



W I N T E R E Q U E S T R I A N F E S T I V A L

WEEKLY WIRE

WEEK 9 • MARCH 4, 2026

**KARL
COOK'S
WINNING WEEK**

**CATCH UP ON
NATIONS CUP
ACTION
SHOW
& TELL:
WHAT'S UP AT
FARM STAND**





A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

I attended the Show Jumping Hall of Fame Induction Gala on Sunday evening. Sitting in the same room with the greats of U.S. show jumping—past, present, and future—is something that will never get old.

While watching Lee McKeever, Albany, and Kevin Babington be inducted, I was transported back to my childhood. To the summers when I would beg my parents to order the channels that carried the occasional grand prix, or the days I spent ringside at the Lake Placid Horse Show, hoping to catch

a glimpse of Margie Engle or Beezie Madden.

Fast forward a couple of decades, and there they were, sitting a few tables away in their iconic blue SJHF blazers. I listened to Mary Chapot's daughters speak about her incomparable rise to fame; Kevin Babington recount the kismet way in which he got the ride on Carling King; Albany's owners recall the magic that can happen when you simply give a horse a chance; and Lee McKeever chronicle the joy that show jumping has brought—and continues to

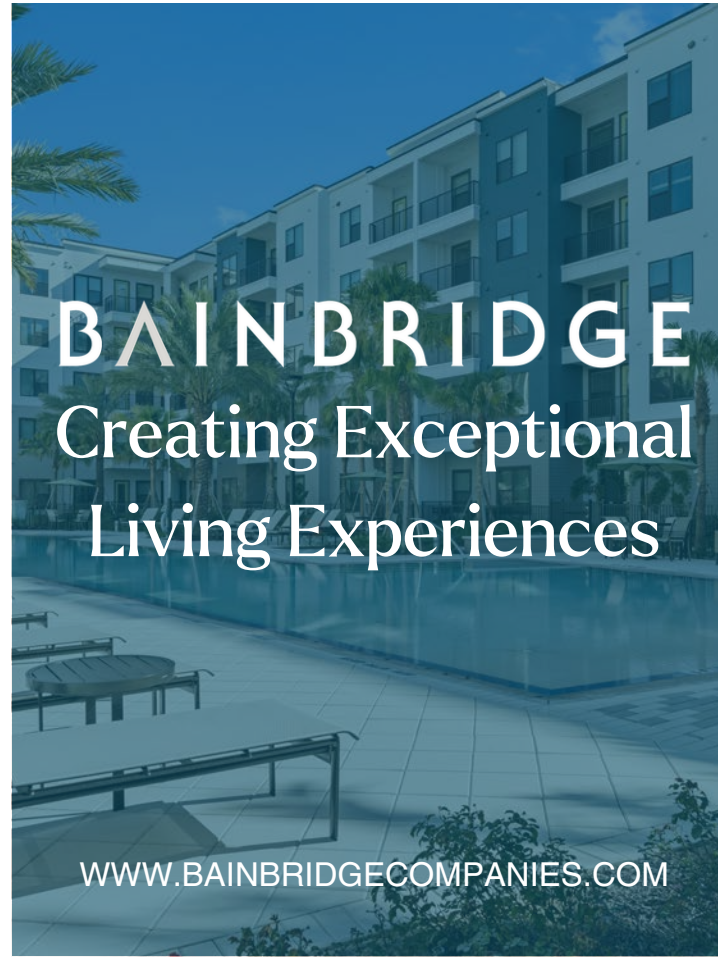
bring—to his life.

Being inspired like that from true legends is exactly what I needed to break through the WEF 8 wall and tackle the end of the 2026 season. Thank you, Show Jumping Hall of Fame!

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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A SPRINGBOARD UNDER THE LIGHTS:

HOW WEEK 9 HAS LAUNCHED FIVE-STAR CAREERS

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Over the past decade, the CSI5* Grand Prix of Week 9 has developed a striking pattern: it is often where horses and riders take their very first five-star Grand Prix win, even as seasoned champions continue to thrive under the same spotlight.

Look back over the past decade and a clear pattern emerges: for most horses, victory in the Week 9 Grand Prix is not the final chapter, it is the first big line on the résumé. Eight of the last ten winning horses were taking either their first-ever CSI5* Grand Prix when they crossed the timers in Wellington, with Daniel Bluman's Ladriano Z the lone exception as a proven five-star champion returning to win the class twice.

From Carrabis Z in 2016 to Portobella van de Fruitkorf in 2025, Week 9 has consistently crowned combinations who were still writing the opening pages of their top-level story.

WHEN A FIRST WIN BECOMES A BEGINNING

LUCIANA LOSSIO AND LADY LOUISE JMEN: DEFYING THE ODDS ON DEBUT

When Luciana Lossio rode through the in-gate for the Week 9 Grand Prix in 2024, she and Lady Louise Jmen were not just chasing their first CSI5* win, they were jumping their very first CSI5* 160 Grand Prix together, full stop. In a sport where only around 4% of international horses ever reach that level, simply appearing in this class is rare; converting that debut into a victory is almost unheard of.

Only 47% of horses that attempt CSI5* 160 will ever jump a clear at the height, and just 1% manage to win on their five-star 160 debut, which gives some sense of the statistical improbability of what Lossio and Lady

Louise Jmen achieved. Against that backdrop, their clear, winning performance did more than upset the form book, it perfectly captured Week 9's reputation as the place where brand-new five-star

partnerships announce themselves to the sport.

