



WINTER EQUESTRIAN FESTIVAL

WEEKLYWIRE

WEEK 6 • FEBRUARY 11, 2026

RICHIE VOGEL

FINDS A NEW STAR

HUNTERS TAKE TO THE BIG RING

RINGSIDE
HEALTH: VETS USE STEM CELLS TO SAVE HORSES' JOINTS. WHY ARE YOU STILL ICING YOURS?





A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

Five-star weeks just hit differently. What I find so special about WEF is that every week has its own identity, with a nuance that keeps us looking ahead and ready for more. This past week, it was show jumping at its finest.

It takes me a solid three hours—sometimes more—to wind down from a Saturday Night Lights grand prix, and this week was no different. Last week's "wind-down" was made even more difficult after the buzz of Wellington International's first five-star grand prix of 2026.

When the press conference concludes, the final words have been written and the last of the champagne has been toasted, I take a moment in a quiet media center to reflect on the sport, the stories that were told, and in some cases, the history that was written.

From the Fidelity Investments® Grand Prix, we learned that reigning European Champion Richie Vogel has a new star on his hands, Nina Mallevaey isn't slowing down anytime soon after cracking the world's top ten, and Ben Maher

can always depend on Enjeu de Grisien. Catch up on what you may have missed last Saturday Night on page 8.

The Wire is produced for, about and in celebration of YOU. If you have story ideas, want to share content with us from your Wellington International experience, or would like to submit a letter to the editor—please email press@wellingtoninternational.com.

You can find *The Wire* distributed weekly on

Thursdays throughout the showgrounds and online at WellingtonInternational.com.

All the best,
Lindsay Brock
Editor

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To Our Clients, Partners, and Friends,

As another season unfolds, I find myself reflecting with immense pride and gratitude on the journey that has brought IDA Development to where it is today. For the past nine years, it has been an honor to sponsor the Winter Equestrian Festival and support horse shows across the country—events that represent the very best of this sport and the community behind it.

What began as a small operation has grown, in less than a decade, into an international equestrian design-build company trusted with some of the most high-profile facilities in the industry. That growth did not happen overnight, and it

certainly did not happen alone. It happened because of the owners, riders, trainers, managers, and organizations who believed in our work, gave us opportunities, and continue to place their trust in us year after year. For that, I am deeply thankful.

This business has given me far more than professional success. It has allowed me to meet extraordinary people from all over the world—people bound together by a shared respect for horses, hard work, and community. From Wellington to Ocala, from California to Ohio, Guatemala, Costa Rica, and everywhere in between, I have seen firsthand how global and yet close-knit the equestrian world truly is. Those relationships are the

foundation of everything we do. IDA Development was built on simple principles: integrity, quality, responsiveness, and care for both horses and people. The same values that guided my earlier career have shaped our company culture and allowed us to grow quickly while never losing sight of what matters most. Every barn, arena, walkway, and structure we build carries that responsibility.

As we mark nearly a decade of growth, I am incredibly proud of our team and humbled by the continued support of this community. Thank you for welcoming us into your farms, your facilities, and your lives. We look forward to building the

future of equestrian sport together—one project, one relationship, and one season at a time.



With Sincere Appreciation,

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RICHARD VOGEL SHINES WITH GANGSTER MONTDESIDR

IN FIDELITY INVESTMENTS® GRAND PRIX

Three of the world's top ten climbed atop the podium in the \$500,000 Fidelity Investments® CSI5* Grand Prix, under the glimmer of Saturday Night Lights.

Leading the way, World No. 6 Richard Vogel piloted up-and-coming mount Gangster Montdesir to win the first of four five-star events at the 2026 WEF.

Vogel showcased a new star in Gangster Montdesir, stopping the jump-off clock at 42.65 to take the victory by three-tenths of a second over British Olympic Champion Ben Maher aboard Enjeu de Grisien. At only 10 years old, Gangster Montdesir—the Selle Français owned by Karlswood Partners—is coming off a five-star grand prix win in Lyon last October and added a second on Saturday.

