

Californians Take Capital Challenge

By Emily Riden, Jump Media



Augusta Iwasaki rode Small Affair to the win in the \$2,500 WCHR Junior 3'6" Hunter Challenge after having already been named the Grand Junior Hunter Champions. Photo by Jump Media





2016 WCHR Pro Finals winner, John French of Paso Robles, CA, earned numerous top honors at the 2017 Capital Challenge Horse Show, including the Green Hunter 3' Section B championship with Bieber (pictured), owned by Four Winds Farm. Photo by Shawn McMillen Photography

"I've always loved being here and competing here," said Maxwell, 27. "It's the kick-off to the indoor season so it's nice to come here and see where you stack up. For the horses going to the other shows, it kind of helps dictate hopefully how the rest of indoors is going to go."

Also claiming an Amateur-Owner championship for the Californians was Virginia Fout of Los Angeles, CA, who rode Carma to the Amateur-Owner 36 and Over 3'3" Hunter division's top honor.

In the professional hunter divisions, John French – the 2016 WCHR Professional Finals winner – and Nick Hanes claimed several top honors. French, of Paso Robles, CA, returned to Capital Challenge to take the win in the Professional WCHR Under Saddle riding Banksy, owned by Grace Russo, and the Grand Conformation Hunter Championship on Boss, owned by Laura Wasserman. Hanes, of San Clemente, CA, rode Mayfield, owned by Strasburg Morin Inc., to the Grand Green Hunter 3'6" Championship.

Each year, the Capital Challenge Horse Show in Upper Marlboro, MD, attracts top horses and riders from across the country for one of the year's most prestigious and competitive events. For 2017, that included riders from 41 states – and an impressive 144 riders from California alone.

California-based riders not only made the trek across the country to show up in droves at Capital Challenge, they returned to the West Coast with many of the horse show's top accolades, including a major equitation victory and numerous grand championships.

Among the most successful riders from the Golden State was Augusta Iwasaki of Calabasas, CA. The 13-year-old earned the win in the Taylor Harris Insurance Services (THIS) National Children's Medal Finals on Sunday, October 1, and the following weekend, she claimed the Grand Junior Hunter Championship and the win in the \$2,500 World Championship Hunter Rider (WCHR) Junior Hunter 3'6" Challenge aboard Small Affair.

"[Capital Challenge] is very competitive and everyone fights and works all year to compete in it," said Iwasaki, who has had the ride on Small Affair, owned by Iwasaki & Reilly, for the last two years. "I've always wanted to be a champion at a place like this."

In the Amateur-Owner Hunters, Lindsay Maxwell of Beverly Hills, CA, led the Californian charge, earning the Amateur-Owner 18-35 3'3" Hunter Championship, and ultimately the Grand Amateur-Owner 3'3" Hunter Championship, aboard Belgravia, her own nine-year-old Warmblood gelding.

"I'm trying to stifle a smile over every jump when I jump him, because it's just a big, athletic, round fence," said Maxwell of Belgravia, a horse she purchased just two months ago. "He loves to show. In the schooling ring, he's kind of grumpy and doesn't really want to do it. As soon as he sees the in-gate, he's marching right in and is excited to go in there. I love to show too, so that works out great!"

Having purchased Belgravia – known as "Prince" in the barn – so recently, Maxwell did not have the opportunity to qualify the gelding for any of the other indoor horse shows that follow Capital Challenge, so she was grateful to get into Capital Challenge based on the show's first-come, first-served basis and to not be wait-listed for the popular event.



Nick Hanes and On Pointe following a win in the Green Hunter Colts & Geldings. Photo by Jump Media

"I've been coming to Capital Challenge since 2005 when I was a junior," said Hanes. "I love this horse show. This is a great first show for indoors season and to get all of the horses acclimated. It's a long way for us to come from California, so the horses have to get their feet wet, so to speak, in the indoors circuit and get their confidence up and get on a good roll."

"I always feel like Capital Challenge is the first time all year that everyone from all over is together in one place with all of their nicest horses that are ready for indoors," Hanes continued. "They're all ready to walk in here and perform, and you really get a chance to see the quality of horses from across the country."

Find the full results from all riders across the U.S. and more information about the Capital Challenge Horse Show at www.capitalchallenge.org. The 2018 Capital Challenge Horse Show will be held once again at the Prince George's Equestrian Center in Upper Marlboro, MD, on September 28-October 7.



John French & Boss. Photo by Shawn McMillen Photography



Stella Wasserman of Beverly Hills, CA, won the Junior Hunter 3'3" Section B championship and the \$2,500 WCHR Junior 3'3" Hunter Challenge riding Boss, owned by Laura Wasserman. Photo by Jump Media



Liza Boyd rode O'Ryan in the final round of the WCHR Pro Finals to claim the victory. Photo by Shawn McMillen Photography



The 2017 Capital Challenge Horse Show attracted top competitors from 41 countries – and 144 riders from California alone.

Photo by Jump Media

Virginia Fout of Los Angeles, CA, planted a kiss on Carma after winning the Amateur-Owner 36 and Over 3'3" Hunter championship.

Photo by Jump Media





Lindsay Maxwell of Beverly Hills, CA, and Belgravia jumped to the Grand Amateur-Owner 3'3" Hunter Championship.
Photo by Shawn McMillen Photography



The win in the \$25,000 Professional Challenge, sponsored by the Gochman Family, went to Tracy Fenney riding MTM Outbid. Photo by Jump Media



San Clemente, CA, native Nick Hanes earned the Grand Green Hunter 3'6" Championship aboard Mayfield. Photo by Shawn McMillen Photography



Scott Stewart and A Million Reasons swept the High Performance Hunter division to take the overall Grand Champion Hunter title, and, for Stewart, the Leading Hunter Rider Award.
Photo by Shawn McMillen Photography

