicodemus (31.7).

The Training Level Three-Day Riders will complete their speed and endurance day on Friday, starting at 2:30 p.m.

In the international CCI divisions, which perform their dressage tests on Friday, all horses presented to the ground jury at the first horse inspection were accepted. In honor of Halloween, several riders jogged in costume, with Harry Potter, Wonder Woman, Superman, and a She-Devil all having horses accepted.

The international dressage rides begin on Friday with the CCI1* starting at 8:15 a.m., the CCI2* starting at 8:30 a.m., and the CCI3* starting at 1:30 p.m.

All three days of the CCI3* competition will have live streaming on PRO Tour Series Radio, which can be found on UStream, the Galway Downs website or the PRO Website.

Faultline will perform as the musical headline act on Saturday night, playing from 6:00 to 10:00 p.m. Faultline, a five-member, Southern California-based party band, says their music has only one purpose: to keep the dance floor full of people. They combine rhythm and blues, Motown, disco and more to create a memorable live-music experience.

And three more musicians – guitarist Gil Gillem, guitarist Larry Thompson and guitarist James Wells – will entertain fans on Saturday afternoon, performing in each of the three oasis points on the cross-country course (at noon, 1:20 and 3:00 p.m.).

Each oasis will feature food by one or more of the four gourmet food trucks scheduled to be on site, complemented by local wine and beer.

The Gold Medal Sponsors of the Galway Downs International Three-Day Event are: Devoucoux, Ian Stark Equestrian Center, MD Barn Master and Sunsprite Warmbloods.

The Silver Medal Sponsors are: Charles Owen, Embassy Suites Hotel, Holiday Inn Express, Majyk Equipe, SmartPak Equine and Temecula Creek Inn.

The Bronze Medal Sponsors are: American Medical Response, American Horse Trials Foundation, Auburn Labs Advanced Protection Formula, Big Horse Feeds, Cavalor, *The Chronicle of the Horse*, CWD, Finish Line, Freedom RV Rentals, Geranium Street Equestrian, Point Two Air Jackets, Riding Magazines Inc., Ride On Video, San Luis Rey Equine Hospital, Triple Crown Nutrition and Voltaire Design.

Eventingtrainingonline.com is a Friend sponsor.

General admission for the Galway Downs International Three-Day Event is \$10 per day in advance, \$15 at the gate, with children under 12 free when accompanied by a paying adult.

Patron's passes – which include seating in the ringside tent, lunch and a full selection of beverages – are available for \$55 per day on Thursday, Friday and Sunday and \$75 for Saturday, in advance.

For all advance ticket reservations, go to www.galwaydowns.com.

For more information on the Galway Downs International Three-Day Event, visit www.galwaydowns.com or call 951-303-0405. To learn more about eventing, visit the U.S. Eventing Association's website (www.useventing.com).