"It's a very exciting addition to my string," said Vogel of the Kannan x Cornet Obolensky stallion. "He arrived last September—so a new partnership—but right away I had a super

feeling with him. He always wanted to do a good job from the very first show. I couldn't wish for anything more than how he jumped tonight and how he was fighting for us."

Of his winning jump-off round over 2024 Paris Olympic Games course designer Gregory Bodo's (FRA) track, Vogel said, "I could stay on the gallop, and I think that's what saved me; I didn't have the tightest turns but kept the flow everywhere to stay in rhythm."

Vogel, a German Olympian, has jumped four five-stars with Gangster Montdesir and has been clear in each one. "If you get such a talented horse stepping up so quickly, you always must find a balance—we want great nights like tonight, but we never want to over-face the horse. Right now, he feels highly motivated and very game. He's green at this level, but we have high hopes for him," said Vogel, whose groom Geraldine Baden was honored with the Double H



Farm Grooms Award and \$500 prize for her care and preparation of Gangster Montdesir.

Maher, currently World No. 3, piloted Enjeu de Grisien, a 12-year-old Selle Français owned by Charlotte Rossetter and Pamela Wright, to a time of 42.95 seconds as runner-up.

"I've had him since he was seven years old, so we've grown up together," said Maher of the Toulon x Andiamo gelding that also finished second to Vogel and Gangster Montdesir in Lyon.

"He's always been in the shadows of some of the other horses, and he's had to step up in previous months—he's

really taken the role on well. He's been a little unlucky here and there, but he's a very sharp, high-energy horse, and he's an incredible learner. That's been his biggest asset; he really wants to be a great horse."

After skyrocketing up the global rankings over the last year to now sit No. 8 as the highest-ranked woman in the world, 26-year-old Nina Mallevaey (FRA) took third in 43.37 seconds riding Dynastie de Beaufour for owners Tara Dow-Rein and the Rein Family.

"It has been a really fast year with a lot of change, but I think that's a result of the amazing team around me,"

PHOTOS ©SPORTFOT



said Mallevaey, reigning French National Champion. "I have incredible horses and incredible people—that's what brings me here today."

Dynastie de Beaufour, a 13-year-old mare (Diamant de Semilly x Cassini II) rounded out a full podium of French-bred horses. "She jumped her first five-star with me when she was 11," said Mallevaey, who has since piloted the mare to 11 consecutive five-star clears at 1.60m—making her the eighth horse to achieve a streak that long in modern history. "She feels like she

could do anything. I'm lucky to have a horse like her—I give everything for this sport and my passion for the horses. I hope this success will continue."

When asked how it felt to be back in Wellington in front of a sold-out stadium, Vogel concluded by saying, "Wellington is our home in the winter months. It's my fifth circuit here, and it has always been good to us, good to our horses. Every year, we can step up a couple of new, younger, exciting horses, and Gangster is the one this year."



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The Calvert Collection (WEF 8-12)
Weatherly Stroh Studio (WEF 8-11)

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Odette Boutique (WEF P-4)
Respoke (WEF 5-8)
Flor de Campo (WEF 9-10)
Renrod Equestrian (WEF 11-12)

VENDOR VILLAGE NORTHSIDE

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The In Gate
Ride EquiSafe
Miki Saddlery
Parlanti
Equ Lifestyle Boutique
EQUIS
Vogel NYC
Kelly's Lemonade (WEF 1-2)

PONY ISLAND

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Hunters Landing
Silva's Tacos (WEF 1-2)
Florida Snow (WEF 1-2)
Best Pizza Heaven (WEF 1-2)
Palm Beach
International Academy
House Call The App (WEF 1-2)
Fashion Farm Girl (WEF 3, 4, 6, 10, 11 & 12)