EMILIE CONTER & PORTOBELLA VAN DE FRUITKORF: FROM BREAKTHROUGH TO BELGIAN BACKBONE

When Emilie Conter and Portobella van de Fruitkorf won the Week 9 Grand Prix twelve months later, it was also framed as a breakthrough: a first CSI5* Grand Prix victory for a young rider-mare partnership stepping out against one of the strongest fields of the season. That result has since proved to be a starting point rather than an end point. In the twelve months that followed, Portobella has become an integral part of the Belgian set-up, helping Team Belgium to three podium finishes in five-star team competitions at LLN Ocala,

Former Champions

Who are the combinations that have won the CSI5* \$500,000 Bainbridge Companies Grand Prix in the last decade?

Date	Winners	Elo at the Time	Elo Field Strength	Winning Margin (in secs)
2025	Emilie Conter Portobella vd Fruitkorf	690	715	0.9
2024	Luciana Lossio Lady Louise Jmen	610	707	0.42
2023	Daniel Bluman Ladriano Z	749	694	0.61
2022	Abdel Saïd Arpege Du Ru	712	715	1.84
2021	Abdel Saïd Pegasus Bandit Savoie	600	693	0.01
2020	Ashlee Bond Donatello 141	632	694	0.33
2019	Daniel Bluman Ladriano Z	741	688	0.17
2018	Daniel Coyle Cita	683	681	Only clear
2017	Karen Polle With Wings	688	684	0.94
2016	Richie Moloney Carrabis Z	663	681	1.65

*Abdel Saïd changed from Egyptian to Belgian nationality in 2022.



the Nations Cup of Aachen and the Nations Cup of Sankt Gallen.

Along the way, they underlined their big-occasion credentials with a clear round in the Rolex Grand Prix of Aachen, one of the most prestigious 160 tests in the sport. Back in Wellington this winter, Conter and Portobella have picked up exactly where they left off, opening 2026 with a Top 10 finish in the \$500,000 Fidelity Investments Grand Prix during WEF 5 and reminding everyone that last year's Week 9 win was the launch of a top-level career, not a one-night surprise.

FROM BREAKTHROUGH TO SERIAL WINNER

Week 9 has also played a different role for riders who were already established but still on the cusp of something bigger.

ABDEL SAÏD & HIS WEEK 9 DOUBLE

Now riding for Belgium, Abdel Saïd is the only rider in the past decade to have won the Week 9 Grand Prix twice, and he did it by giving two different horses their first taste of five-star glory. With Pegasus Bandit Savoie in 2021 and Arpege du Ru in 2022, Saïd rode both horses to their first-ever CSI5* Grand Prix victories under the Wellington lights, adding to a five-star record that already included his 2016 World Cup win in Verona with Hope van Scherpen Donder.

Pegasus Bandit Savoie confirmed that breakthrough by winning another CSI5* Grand Prix later that same

year before continuing his career under France's Ines Joly, while Arpege du Ru went on to add further big-tour results to Saïd's résumé. Taken together, his Week 9 record reads less like a pair of isolated Wellington upsets and more like the calling card of a rider who repeatedly turns talented, relatively unproven horses into five-star Grand Prix winners.

DANIEL COYLE & CITA: A FIRST WIN THAT UNLOCKED EIGHT MORE

When Daniel Coyle won the Week 9 Grand Prix in 2018 with Cita, it was the first CSI5* Grand Prix victory of his career and an early sign that he was ready to live in five-star company. Since that night in Wellington, he has added eight more CSI5* Grand Prix or World Cup wins across North America and Europe, including major titles such as the Longines FEI World Cup legs in Toronto, Leipzig and Amsterdam with Legacy, the Grand Prix of Rotterdam and Thermal, and the \$1,000,000 ATCO Queen Elizabeth II Cup at Spruce Meadows with Incredible.

That body of work has carried Coyle into the elite bracket of the sport; as of the latest Longines FEI Jumping Rankings, he now sits inside the world's top 10 riders. Looking back, his Week 9 breakthrough reads like the first clear indication that a future Top 10 rider was being forged under the Wellington lights.

A PROVEN WINNER WITH A NEW PARTNER

The Week 9 roll of honor is



not only about first-timers. Daniel Bluman and Ladriano Z are proof that seasoned five-star winners can make this Grand Prix their own, having lifted the trophy twice together and setting the benchmark for repeat success under the Wellington lights. Their double adds an important counterpoint to the recent trend of emerging partnerships taking breakthrough wins here and shows that experience can be just as decisive as momentum.

Although Ladriano Z has since retired from top-level sport, Bluman arrives in 2026 with another serious contender in Corbie V.V., who has jumped clear in eight of his last nine five-star Grand Prix and World Cup

starts. With that kind of current form, Bluman looks well placed to chase a new chapter in his Week 9 story, this time with a different horse.

THE NEXT CHAPTER IN A TWO-TRACK TRADITION

Put together, the last ten years of Week 9 tell a nuanced story. This is a Grand Prix where first-time five-star winners regularly launch themselves onto the big stage, yet proven championship horses can still come back and win it again. As another edition approaches, the question is not whether history will repeat itself, but which version of the Week 9 script, breakthrough or confirmation, will play out under the lights this time.



