

The 2012 New England Equitation Championships

For Immediate Release by Melody Taylor-Scott

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The Boys are Back in Town for the 37th New England Equitation Championships!

The 2012 New England Equitation Championships, now in its 37th year, expanded to a five-day format to accommodate over 430 Junior and Adult competitors and added live streaming video. This impressive equitation Medal final is held annually in October at the Eastern States Coliseum in West Springfield Massachusetts and brings together riders from all over New England to compete for top honors in their respective divisions and celebrate their passion for their sport, a commitment to excel, and their love of horses.

Amy Eidson and Cookie DeSimone, the show Co-Chairs, show Manager Bob Crawford, Joe



Dotoli, Kelly Small, Kristen Bumpus, Carl Catani, Kathy Fletcher, Patti Harnois, Fred Hunt, Armand Chenelle, Debbie Hoyt-Banfield, Pam Hunt, Olana Laffey, Linda Langmeier, Jay Sargent, Liz Mokley, and Laurel Tinney are to be commended for their tireless efforts in organizing this amazing five day event.

Considered to be one of the finest equitation finals in the country, the NEEC is also the innovative originator of the Horsemanship Challenge and the Challenge of the States classes.



A panel of 6 Judges from around the country, comprised of Richard Slocum, VA, Otis Brown- KY, Mike Rosser- NC, Keith Hastings-NC, Bill Ellis-FL, and Rob Gage-CA, also the Course Designer, worked in alternating teams of 2 with their scores averaged together to arrive at the choice of Champions from 221 Junior and 209 Adult competitors.

The courses were technically challenging, using the center line of the arena to set the jumps creating multiple bending lines, combinations, and roll back turns to test the rider's ability to adjust their horse's stride to make a correct distance.

The Junior Celebration dinner held at the Springfield Marriot provided a wonderful evening of friends gathering to applaud the Junior's in their last year. The written phase of the Horsemanship class, held behind closed doors was completed prior to an excellent dinner, seating over 500, and a fantastic hour long video presentation sponsored annually by Oliynyk Stables. Compiled over the year by Cookie DeSimone and Amy Eidson, this commemorative to the show year culminating in the NEEC Finals, is a keepsake DVD and given to each Junior in their last year along with a wooden picture frame, sponsored by Benchmark Farm, customized for each Junior.

The Judges attending the dinner were amazed at the unique content provided in the video presentation and stated repeatedly what an exceptional Finals event this is. Special guest judge for the Horsemanship Challenge, Melanie Smith-Taylor and her longtime friend and Calypso's former groom, Syd Eustace Goodrich remarked on what a wonderful tribute to the horses and riders the NEEC Finals are.

The NEEC Junior Horsemanship Challenge, sponsored by Volo Farm, is open to all junior exhibitors competing in the New England Horsemen's Council Hunt Seat Medal Finals. This award is intended to identify the all-around horseperson; those who can "do it all", who not only ride well, but understand the importance of quality horse care. Winners are determined by adding together scores in three competition areas; a written test, sponsored by SmarPak, the average first round score in the NEEC Finals, a "hands on" practicum in the stable area officiated by three judges comprised this year of NEEC



Alums, Kate Chope, DVM and Laura Faulkner, DVM and special guest US Olympian Melanie Smith-Taylor. Winning the 2012 Katie Battison Horsemanship Award is Sophie Povirk with the highest scores in both the written and practicum phase.

The hugely popular Challenge of the States fielded 13 teams formed by combining Junior riders who represent their state, with the top six scores from the open eq. classes creating teams of 6 with the top five riders with the highest scores to ride and the sixth highest score becomes the chef d'equipe. Trainers are not allowed to help or coach, being served a buffet dinner in the stands, sponsored by JT Farm, while the class unfolds and teams each create a themed costume in this no entry fee class. The 2012 NEEC GOLD went to Team 2 from CT and Rebekah Chenelle, Wendy Collins, Sydney Smith, Keeley Gambino, Alexandra Carlton, and Chef d'eq. Melissa Dander. Silver went to Team CT1 and the Bronze to Team VT1.



The boys were on top this year, with Champion of the 2012 Adult Amateur 18-22 Medal awarded to **Colin Quinlan** riding with Shachine Belle whose students were also 4th and 6th. Reserve went to Emma Johnson who does her own training.

Besting a field of 221 entries and a very tight ride off of the top 3, the 2012 NEEC Junior Champion is **Michael Janson** riding with David Oliynyk. Michael, seen doing his homework between rounds in the show cafeteria, proved to be an example of what hard work and dedication can accomplish.



Reserve is Ali Tritschler and Trainer Timmy Kees, and third was Genevieve Zock with just fractions separating their scores prior to the call back





The new 5 day format made for a more relaxing schedule of classes, devoting two days to the adults and three days to the juniors. The 2012 Amateur Adult 23-40 Medal winner is **Gwen Goodwin** and Trainer Gretchen Anderson and Reserve is Steven Violin riding with Cookie DeSimone and Greg Prince.



The 2012 Adult Amateur 41 and Over Medal awarded to **Amy Cooper** and Trainer Kristy McCormack and Reserve went to Michelle Fallon with Trainer Mark De Blasio.

The NEEC annually honors those people that make a difference in the industry and this year's Lifetime Achievement award was given to renowned horsewoman Kip Rosenthal. The Nicholas Award for outstanding horse was given to both Condesi, owned by Jean Sheptoff, and Ludo owned by Carly Corbacho and the Judges Choice to Gifford. The Grooms award went to Ashley Pimentail of Riverwind Farm and the Sue Brainard award to Terry Gibbon. Winning the Junior Sportsmanship Award is Alexandra Carlton, and the Adult Sportsmanship Awards to Nicole Stamm and Melissa Welch. The Adult Scholarship went to Alannah Wagstaff and the Junior Scholarship to Kyle Blakeman. The two Blue Ribbon High Point Rider awards went to Adult Colin Quinlan and Junior Rebekah Chenelle. Please visit www.NewEnglandEquitation.com for all the results and follow the NEEC on Facebook.