OASIS

Charles Ancona
La Enovesé Designs
Erica Wilson (WEF P-4)
J Wilder Imports (WEF 5-6)
Odette Boutique (WEF 7-8, WEF 11-12)
Ryde Equestrian (WEF 9-10)
Devoucoux
70 Degrees
CWD Sellier
Paulina Velez Designs
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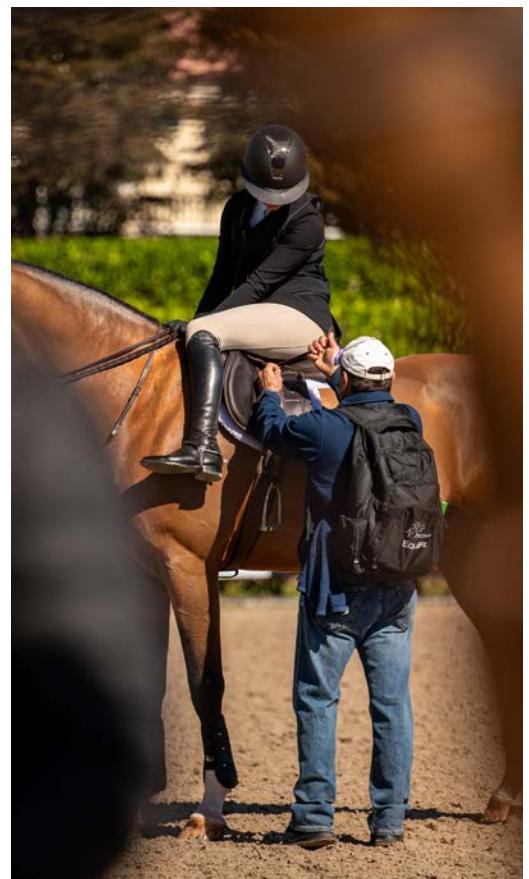
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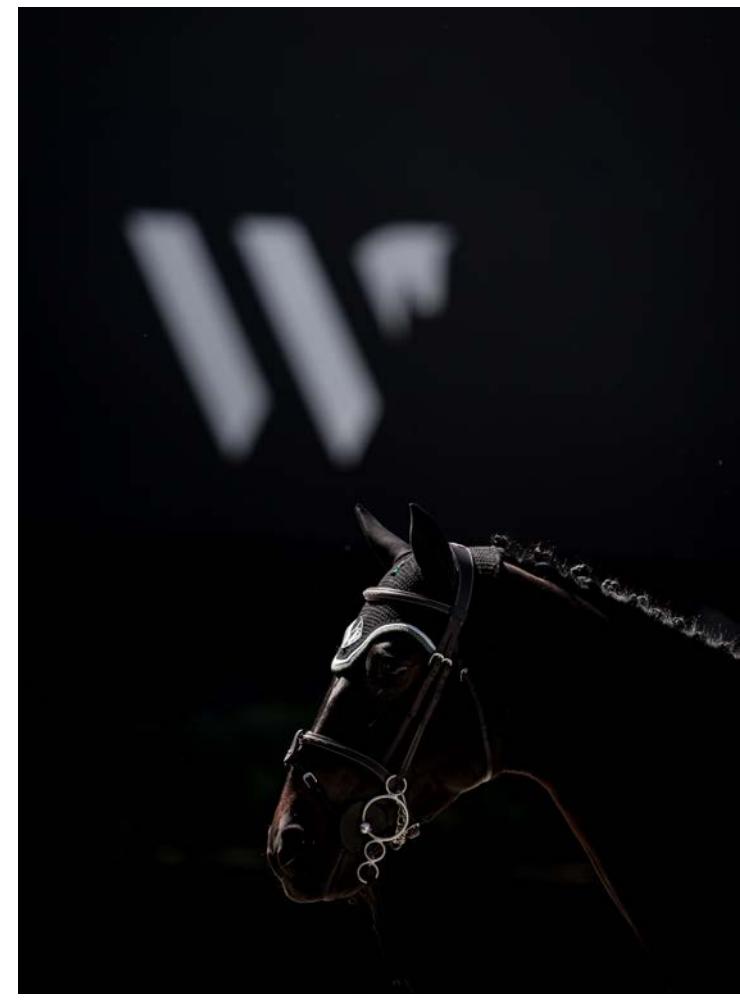
AROUND THE GROUNDS