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TWICE IS NICE FOR U.S. JUMPING TEAM

in CSIO4* Nations Cup, Presented by Florida Coast Equipment



The U.S. Jumping Team—made up of Karl Cook, Callie Schott, Marilyn Little and Mclain Ward—earned its second consecutive victory in the \$150,000 CSIO4* Nations Cup, presented by Florida Coast Equipment. Eight countries brought forth teams to compete in the Saturday Night Lights. Over the 25-year history of the FEI Nations Cup Wellington, the U.S. has now won 11 times.

Teams from Australia, Brazil, Canada, Colombia, Ireland, Israel and Mexico joined the home nation in the opening round, with the top six teams returning for round two. After disappointing first attempts over tracks built by the USA's Nick Granat and Steve Stephens, Israel and Colombia did not advance.

Cook aboard his Paris Olympic partner, 14-year-old Selle Français mare Caracole de la Roque (Zandor Z x Kannan*GFE); Little riding La Contessa, the 11-year-old Mecklenburg mare by License x Cornet's Prinz; and Schott on 15-year-old Dutch Warmblood gelding Garant (Warrant x Verdi TN) were foot-perfect in the opening round. As a result, U.S. Chef d'Équipe Robert Ridland elected for Ward, his team's anchor rider, to save his horse—12-year-old Dutch Warmblood gelding Jordan Molga M (Etoulon VDI x HGT Dulf van den Bisschop)—for the second round.

The U.S. advanced to the second round on a score of zero, matched only with Ireland after Cian O'Connor, Shane Sweetnam and Tom Wachman jumped without

faults. Scores of zero on the board once again came from Schott and Little for the home nation, while a rail fell for Cook. For the Irish squad's return, Jordan Coyle and Cian O'Connor were clear, with Wachman posting four faults.

A familiar scenario in team jumping at Wellington International, the final decider came down to the last two rounds of the evening between Ireland and the U.S. A heartbreak rail at the final fence on course put a tally of four aside Sweetnam's name, and placed all the pressure on Ward's shoulders.

"It's a position that I've grown to be comfortable in and relish, to be honest, but I think I felt more pressure because it's a new



relationship with this horse," said Ward of Jordan Molga M, the mount owned by Michael Smith that joined Ward's string in December and made a debut under the lights at WEF on Saturday night. "I was going back and forth on whether I should jump the first round, and decided I needed to trust our preparation.

"I'm very lucky to have such a strong team—they put me in a pretty nice position," continued Ward. "It's always a good feeling knowing you're going to either jump off or win."

Ward only jumped once but made it count with a clear from Jordan Molga M. Ireland settled for second on a final score of four and Canada took third on nine faults.

"The two double clears were phenomenal," said Ridland of Little and Schott's pivotal contributions to the team effort. "That's the way you win Nations Cups; double-clear rounds."

Of La Contessa, the mare that carried her to the win, Little said, "Her consistency is absolutely fabulous. It's a blessing to have a partner you can really count on. This was a dream about 12 months ago, so to be here—with a horse like that, on a team like this with mentors, and in my hometown—it's a dream come true."

In her first Nations Cup on home soil, Schott echoed Little's sentiments and gave credit to Garant, owned by Southern Arches, saying, "It was really exciting to jump double clear and be there for the team. I trust Garant so much—he loves to run and jump, and if I trust him and be there for him, he's there for me.

"He was very excited to be coming back for a second round," Schott laughed. "I think he thought he was coming back for a jump-off, but he held us together."

Despite the rail, Cook and Caracole de la Roque, owned by Eric Navet

and Signe Ostby, made a significant contribution to the winning effort after traveling from their home base in California to Florida.

"The show here has built a really great brand around Saturday Night Lights, and not only does the horse culture here in Wellington come out, but also the general public does as well. The crowd helps us as riders, and I think it makes the sport better."

With the FEI World Championships in Aachen, Germany, in August at the forefront of everyone's mind, Ridland spoke about the significance of this early-

season Nations Cup on the global calendar.

"This is always an interesting Nations Cup because the pressure is on to win—it's a home Nations Cup and a really big deal," said Ridland, who was presented with the Denis Quinlan Perpetual Trophy for the victory. "At the same time, it's early, and you've got to play the long ball. This is the beginning of the year, but you can't do everything at the end, and this will have played a role for sure in where we are later [in the season]. More importantly, what a great night it was."



KARL COOK AND CANDY

Can't Be Caught in JTWG Inc. CSIO4* Grand Prix



The U.S. national anthem rang out once again for Karl Cook's victory in the \$200,000 JTWG Inc. CSIO4* Grand Prix riding Candy, just one day after a home win for Team USA in the FEI Nations Cup at Wellington International.

A five-horse jump-off that included four nations set the stage for another face-off between the U.S. and Ireland. After a bold gallop to the final fence in USA course designers Steve Stephens and Nick Granat's jump-off track, Cook and Candy set an uncatchable time at 36.87.

An extra stride in that final line from Irish Olympian Darragh Kenny aboard Colibelle Hero Z, an 11-year-old Belgian-bred mare (Comme Il Faut 5 x

Rubens du ry d'Asse) owned by Elena A. Haas, settled them as the runner-up on a time of 37.72 seconds. Kenny also earned the Niall Grimes "Cheers" Perpetual Trophy as the top money-earning Irish competitor during CSIO week at WEF.

