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## **Young Horses Open the Show At the Galway Downs International Three-Day Event**

*Temecula, Calif., Oct. 30, 2014*—The Galway Downs International Three-Day Event kicked off by showcasing the best future eventing talent on the West Coast, by hosting the West Coast Finals of the USEA 4- and 5-Year-Old Young Event Horse Championships, as well as the West Coast Finals for the USEA Future Event Horse Championships, for yearlings, 2-year-olds and 3-year-olds.

The 5-Year-old championship went to Fleeceworks Royal, a striking steel gray Holsteiner mare. She's by Riverman, out of Marisol and is a full sister to R-Star, the accomplished CCI4\* competitor who won the Galway Downs CIC3\* in March 2014. The mare is owned by Judith McSwain and ridden by Tamra Smith.

"She's very different looking than [R-Star]," said Smith. "She's much smaller, but has the same very larger –than-life attitude."

Smith and "Rory" haven't had an ideal year—the mare was injured in a hay feeder earlier this year, and had a fall at the American Eventing Championships in September—which made her victory at Galway Downs all the sweeter.

"It's really cool she did so well this weekend, as I only had a few weeks to prepare her," said Smith. "The fences weren't really impressing her much, I'd hoped she could have jumped better, but she was super rideable and really tries hard."

Smith and Rory led from start to finish, scoring 7.38 in the conformation, 8.46 in the dressage, and 8.05 in the jumping and potential, to finish with a total of 80.9. Close behind in second place was Hawley Bennett-Awad on High Duty (79.4) with Smith's second mount Emporium moving up in to third (78.8).

Smith's score is not enough to put her at the top of the list for Turner/Holekamp YEH Le Lion D'Angers Grant. That title belongs to East Coast Champion Vagabon de Champdoux and Will Coleman, who were crowned at the Fair Hill International two weeks ago. The grant, spearheaded by Tim and Cheryl Holekamp, provides a stipend to the high scoring 5-year-old in any given year to attend the CCI2\*

for Young Horses at Le Lion D'Angers in France as a 7-year-old. But, a lot can happen in two years, and Smith has her sights firmly set on the future.

"I was supporting the program before that, but [the grant] is huge, because I'm trying to produce horses that go to the top of the sport," said Smith. "I also think it's really good for American horses to go over [to Europe] as a 7-year-old."

In the 4-Year-Old Championship, the title went to another handsome gray, the Thoroughbred gelding Otter Pop, owned and ridden by Amber Levine. Levine has only owned the gelding a few months, after getting him off the track from Shirley Aronson, and he'd only done two events and one Young Event Horse qualifier before coming to Galway Downs. But his natural uphill balance, bravery and stunning jump and gallop caused the judges to reward him with the victory.

"[He was] so good," said Levine. "He's really fun and really green! He did first event at Woodside (Calif.) in October, and did Fresno (Calif.) two weeks ago. But he's never said no. He'd never done a down bank in to water [before today], but you point and say, 'It's OK,' and he tries."

Levine and "Otter" also led from start to finish, scoring 8.18 in conformation, 8.48 in dressage, and 8.25 in jumping and potential to finish with 83.2. Olivia Loiacono and Filosofia moved up to finish second (80.7), and Erin Kellerhouse and Rondelet came in third (77.7).

Two of the Future Event Horse titles went to the same barn—Dragonfire Farm's Simple Dreams DF took the yearling title, while Let's Go DF took home the 3-year-old title. Both homebreds were handled by Dragonfire owner/trainer Earl McFall.

Let's Go DF is a  $\frac{3}{4}$  Holsteiner/ $\frac{1}{4}$  Thoroughbred by Linaro out of Rani D, while Simple Dreams DF is by the Morgan stallion Dragonfire Kirin out of Highland Empress, an Irish Sporthorse by Master Imp.