From the Wellington International Photography Collective



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\$100,000 HUNT TEAM EXHIBITION FEATURED

IN A NIGHT BENEFITTING THE NEIL S. HIRSCH FAMILY BOYS & GIRLS CLUB

Hunter riders went under the lights during WEF 5 for the third annual \$100,000 Hunt Team Exhibition Stake Class, benefitting the Neil S. Hirsch Boys and Girls Club of Wellington, presented by Schumacher Automotive Group. The exhibition featured hunter teams of three athletes jumping a 3'3" course in the International Arena to benefit the local

chapter of the Boys & Girls Club. 13 teams gave their Friday night best in hopes of taking the team title, but it was Brianne Goutal-Marteau of Royal Palm Beach, FL; Irene Neuwirth of Culver City, CA; and Lilly Herzog of Pepper Pike, OH, who bested the rest.

The Team Hunter Exhibition furthers the mission of The Boys and Girls Club; to enable

all young people, especially those who need us most, to reach their full potential as productive, caring, responsible citizens.

Teams consisted of a professional, amateur, and junior hunter rider. Held in a relay format, each rider jumped a portion of the 20-fence course. Scores were given from three judging panels for an average final score. Each team was allotted one drop score, allowing them to erase their lowest-ranked performance, akin to a jumper Nations Cup.

High scores of 90 from Herzog on Tiebreaker and 89 from Neuwirth riding Holland Park secured the victory for their team.

"I happen to love doing this class," said professional Brianne Goutal-Marteau, who rode Scout's Honor. "It's a completely different format than any of us—or the horses—are used to. It's an amazing precursor to next week [WCHR Week] and a great opportunity to give our horses a fun atmosphere."

Goutal-Marteau has competed in the class since its inaugural year in 2024, not only riding for the experience in the ring but for the purpose behind it.

"The Boys and Girls Club has had a long-lasting involvement in the equestrian community, especially in Wellington," said Goutal-Marteau. "It's an amazing



organization that supports the local community and gives us an opportunity to give back and get involved.

"We also cannot talk about this class without thanking Andrew Lustig," continued Goutal-Marteau. "He's been the brainchild behind this event, and it's amazing what he's been able to accomplish. We all appreciate how he's been able to modernize and keep up this event year after year."

In addition to arena action, The Boys and Girls Club Gala was held ringside; co-chaired by Jenny Oz LeRoy and Her Royal Highness Princess Margarita de Bourbon de Parme, with presenting sponsor Marlo Massey of Schumacher Auto Group.

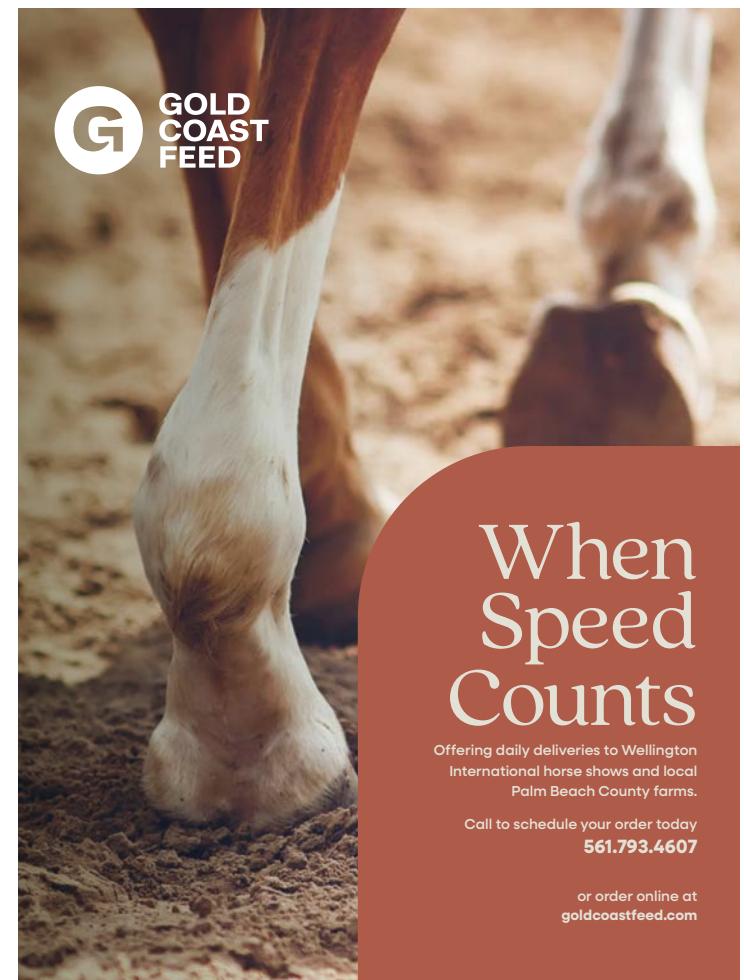
Neil S. Hirsch, a significant member of the Wellington