The pathfinding in the jump-off and fellow Irish Olympian Shane Sweetnam finished third in 37.75 seconds riding Coriaan van Klapscheut Z, a 10-year-old Zangersheide gelding owned together with Voquest, LLC, and by the same sire, Comme Il Faut 5, out of a Lord Z Z mare.

"The last line was eight or nine, but the eight was a tall ask," said Cook, whose groom, Tessa Falanga, accepted the Double H Farm Grooms Award and \$500 cash prize for her care and preparation of Candy. "The way we jumped in—I had to go look at my landing prints during the prizegiving—was so far to the right, I wasn't planning to have that much of an inside line, and that made the eighth."

The jump-off, which also



included McLain Ward (USA) and Erynn Ballard (CAN), was stacked with athletes who have all represented their nation at the Olympic Games, proving the win would not come easily. "Jump-offs like this, you have to focus on yourself and what you're capable of," said Cook, an Olympic team silver medalist. "That was only our second jump-off together. I've had her for a while, but haven't jumped clear. We did everything we could today, and it was enough."

Cook has taken his time with Candy, an 11-year-old Swedish Warmblood by Coventry x King Louie, owned by Signe Ostby. The horse joined his string at the end of the 2024 WEF season and rounds out his international lineup of speedy mares.

"Like any relationship, you build and build, and a lot of times it feels like you're on

a plateau, and then all of a sudden it changes," said Cook. "Every day you're finding little things that we can do better. Her big strength is her power, so it's just figuring out how you can let that power shine and ride her to her strengths."

Cook will return to

Wellington for the \$1M Rolex US Equestrian Open Grand Prix, a Rolex Series Event, with his Paris Games mount Caracole de la Roque, before heading to Europe with a plan to take aim at the FEI World Championships in Aachen, Germany, this August. With big plans ahead, Cook concluded

by speaking about how special a Nations Cup week on home soil is, saying, "The U.S. has two, but the rest of the time you're overseas. And while those shows are really fun, it's also fun to be home. The crowd here is great, and you really felt that this week."





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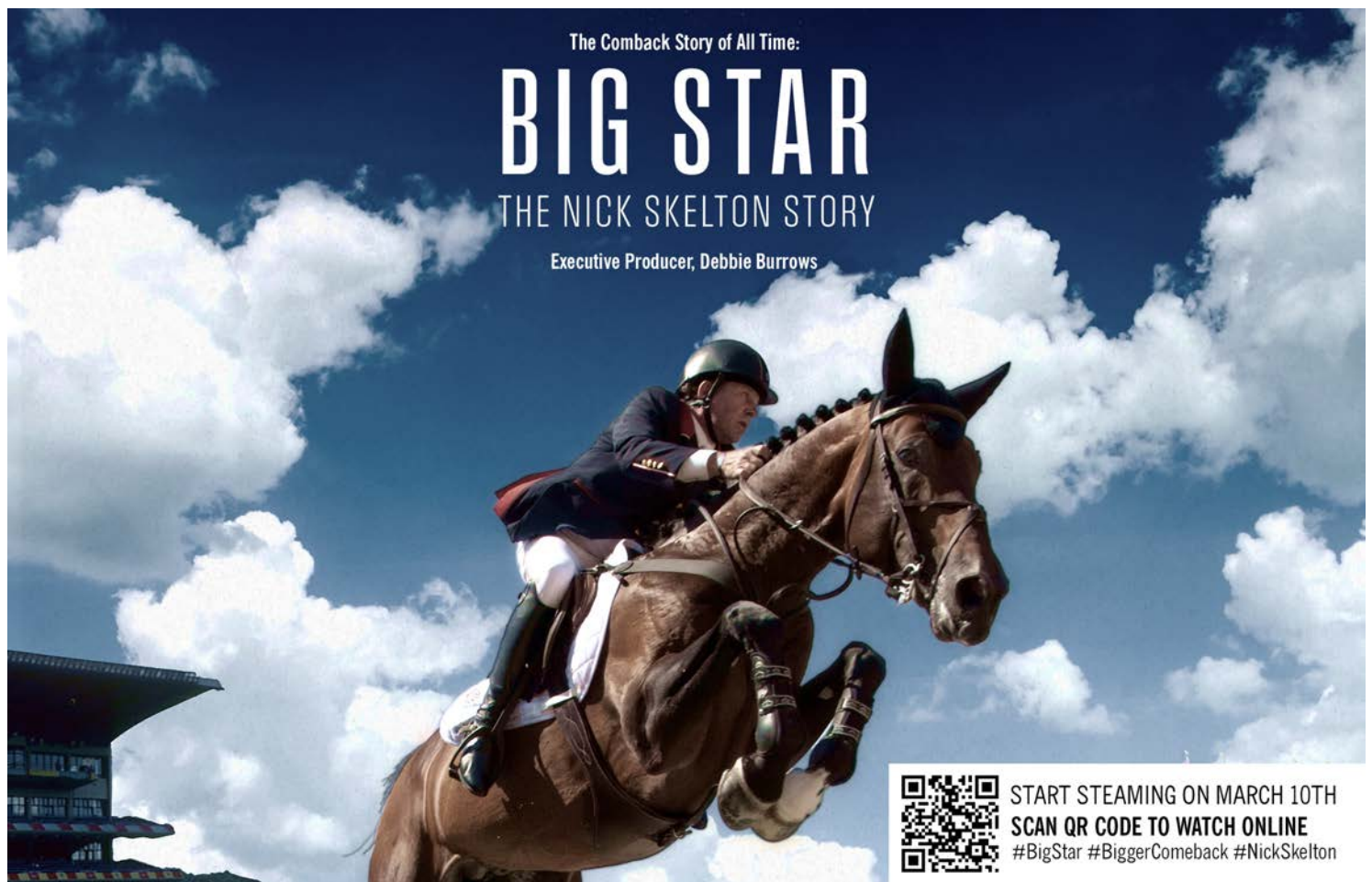


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In the equestrian world, passion is not a hobby. It is a way of life. It shows up in the early mornings and in the steady trust between riders and the horses who carry their dreams. This community embodies that passion in every stride, which is why Coastal Steel Structures is honored to be a proud sponsor of the Winter Equestrian Festival.

