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Day 5 – Dressage at Devon 2017 Top Performances, Musical Freestyle, Snow White and More

September 30, 2017 (Devon, PA) - The clouds threatened a bit, but the weather held up – again – at Dressage at Devon 2017. Lots of shopping bags held testament to the quality and variety of merchandise offered by the vendors. Snow White, the 7 dwarfs, Prince Charming and the Evil Stepmother (aka the Delaware Valley Combined Training Association) danced to classic Disney tunes and top riders and their horses danced in the rings.

Canadian Women Sweep the Grand Prix Freestyle

The three winners of Devon’s Grand Prix Freestyle, all hailing from Canada, seem more like comrades than competitors, helping each other out on and off the show circuit. Brittany Fraser-Beaulieu and her equine partner All In (Tango x Leontine) were all in for the win with a ride that garnered a personal best score of 75.500. Brittany, who has been riding this 12-year-old Dutch Warmblood gelding since he was five, said she had only competed this freestyle routine four times. Adding to the challenge, she completely changed the ending for Dressage at Devon. No one would have known. When they entered the Dixon Oval, All In was completely focused on Brittany and the pair put in a pitch perfect ride.

Diane Creech and Chrevis Christo (Lavallo x Chrevi’s La Vi), a 9-year-old bay Danish Warmblood gelding, captured second place with a score of 73.150. Even though it was her horse’s first time under the lights and Diane said Christo found the shadows to be challenging, she added “Christo was comfortable in the atmosphere. He loved it. I could have ridden him on a loose rein.” He was relaxed in the warm up, pumped himself up a little as he entered the ring and rode through a performance that thrilled the crowd.

Two-time Canadian Olympian Jacqueline Brooks put in a moving performance to take third place with a score of 70.875. She rode D Niro (affectionately known as Goose) (D-day x Alitalia), an 18-year-old Swedish Warmblood, to the Sounds of Silence by Simon and Garfunkle — the song running through the entire performance. Jacqueline had wanted the audience to be able to sing along with the familiar song, giving the whole presentation unity. So instead of choreographing their moves first, as is the usual practice, and then matching up the music, she worked backwards. She said “Goose loves the music and is very content in the rhythm.” As for why she keeps returning to Dressage at Devon every year for over two decades, she says, “The energy is so positive.” Judging by the clapping as she exited the Dixon Oval with her signature two-handed wave and easy smile, the crowd seems to feel the same way about her.

Back in the Barn

David Ziegler loves Dressage at Devon. “It’s my favorite show. It’s like a second home,” he said. And that’s saying a lot. Born and raised in Alberta, Canada, his equestrian life started out on the family farm in Alberta – when his mom put him on a horse at 2. He said he hated it until he was 11 but that apparently didn’t hurt. In 2006, he began training exclusively in eventing. In 2011, his training and competing led him to meet Hall of Fame Trainers Missy and Jessica Ranehousen, and to his interest in Dressage.

He began to take an interest in pure dressage. David’s talent at both eventing and dressage has provided a solid background in equestrian sports, while pursuing the highest level of competition, training with legends of the sport Pan Am Medalist Missy Ranehousen, eventing Hall of Fame inductee Bruce Davidson and Dressage Hall of Fame inductee Jessica Ranehousen.

In 2014 David became the only rider in the history of North American Young Riders championship to medal in two disciplines in the same year taking home individual gold in eventing and individual silver in dressage. He has since gone on to compete at the advanced level in eventing and Grand Prix in dressage. He’s a versatile rider and even jumps competitively. “I’ll always do what the horse is best at.” Truly an all-around equestrian (he coaches and trains too) David entered the Dixon Oval three times today for the FEI Intermediaire I, riding Fie Guldbjerg, a Danish Warmblood mare owned by Jean Good, Chester County a 7 year old Holsteiner/Thoroughbred cross owned by Joan Farwell and Lord London, Hanoverian gelding owned by Janice Murdock. Next year he hopes to bring his Grand Prix horse, Peninsula Top Man to Dressage at Devon (he couldn’t come this year because of Canadian qualifying rules.)

We’ll be watching David for many years to come.

Hi Ho Hi Ho – It’s Off to Work We Go and Batman Visits Devon

The Delaware Valley Combined Training Association Quadrille grew to 12 as Snow White, 7 dwarfs and the entire cast rode to the familiar Disney tunes witch just happened

to match their strides perfectly! Created and directed by Anne Miller, this quadrille completely dwarfed audience expectations as the magic of the ride captured the audience. Anyone who saw this bewitching ride will be a tale-ing this story for years to come. Then the traditional “Devon Drag” mistook the field for Gotham, and Batman leading his crew in the fight for a clean arena.

Just a few additional highlights of today’s performance classes:

USEF Fourth Level Test 2 Open A was won by Roberta Carleton on Kir Royale (Kopenik x Ronja), with a score of 70.139.

USEF Fourth Level Test 2 Open B was won by Maia Barnes on Benvica (Sandreo x Ranieta) with a score of 69.097.

FEI Intermeidaire 1 CDI3 was won by Belinda Trussell on Carlucci, a 16.3 Hanoverian owned by Barbara Holden Sinclair, with a score of 73.465.

FEI Grand Prix Special CDI3 was won by Ashley Holzer, on Havanna 145, owned by Diane Fellows, with a score of 71.157.

For little kids and not-so-little kids, Dressage Explorers takes place Sunday, Oct 1 featuring child-friendly equine activities including A Conversation with top rider Silva Martin, Equine Jeopardy, a Selfie Scavenger Hunt and the popular stick horse contest. Sign up at the show secretary’s office.

Dressage at Devon takes place September 26 – October 1 at the Devon Horse Show Grounds in Devon, PA. General admission tickets are \$10 for ages 13 and above; Kids ages 3-12 are \$5, and children under 3 are admitted free. General admission is available at the door.

About Dressage at Devon

Dressage at Devon (www.dressageatdevon.org) has been a premier North American Equestrian event since its founding in 1975. It combines world-class dressage competition and the world’s largest open breed show with the international Fall Festival show and special activities for the entire family. The six-day event attracts hundreds of riders from around the world and thousands of spectators. Dressage at Devon is a 501(c) (3) PA non-profit organization, benefitting equine education.

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