community, spearheaded the establishment of the Neil S. Hirsch Boys and Girls Club in 2012, and Neil's hope for a brighter future has been realized ever since.

"This class is a great reflection of what Neil always wanted," said class organizer and esteemed hunter trainer Andrew Lustig.

A junior rider, Herzog laid down the highest score of the night atop Tiebreaker, a horse she newly partnered with at the beginning of 2026. "The goal was to have a nice ride under the lights, as it was his first time, but he really rose to the occasion."

"It's such a special atmosphere, and I'm grateful to be able to jump under the lights in a class like this," said Herzog.



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W CHAMPIONS GALLERY



Zara McGuigan rode Hulst Summer, owned by VS Stables, to champion of the WEF 4 Large Pony Jumpers Division.



Sofia Melluzzi rode her own Brock Bee Line to champion of the WEF 5 Large Pony Jumpers division.



Ka-Chow, owned by Southside Equestrian and ridden by Estella Waldman, was champion of the WEF 5 Small/Medium Pony Jumper Division.



Pony Boy, ridden and owned by Emilia Cannizzo, was reserve champion of the Large Pony Jumpers division during WEF 5.



Play Boy Montdesir, owned by Richard Schechter Equestrian and ridden by Jennifer Schechter, was champion of the WEF 3 1.0m Amateur Jumper 36 & Over Division sponsored by JTWG, Inc.



Gail Maclean, pictured with Geoffrey Hesslink, rode Aventus, owned by Sterling Racing, to champion in the Older Cross Rail Division sponsored by the Always Faithful Equestrian Club during WEF 5.



Jadalco, owned and ridden by Francesca Bolfo, was reserve champion in the \$15,000 NAL 1.35m Amateur Jumper Classic sponsored by Horseware Ireland, earning them the Champion Equine Insurance Jumper Style Award winner for WEF 5, presented by Laura Fetterman.



Central Park, owned by Wade Equestrian Farms and ridden by Vivian Yowan, was awarded the Champion Equine Insurance Hunter Style Award presented by Laura Fetterman after winning the WEF 5 Green Hunter 3' round sponsored by Almased.

PHOTOS © SPORTFOT

W CHAMPIONS GALLERY

LEADING LADY RIDER AWARD STANDINGS

PRESENTED BY MARTHA W. JOLICOEUR, DOUGLAS ELLIMAN

1	LILLIE KEENAN USA	316 PTS
2	NATALIE DEAN USA	315 PTS
3	ERYNN BALLARD CAN	255 PTS
4	NINA MALLEVAEY FRA	229 PTS
5	MIMI GOCHMAN USA	214 PTS



Lillie Keenan is presented with the Martha Jolicoeur, Douglas Elliman Leading Lady Rider Award by Martha Jolicoeur (center) and Dr. Stephen Norton (left). Photo ©Sportfot

HERMÈS 1.50M CHAMPIONSHIP JUMPER SERIES

1	CIAN O'CONNOR IRL	118 PTS
2	ERYNN BALLARD CAN	103 PTS
	LILLIE KEENAN USA	103 PTS
4	MARK BLUMAN COL	94 PTS
5	MCLAIN WARD USA	85 PTS