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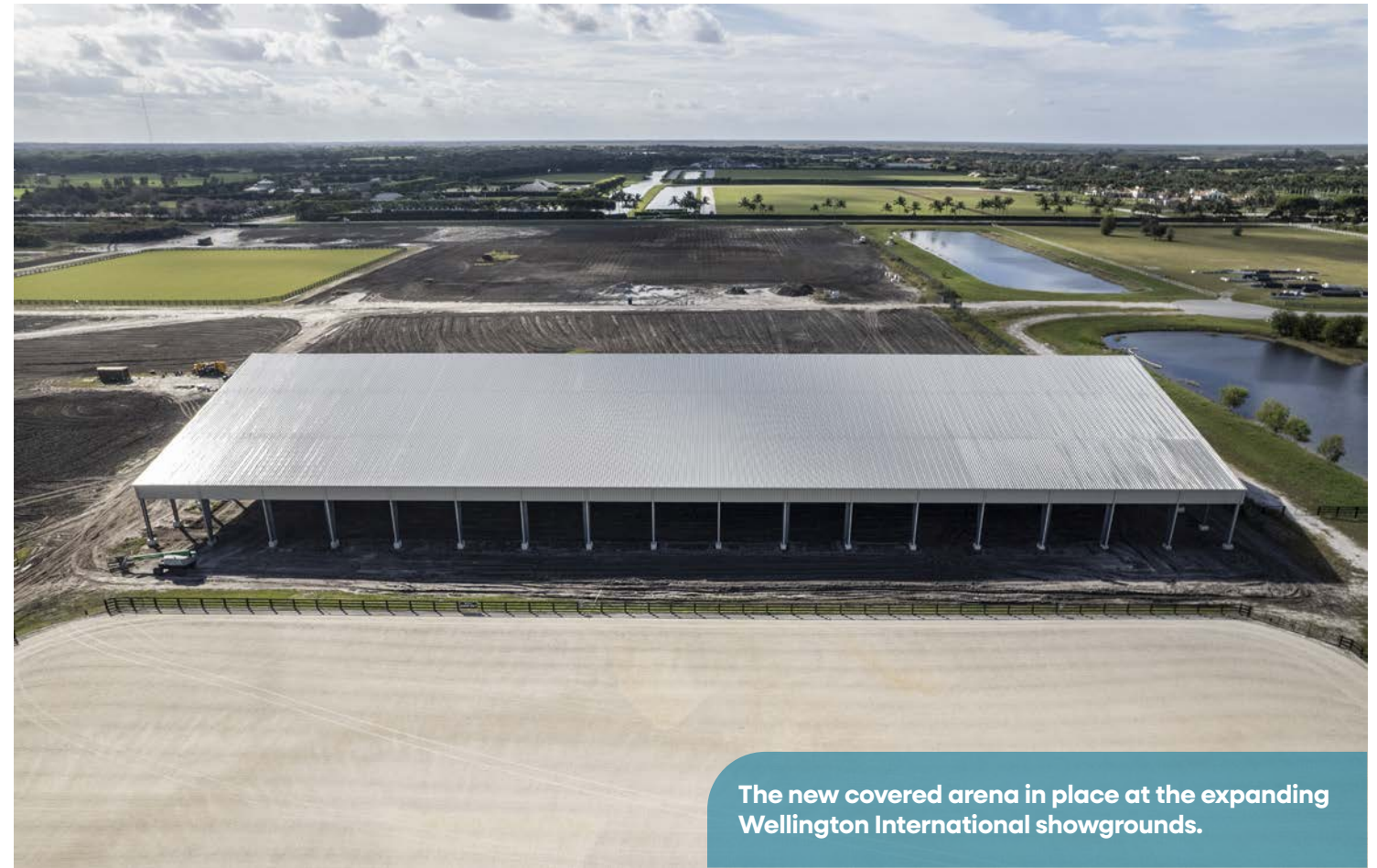
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Excellence at this level requires spaces that rise to meet it, and we take that responsibility seriously.

Our commitment to excellence is also why we joined the WEF expansion project and contributed to

the construction of the new covered arena at Wellington International. Designed for riders and trainers who hold themselves to the highest standards, this covered arena delivers the precision and consistency they expect from every training environment. It protects horses from unpredictable weather, supports uninterrupted year-round training, and provides the steady, reliable conditions riders need to stay focused on their craft and perform at their best.

To us, this covered arena is far more than a building. It is a space shaped with purpose, built to elevate performance and strengthen the bond between horse



The new covered arena in place at the expanding Wellington International showgrounds.

and rider.