"[Let's Go] is a superstar for the future," said McFall. "He's got a great attitude, a great look, and he's just a super-fun horse. I was riding him around, and people were asking me what level he was competing, and I said, 'Well, he's a 3-year-old.' He just handled himself really well. He's really mature for his age."

Let's Go's score of 79.75 gave him the overall Future Event Horse reserve championship, with the championship going to Terry Paine's 2-year-old Cheers, who garnered an impressive 81.63 from the judges.

Cheers is by Paine's Holsteiner stallion Blauer Vogel, a CCI3\* competitor in Europe, out of Qtrpasthree, the Thoroughbred mare who is the dam of the Paine's CCI4\* horse Gin N Juice. Cheers is her last foal.

"We're just tickled to be able to get the high score, and we got a nice award for him being bred in North America," said Paine. "It's a great joy for us to see our homebred horses making progress and change and morph into more capable, educated horses."

The Training Level Three-Day Event also got underway on Thursday, with dressage taking place for both divisions. In division A, Dede McCoy and No Regrets lead with a 29.8, and in division B, James Alliston and Sunsprite Madeira lead with a 28.9.

The three international divisions also took part in their first horse inspection today, with the ground jury accepting 55 horses to start in the CCI1\*, 23 in the CCI2\*, and 19 in the CCI3\*.

On Friday, the Training Level Three-Day Event will tackle the challenges of the cross-country course, from 2:30 to 4:45.

The CCI1\*, CCI2\* and CCI3\* will also perform their dressage tests on Friday. The CCI2\* runs from 8:30 to 12:00; the CCI3\* runs from 1:45 to 4:45, and the CCI1\* begins at 8:15 and runs until 5:10.

Saturday is cross-country day for all three CCI divisions, with the CCI2\* running from 9:20 to 10:45, the CCI3\* running from 11:05 to 12:05, and the CCI1\* running from 12:30 to 3:30. Saturday will conclude with show jumping for the Training Level Three-Day Event, starting at 4:10.

The CCI divisions wrap up the weekend on Sunday with the climactic show jumping phase, starting at 10:30.

The CCI3\* is a member event of the 2014 PRO Tour and will be live-streamed on Pro TV on Saturday and Sunday, Nov. 1-2. Go to <http://new.livestream.com/PROTV> to view it. Media players will be embedded on Galway Downs website. A Livestream App for TV, iPhone, iPad and Android can also be downloaded from the iTunes Store and Google Play. Follow the events on PRO TV to receive automatic updates on any schedule changes.

Leading the commentary team will be international event rider and BBC commentator Spencer Sturmeay, along with Samantha Clark, host of the Eventing Radio Show.

"We at Galway Downs are excited to be working with PRO TV in its new venture to cover and produce PRO Tour events," said Robert Kellerhouse, the Galway Downs organizer. "We're really looking forward to being a part of this new opportunity to raise awareness of eventing in North America."

CWD, Devoucoux, Equine Insurance of California and the PRO Tour are the Presenting Sponsors of the Galway Downs International Three-Day Event.

The Gold Medal Sponsors are: *California HorseTrader*, Equinox Equestrian Center, MD BarnMaster, Ian Stark Equestrian Centre, John Deere (the official tractor supplier for Galway Downs), Professional's Choice and Sunsprite Warmbloods.

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The Friends of Galway Downs are: Copper Meadows, Eventing Training Online and Success Equestrian Pads.

San Dieguito Equine Group is the Patron Sponsor.

General admission for the Galway Downs International Three-Day Event is only \$10 per day in advance, \$15 at the gate, with children under 12 free when accompanied by a paying adult. Haunted Horse After Party is \$35 per person, and Patron's Passes are available for all four days of competition.

For more information on the Galway Downs International Horse Trials, visit [www.galwaydowns.com](http://www.galwaydowns.com) or call 951-303-0405. To learn more about eventing, visit the U.S. Eventing Association's website ([www.useventing.com](http://www.useventing.com)).