\$25,000 LEADING INTERNATIONAL RIDER BONUS STANDINGS

PRESENTED BY MICHAEL SMITH

1	RICHARD VOGEL GER	\$157,266
2	BEN MAHER GBR	\$151,516
3	LILLIE KEENAN USA	\$149,500
4	SHANE SWEETNAM IRL	\$111,509
5	BERTRAM ALLEN IRL	\$95,923

DON LITTLE MASTERS STANDINGS

PRESENTED BY RUSHY MARSH FARM

1	JEANNE REID & ATALANTE D'UHART	58 PTS
2	CAMILLE PACHECO CESARSKI & FLINT T.S. ET	52 PTS
3	BLYTHE MASTERS & PALERMO VAN PAAL Z	45 PTS
4	PHILIP STEINKRAUS & PAUL DE LUXE	44 PTS
5	REZA SHABANI & DAKOTA Z	42 PTS

BRAINJUICE UNDER 25 GRAND PRIX SERIES

1	CAMPBELL BROWN USA	107 PTS
2	TONY STORMANNS GER	89.5 PTS
	VIRGINIA BONNIE USA	89.5 PTS
4	EVA FISHERMAN USA	81 PTS
5	ALEXANDER ALSTON USA	77 PTS

OVERALL HUNTER JUNIOR/AMATEUR-OWNER RIDER

PRESENTED BY YETI

1	LILLY HERZOG	342 PTS
2	PARKER PEACOCK	317 PTS
3	MELISSA JACOBS	237 PTS
4	IRENE NEUWIRTH	220 PTS
5	LEXI MAOUNIS	206 PTS

OVERALL HUNTER PROFESSIONAL RIDER

PRESENTED BY YETI

1	VICTORIA COLVIN	1384 PTS
3	SCOTT STEWART	902 PTS
2	JENNIFER HANNAN	771 PTS
4	CHRISTOPHER PAYNE	764 PTS
5	MICHAEL BRITT-LEON	636 PTS

VETS USE STEM CELLS TO SAVE HORSES' JOINTS.

WHY ARE YOU STILL ICING YOURS?

As riders, trainers and owners, we all understand maintenance. Our horses receive routine checks, flexions, bodywork and therapeutic support so they can feel their best and perform at the top of their ability. We invest significant time, money and care into keeping them sound.

But what about us?

Over time, riding takes its toll. New injuries develop, old injuries resurface, joints become stiff or achy, and subtle discomfort can lead to compensation—moving differently, riding defensively, or pushing through pain just to stay in the saddle. For many equestrians, the greatest concern isn't just pain or injury; it's the possibility of having to step away from riding altogether.

Like any athlete, riders want to move better, recover more effectively, and sustain long-term performance. In recent years, regenerative medicine has emerged as a burgeoning area exploring new ways to support healing and recovery. One such area is stem cell-based therapies.

Ringside Health is working with RegeneCell to offer

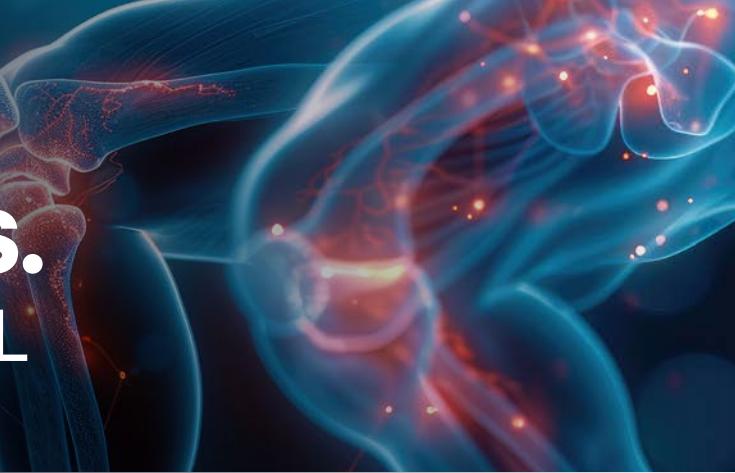
riders access to this exciting new treatment modality, helping individuals understand whether these approaches may be appropriate to explore with our qualified medical professionals.