Being part of this milestone for Wellington International gives us a unique perspective on the heartbeat of this community. We see the determination of riders who arrive before sunrise. We see trainers shaping futures one stride at a time. We see families making countless sacrifices so their athletes can chase their dreams. This new covered arena is built for all of them. It represents progress, protection, and the promise of what is still possible.

Since our work with this community extends past the structures we deliver, we felt it was important to contribute something

meaningful this year. Coastal Steel Structures is hosting the Rider Recovery Lounge, a quiet space where riders and those who attend WEF can rest, reset, and feel appreciated. Whether you are competing, training, supporting from the sidelines, or simply enjoying the experience, this space is for everyone who makes this community what it is.

You can find us at Hunter Hill March 18-29. We invite every rider, trainer, family member, and guest to stop by and recharge. Your passion deserves more than the standard, and we are honored to support you as WEF grows, evolves and builds what comes next.

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- Flor De Campo (WEF 3-4)
- Irene Neuwirth (WEF 5-6)
- Zoe (WEF 7-11)
- SR Blackinton (WEF 12)

BRIDGE DECK AT TIKI TERRACE

- DADA Sport
- Coastal Steel Structures (WEF 5-7)
- Weatherly Stroh Studios (WEF 8-11)
- US Equestrian (WEF 12)
- Cara VL (WEF P-1)
- Horsehair Jewellery (WEF 3-4)
- Hangai Mountain Textiles (WEF 5-7)
- The Calvert Collection (WEF 8-12)

THE BARN AT HUNTER HILL

- LeMieux
- Gladiator Therapeutics
- Lash LaRue
- Odette Boutique (WEF 9 & 10)
- Coastal Steel (WEF 11-12)

INTERNATIONAL RING WARM UP

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- Horcery
- Bruno Del Grange Maître Sellier
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RING 6

- Antarès Sellier
- Voltaire Design
- THEAULT

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OASIS

- Charles Ancona
- La Enovese Designs
- Devoucoux
- 70 Degrees
- Erica Wilson (WEF P-4, WEF 7 & 8)
- J Wilder Imports (WEF 5-6)
- Ryde Equestrian (WEF 9-10)
- Paulina Velez Designs
- The Oasis Café

VENDOR VILLAGE SOUTHSIDE

- Danny & Ron's Dog Rescue
- Equestrian Team Apparel
- Optic Nirvana
- Fab Finds by Sarah
- JODS
- Sofie's Boutique
- Best Buds Florist
- Odette (WEF P-8, WEF 11 & 12)
- Flor De Campo (WEF 9-10)

VENDOR VILLAGE NORTHSIDE

- Loopy's Crepes
- The In Gate
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- Parlanti
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PONY ISLAND

- Scarlet Technologies (WEF 1-2)
- Fashion Farm Girl (WEF 3-4, 6, 10-12)
- The In Gate Academy
- Palm Beach International
- Sylvia Tacos
- Best Pizza Heaven
- Florida Snow
- Farm Stand

THE BARN

- Paddock Paws
- Dandy Products
- FarmVet
- Josey's Laundry
- Anonymous Coffee

RING 9

- Arion (WEF P-8)
- The Dad Den (WEF 9-12)
- Forestier
- Graceful Oaks
- Nathalie's Café

RING 10

- Ringside Health
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- Magdalena's Mexican

SOUTH BARN

- Rider's Boutique
- Zest
- Blue Ribbon Carts
- Tampico Hermoso



SHOW & TELL

What's Up at the Farm Stand



If you spend the winter showing in Wellington like we do, or plan to make a visit to WEF during the winter season, this post should speak to you...

As the last month of WEF is upon us, we've put together a guide of our favorite bites and finds at the Farm Stand. This food and fashion marketplace located between the Grand Hunter ring and "Pony Island" offers the healthiest food at the horse show and a rotating curation of boutique pop ups throughout the winter season. (Aka—bring your non-riding siblings and friends here for a break from the horses.)

We don't often go a day at the show without making a pitstop at the Farm Stand. If nothing else, I'll run there for my near-daily ginger iced tea from Loida's (with all the add-ons, of course). I've got my mom hooked on it. A lunch time break means there's likely a veggie rice/noodle bowl with a fried egg in the mix from Loida's too. Don't sleep on the refrigerated juices or lunch bowls from Meraki or the semi-overwhelming healthy snack selection from the Wandermust truck either.

There are so many exciting brands coming to the Farm Stand in March and these are the ones we are looking forward to most:

★ Marfa Stance

We love their parachute style jackets + bombers with reversible liners/hoods, they're currently popping up in Palm Beach too (through end of April)

★ American Colors by Henry Lehr

Great cotton staples for warm weather (mens too)

★ Choix

Fashion + home goods, there's always an array of fun colors + prints

★ Cou Palm Beach

Great curation of brands, based in Palm Beach

★ The Surrey

California-based, equestrian-inspired, meant to be worn stable to street

★ Sant M

Super cute velvet Furlane slippers

★ Studio FSR

Not familiar with this candle / perfume company, but looking forward to trying!

★ Ella rue

High-end vintage / consignment pieces, this is always a fun browse

We are always on the lookout for what's new at the Farm Stand and hope you like some of our favs too. (Shoutout to Kristy Strait and Suzy Drasnin for continually leveling up this little oasis.)

