

Top Equestrians Return to Harrisburg Oct. 12-21 For 55th Annual Pa. National Horse Show

HARRISBURG (Dauphin Co.) — The Pennsylvania National Horse Show, one of Pennsylvania's premier sporting events and America's largest indoor all-breed horse show, will conduct its 55th annual 10-day competition here Oct. 12-21.

Since its inception in 1945, the event at Harrisburg's State Farm Show Arena, has raised more than \$1.4 million for youth literacy, educational, and recreational programs through the Harrisburg Kiwanis Youth Foundation.

Each year, hundreds of thousands of hunter, jumper, and equitation riders across the U.S.

compete year-long for an invitation to join the best of the best at "The Show of Champions" in Harrisburg.

The Pennsylvania National Horse Show is a celebration of horse sports, featuring more than 1,400 of America's top horses and riders, unique entertainment, shopping, food, and family fun.

Eight national championships are decided at the PNHS. The American Horse Shows Association/Black Entertainment Television National Junior Jumper Championship, Saturday night, Oct. 14, is one of only three USA Junior Olympics-Equestrian events, and features America's

top under-18 jumper riders.

More than 200 young riders culminate a year of competition on Sunday, Oct. 15, as they vie for the American Horse Show Association/Eisers and Pessoa National Hunter Seat Equitation Medal Championship — one of the few events where the rider, rather than the horse, is judged.

Many of the young national champions go on to represent the U.S. in international and Olympic Grand Prix competition of the type featured at the PNHS nightly Tuesday, Oct. 17 through closing Saturday, Oct. 21. Spectators thrill to America's best Grand Prix jumper

riders, including Olympic competitors, striving to win more than \$115,000 in prize money by clearing jumps up to five-feet high and six-feet wide.

A week of varied equestrian competition begins Monday, Oct. 16, with Hunt Night, an evening of friendly rivalry for the mid-Atlantic's top foxhunting clubs. For about 150 years, foxhunting has remained a strong tradition in Pennsylvania, home to more hunts than any other state except Virginia.

Teams and individuals test their hunting skills over fences, in a Parade of Hounds, the North American Fox Hunting Horn Blowing Championships, and in races over fences for feisty and adorable Jack Russell terriers. Author Rita Mae Brown, a foxhunting enthusiast, is expected to make an appearance during Hunt Night.

Spectators will be treated to an amazing variety of equestrian athleticism. High-flying Grand Prix jumpers, fiery, high-stepping American Saddlebreds and their tiny Hackney pony cousins, thundering draft horses in hitches of one to six, easy-going western pleasure horses, and roadster horses and ponies who race around the ring at top speed take turns delighting and entertaining the audience. The \$50,000 Budweiser Grand Prix de Penn National, the show's richest and most prestigious event Saturday night, Oct. 21, will be taped for broadcast on ESPN.

"The Sport of Kings" will thrill spectators as teams from Harrisburg and Lancaster play a heart-pounding chukker of fast-paced arena polo, Wednesday night, Oct. 18. Always a crowd favorite, Jack Russell terriers race over fences Monday and Friday nights, Oct. 16 and 20. And champion reiner Rocky Dare will present a demonstration of the newest equestrian sport to be sanctioned by the Federation Equestre Internationale (FEI).

Special family days at the horse show are Saturday, Oct. 14 and Friday night, Oct. 20. On both days, when competition and events are geared to kids, children will enjoy free pony rides and face painting. On Saturday, Oct. 14, one child under age 12 is admitted free with a paying adult.

An individual class for local

therapeutic riders will be held Tuesday night, Oct. 17. Horse babies one-year-old and younger will be showcased in a futurity for young American Saddlebred

horses Saturday afternoon, Oct. 21. The Valley Forge Military Academy and College Band will appear at the horse show on Saturday night, Oct. 21, as it has done for the last 52 years.

More than 50 boutiques travel from Palm Beach, Aspen, and points in between to display their jewelry, crafts, clothing, gifts and horse equipment and give spectators an early start on their Christmas shopping.

The show begins about 8 a.m. daily, and runs until about 8:30 p.m. Oct. 12, 6 p.m. Oct. 15, and until about 11 p.m. Oct. 13-14 and 16-21. General admission is \$10, \$5 for seniors and children ages 12 and under, except Oct. 21, when all general admission tickets are \$10. Reserved seating is available Grand Prix Night, Saturday, Oct. 21; prices range from \$15 to \$25. All performance passes with reserved seating Oct. 21 are \$100.

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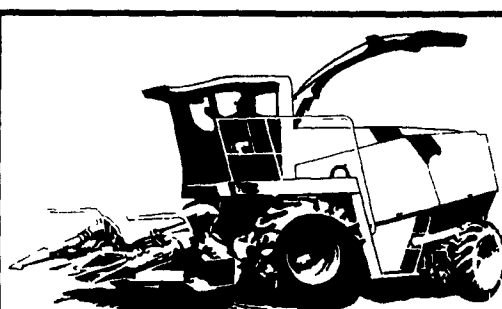
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