What is being studied in stem cell-based therapies?

Stem cells have shown a potential role in supporting the body's natural repair processes. Also, stem cells have shown the ability to develop into different types of cells—such as muscle, bone, or cartilage—and to release signaling molecules that may help regulate inflammation and encourage tissue repair. Stem cells have shown to improve the local healing environment by supporting blood flow and cellular regeneration at injury sites.

Unlike cortisone injections, which are FDA-approved and primarily aim to reduce pain and inflammation, stem cell have shown potential to support tissue repair rather than symptom management alone.

For equestrians, this emerging field represents a potential future pathway



toward improved movement, recovery, and longevity in the saddle.

Ringside Health working with RegeneCell take a comprehensive, rider-focused approach to education and evaluation. Each consultation includes a review of medical history, available imaging, and movement patterns. From there, individuals can discuss whether exploring regenerative options makes sense for their situation.

Consultations can be conducted remotely, and the Ringside Health team works to accommodate the demanding schedules of riders, trainers, and competitors.

At Ringside Health, the goal is simple: to help riders make informed decisions about their health with the same care and intention they bring to their horses. Riding has always been a partnership—horse and rider, working together at their best.



Schedule a consultation

with Ringside Health to learn more about emerging regenerative medicine options and how they may—or may not—fit into your long-term performance and wellness plan.



Géraldine Badan - from backstage to the center of the show

Contributed by Sarah Eakin/Paper Horse Media
in collaboration with HorseGrooms

Géraldine Badan was prepared for Saturday Night Lights to be exciting and nerve-wracking, but as a groom she did not expect to be in the spotlight. Her rider and horse—Richard Vogel and Gangster Mondesir—had just won the \$500,000 Fidelity Investments® CSI5* Grand Prix

"I was really surprised in the middle of the ring during the prizegiving," Badan said.

Badan grew up riding and competing in show jumping in Belgium. At 18, she had experience working with horse—in breeding and other facets of equestrianism, and had decided that what she really wanted to do was to be a groom. Last year, at age 23, she found out about a job with Germany's Vogel—currently ranked No. 6 in the world—and she duly applied.

"I thought it would be great because it was a start in America. I love to come over here," she said. "And then I know that Richie is really competitive, and I am too. On paper, it's a dream job."

In November, she arrived in California to take up the post and have her first

introduction to Gangster, a new horse in Vogel's string and one with a notable personality. "He's a Selle Français, so we say he has a French attitude. At the end of the day, he will do anything."

Gangster pays close attention to his surroundings. "With shadows or if the ground changes, he can be spooky," she explained. "But sometimes that carefulness is an advantage." It proved the right attitude for Saturday night's course, which was delicate with clear rounds slow in coming. Vogel and Ganster jumped towards the end of the field, and Badan felt helpless watching.

"I cannot really stand still," she said. "I'm making a video and almost jumping with him." Despite a clear round, the night was far from over. "It's only halfway done," she said. "We had to wait for the jump-off."

Life at the barn is far less stressful and Badan, who shares eight horses with one other groom, tries to make sure her charges also feel at peace. "We try to have them out as much as we can; field, arena, grass, trails. We try to keep them happy."



Hard work at home was rewarded at the show on Saturday Night, and the theatrics of the occasion, featuring the presentation of the check for the \$500 Double H Grooms Award to Badan in front of the

capacity crowd at the International Ring, provided a welcome change in perspective. "It was nice to be in front of the scene," she said. "Because we are always backstage."

About HorseGrooms

HorseGrooms is a global platform dedicated to supporting, educating, and connecting grooms across all disciplines of equestrian sport. Through educational resources, interviews, in-person events, and an international online community, HorseGrooms works to improve horse welfare while giving grooms the recognition, tools, and support they deserve.

HorseGrooms collaborates with events, brands, and professionals worldwide to share practical knowledge and real stories from the people who care for horses every day, from local barns to top-level competition venues.

Learn more at www.horsegrooms.com



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