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- Adrienne, Alex & Lucy

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MAYA INES DENIS CHAMBON SHINES WITH CALLYPSO DE LA HAMENTE Z

in BrainJuice U25 Semi-Final Grand Prix

Future stars gathered under the lights of Wellington International on Friday evening of WEF 8 for the \$32,000 BrainJuice U25 Semi-Final Grand Prix. After a season of point-chasing in anticipation of the 2026 series finale taking place during WEF 10, riders had one last opportunity to claim their spot with Mexico's Maya Ines Denis Chambon and her own Callypso de la Hamente Z taking the penultimate grand prix win.

A stacked field of 42 horse-and-rider combinations took

to the Steve Stephens (USA) designed track, with eight returning for the decisive jump-off. Denis Chambon—a five-time medalist at the FEI North American Youth Championships—rode her 10-year-old Zangersheide gelding by Chellsini Z x Kashmir van Schuttershof to an early lead. They left fire in their path over the short course, remaining unbeatable in a winning time of 35.87 seconds.

Denis Chambon and Callypso's need for speed could not be caught, and

the duo was the only pair to break the 36-second mark. JJ Torano (USA) and Lyon 50 (Lord Argentinus x Lex Lugar), owned by North Run and Kadley Farms, took second on a time of 36.78 seconds. Germany's Tony Stormanns finished in third in 37.66 seconds with RMF Balouwinsky (Balous Bellini x Cornet Obolensky), owned by Rushy Marsh Farm.

"I base out of Ocala but came down here during week two to specifically qualify for tonight," said 22-year-old Denis Chambon.



"It's great to be able to compete at a high level with just our age group. It forces us to step up our game and raises the level of competition."

The U25 Series creates an on-ramp to higher levels for young show jumpers, featuring challenges such as changes in venue, jumping under the lights, jumping the open water, team formats, and more.

Denis Chambon has been partnered with Callypso for five years, after getting the ride when the gelding was just five years old. "He began as a shy and spooky horse, but has always been competitive," she said. "Having a horse that likes to win and go fast has been so fun to develop."

Now with points on the board, Denis Chambon currently sits within the top 25 in the season rankings and plans to return to Wellington for the series finale during WEF 10. The current standings are led by Campbell Brown (USA) after two early-season wins. Fellow American Eva Fisherman is second, with Canada's Cassidy Rein in third, after winning the WEF 8 welcome earlier in the week.

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CHAMPIONS GALLERY



Tracy Scheriff-Muser rode Old Spice, owned and pictured with Lori Mattiasen, to champion of the WEF 8 Defiant Whisky Adult Amateur 2'9" Hunter division.



Leading Lady, owned and ridden by Mia Stavola, was champion of the Low Adult Hunter (Sec B) division sponsored by Frank & Eileen during WEF 8.



Brittan Harper Wiley rode Picturesque Caught You Looking, owned by Southside Equestrian, to champion of the WEF 8 Short Stirrup Hunter Division.



Styles, owned by Rivers Edge and ridden by Lily Herzog, was presented with the Champion Equine Insurance Hunter Style Award by Laura Fetterman after winning the WEF 8 Small Junior Hunter 3'6" 16-17 Handy.



After winning the \$32,000 Adequan® CSIO4* WEF Challenge Cup Round 8, Obora's Laura, owned by Coolmore Showjumping and ridden by Tom Wachman earned the Champion Equine Insurance Jumper Style Award presented by Laura Fetterman.



SEASON STANDINGS

LEADING LADY RIDER AWARD STANDINGS

PRESENTED BY MARTHA W. JOLICOEUR, DOUGLAS ELLIMAN

1	LILLIE KEENAN USA	451 PTS
2	ERYNN BALLARD CAN	446 PTS
3	NINA MALLEVAEY FRA	398 PTS
4	NATALIE DEAN USA	379 PTS
5	MARILYN LITTLE USA	332 PTS



U.S. team member Marilyn Little, was presented with the Martha Jolicoeur, Douglas Elliman Leading Lady Rider Award after consistent results during WEF 8.

HERMÈS 1.50M CHAMPIONSHIP JUMPER SERIES

1	ERYNN BALLARD CAN	131 PTS
	MARK BLUMAN COL	131 PTS
3	RICHARD VOGEL GER	123 PTS
4	NAYEL NASSAR EGY	121 PTS
5	CIAN O'CONNOR IRL	118 PTS

\$25,000 LEADING INTERNATIONAL RIDER BONUS STANDINGS

PRESENTED BY MICHAEL SMITH

1	SHANE SWEETNAM IRL	\$219,709
2	RICHARD VOGEL GER	\$213,616
3	MCLAIN WARD USA	\$196,845
4	MARK BLUMAN COL	\$173,982
5	BERTRAM ALLEN IRL	\$173,643

DON LITTLE MASTERS STANDINGS

PRESENTED BY RUSHY MARSH FARM

1	CAMILLE PACHECO CESARSKI & FLINT T.S. ET	87
2	REZA SHABANI & DAKOTA Z	78
3	MOLLY ATHEY & KEBEA KS	71
4	BONNIE ORLOWSKI & LOCATO VAN HET KAPELHOF	62
	CHRISTIAN CURREY & UNESCO DU ROUET	62

BRAINJUICE UNDER 25 GRAND PRIX SERIES

1	CAMPBELL BROWN USA	208 PTS
2	EVA FISHERMAN USA	174 PTS
3	CASSIDY REIN CAN	167.5 PTS
4	ALEXANDER ALSTON USA	158 PTS
5	MARY ROSE CANTERBURY USA	155.5 PTS

