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Crabo Wins First CCI3* At Galway Downs International Three-Day Event

Temecula, Calif., Nov. 2, 2014—Barbara Crabo rode Eveready II to victory in the CCI3* at the Galway Downs International Three-Day Event, scoring 53.2 penalties. Her faultless show jumping around pushed her to the top when leader Buck Davidson lowered one rail with Copper Beech to finish second (54.0). Maya Black and Doesn't Play Fair finished third (59.2).

For Crabo, of Scottsdale, Ariz., Galway Downs was her first victory in a CCI3*, and for it she received a check for \$7,000.

"I'm trying not to swear, but it feels awesome. It means the world to me," said Crabo.

Crabo bred Eveready II, now 15 years old, was the first person to ride him, and is the only person to compete him. "We've been working together so hard and so long. I think why couldn't he be 11 now and not 15, but when he was 11 he was unrideable."

Crabo said that, even though she knows Eveready II is a reliable show jumper, "Right before I went in, I was ready to vomit. I was thinking, 'Just don't mess him up. Go in there and be forward, gallop.' I just went out there and rode each fence, trying not to get too far ahead of myself.

"Then when I jumped the last fence and knew I'd jumped clean—the fence that everyone was having a cheap rail on—it was such a relief. It was such an incredible relief."

Davidson, one of the country's most accomplished riders in the country, said he didn't feel the pressure of being the last rider in the warm-up ring or notice the hush that came over the crowd as he entered the ring. "I'm fortunate that I'm in that situation a lot. It never crossed my mind that I was going to hit a rail. I knew Barb was going to jump clean, and it never crossed my mind that I wouldn't.

"But it depends on the day—at [the Fair Hill CCI in Maryland two weeks ago] I had four clears and hit a lot of rails. And today I hit one. But he had the best three phases he's ever had this weekend," added Davidson, of Riegelsville, Pa.

As always, cheering for Crabo were her daughter, Jordan, 11, husband Martin and his parents. Jordan also rode in the novice division at Galway Downs. "Martin's also my vet, which is convenient. All three of us make a good team," she said.

Davidson praised Crabo's performance with Eveready II. "Barb deserved to win—she's done everything with that horse and had a great weekend. To see him being born and do this is a dream. It's cool to see what she's made of a really difficult horse."

Marilyn Little made her trip from Frederick, Md., more than worthwhile by winning the CCI2 and the CCI1*.

With RF West Indie, her score of 56.0 edged James Atkinson on Gustav (56.7) and Caroline Martin on Spring Easy (68.9). Martin, of Springtown, Pa., won the Mia Eriksson Award, given to the best-placed young rider (21 and younger) in the CCI2*.

With RF Scandalous, Little scored 38.2 to defeat Tamara Smith on Sunsprite Syrius (42.2) and Ashlynn Dorsey on RF Kinetic (43.8). Little also finished fourth on RF Typecast (45.0). Little, who is also an international show jumping rider, scored faultless rounds with all three horses.

"All three horses were pretty solid in the level where they are, and I think they feel ready to move up to the next level," said Little.

Atkinson, of Ramona, Calif., said he knew his only chance to win was to keep all the rails up and avoid time faults on the tightly measured track of the course. Gustav delivered a faultless performance, but so did RF West Indie.

"It's great to have riders like Marilyn and Buck come here to Galway Downs, great for everyone from the novice riders to us in the international divisions," said Atkinson. "I think it encourages all of us, to see the best quality in this sport. I think it grows our entries and keeps everyone excited. And for us as competitors it makes us better. It makes us keep working harder and trying harder to be at the level."

Little said that she was glad she'd made the trip across the country. "I think that Galway Downs is one of the friendliest events I've ever been to. Everything is done with the utmost care for the horses' welfare in mind. It's been wonderful to see and be a part of. I'd heard a great deal about it, and it lived up to what I'd heard," she said.

RF West Indie is a 7-year-old, Hanoverian mare, and RF Scandalous is a 9-year-old, Oldenburg mare.

The Jockey Club presented the Thoroughbred Incentive Award (a blanket and prize money) in each of the three CCI divisions to the

best-placed Thoroughbred to encourage the training of Thoroughbreds into other disciplines.

In the CCI3*, the Thoroughbred Incentive Award, along with then Livingstone Award, went to Coal Creek, ridden by Lizzie Snow, who finished fourth.

In the CCI2*, the Thoroughbred Incentive Award winner was Prince William, ridden by Mary Burke. He finished in seventh place.

In the CCI1* the Thoroughbred Incentive Award winner was Chavez Ravine, ridden by Whitney Tucker. He finished in 11th place.

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