OVERALL HUNTER JUNIOR/AMATEUR-OWNER RIDER

PRESENTED BY YETI

1	LILLY HERZOG	460 PTS
2	PARKER PEACOCK	455 PTS
3	JOHN INGRAM	339 PTS
4	IRENE NEUWIRTH	333 PTS
5	LEXI MAOUNIS	310 PTS

OVERALL HUNTER PROFESSIONAL RIDER

PRESENTED BY YETI

1	VICTORIA COLVIN	2166 PTS
2	SCOTT STEWART	1268 PTS
3	JENNIFER HANNAN	1162 PTS
4	MICHAEL BRITT-LEON	1048 PTS
5	CHRISTOPHER PAYNE	1001 PTS

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Saturday Night Lights

- | | | | |
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| JAN. 03 | \$75,000 Battle of the Sexes presented by LeMieux | FEB. 21 | \$500,000 Modon CSI5* Grand Prix |
| JAN. 10 | Country Western Night \$140,000 Palm Beach County Sports Commission CSI3* Grand Prix | FEB. 28 | \$150,000 Nations Cup CSI04* presented by Florida Coast Equipment |
| JAN. 17 | Family Night \$50,000 Palm Beach Equine Clinic Grand Prix | MAR. 07 | \$500,000 Bainbridge Companies CSI5* Grand Prix |
| JAN. 24 | Military & First Responder Appreciation Night Presented by Wellington Regional Medical Center \$215,000 NetJets CSI4* Grand Prix | MAR. 14 | ABBA Night \$215,000 Horseware Ireland CSI4* Grand Prix |
| JAN. 31 | Great Charity Challenge Sponsored by Fidelity Investments* | MAR. 21 | Fan Appreciation Night Presented by Palm Beach County Sports Commission \$150,000 Hermès 1.50m Championship Series Jumper Final |
| FEB. 07 | \$500,000 Fidelity Investments* CSI5* Grand Prix | MAR. 28 | \$1,000,000 Rolex US Equestrian Open CSI5* Grand Prix, a Rolex Series Event |
| FEB. 14 | \$150,000 Peter Wetherill WCHR/USHJA Hunter Spectacular | | |

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*Competition times may vary, please visit www.WellingtonInternational.com for more event information.

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Once in Seven Years:

Gerry Rodriguez leaves the barn for the show ring on a night of near perfection

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

Gerry Rodriguez has been a hunter groom for over 30 years, and for the past seven of those, he has never been to the show ring. That changed on Saturday night of WCHR week when he was there to witness the horse he cares for, Dicobblue PS, win the \$150,000 WCHR Peter Wetherill Palm Beach Hunter Spectacular with Victoria Colvin.

Rodriguez's regular absence from the show ring is due to a physical disability. He has a prosthetic limb from a sudden hospital visit some seven years ago due to diabetes that resulted in the amputation of his lower leg. While he can work all day as a groom comfortably, he prefers to stay behind the

scenes at the barn.

After his hospitalization, Gerry dropped out of the horse world. "After I lost my leg, I did not work for six months," he said. His brother Adrian Rodriguez realized that Gerry was not happy being at home all the time, and he wanted to help him turn his life back around.

A solution arose when Torrey Hardison asked Adrian to come work at John and Stephanie Ingram's barn. Adrian was committed to working elsewhere at the time, but was quick to recommend his older brother for the job. "He had worked for Ashland Farm for 20 years," Adrian said. "I told them he was a good groom and that they should give him a try."

Gerry arrived at the Ingram's



prestigious Hunter barn on Pierson Road soon after. "They were happy to help," said Adrian. "And he worked hard from day one—even when he could have taken a rest, he kept on working. He is a very important part of the team and keeps the barn running when the rest is at the show."

Gerry has two horses specifically in his care. 'Blue'—his barn name as stated above his stable door—won the Saturday Night Lights class during 'Hunter week' and all six grooms were there to celebrate with him as he attended the showgrounds for the first time in a long time. "The team here is perfect," said Gerry, who works alongside his brother and a quartet of four other brothers. "We are looked after really well by the family."

Blue, Gerry says, is also faultless. He was an addition to the Ingram's barn last August. Within weeks of his

arrival, Colvin and Blue won the Platinum Performance/USHJA International Hunter Derby Championship in Kentucky. "He is the perfect horse. He is so well-behaved with everything," said Gerry. "There are many wonderful horses in the barn, but Blue is very special."

On Saturday, Gerry took his time with the gelding, starting preparations for the class three hours ahead of time. "I wanted to make sure he was relaxed and not stressed at all," he said. When the horse went up to the ring, Gerry followed in a golf cart.

"It was a really important class," he added. "And I thought to myself 'why not go to watch.'"

Consisting of two rounds, victory was not a certainty until the final trip was completed, but after the scores came in for the pair's second round, the writing was on the wall. The 11-year-old Diarado's Boy gelding and Colvin came close to

perfection—they posted a 95.66 from the opening round and in the handy they secured a substantial score of 97, including a perfect 100 from panel three. The grooms were all there to celebrate. "You would never see all six of us at the show ring normally," said Adrian. "It was a special night."

Gerry's journey from the barn to the show ring was worth it and did not go unnoticed. "We were all so happy," he said, having received the evening's Grooms Award. "It is not about the money as much as receiving recognition from the show."

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.

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