



IN STRIDE

The Official Magazine of the United States Hunter Jumper Association

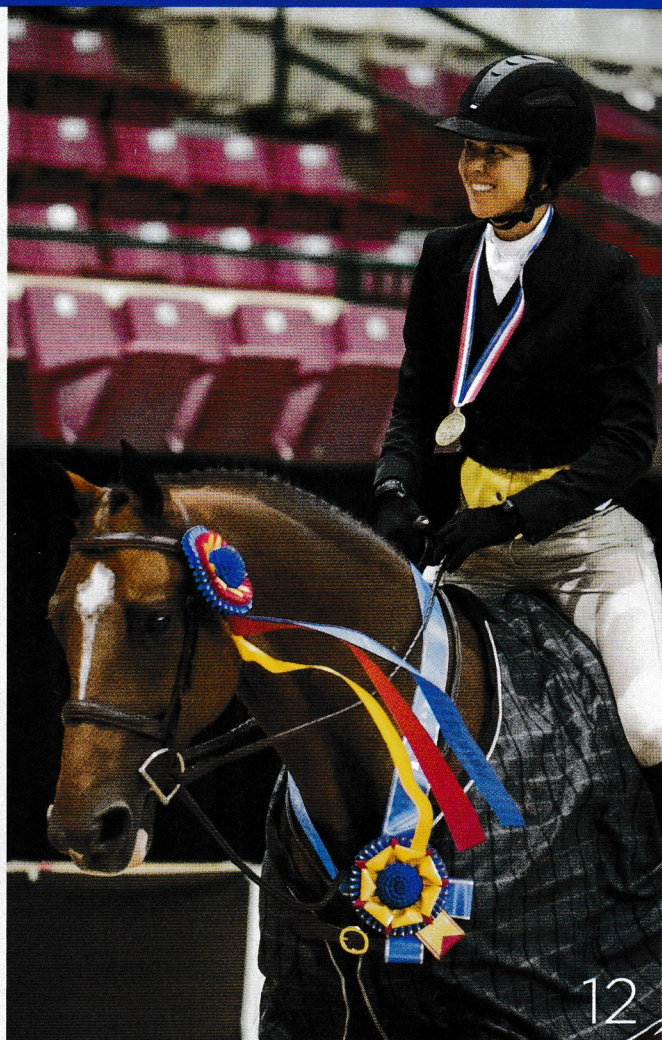
Team Spirit!
SUMMER CHAMPIONSHIPS
PHOTO GALLERY



WCHR Winners Celebrate

NOVEMBER 2017 Volume 12 Issue 6

Grace
Debney and
Storyteller



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ON THE COVER: Grace Debney, with Storyteller, the winner of the WCHR Pony Challenge at the Capital Challenge Horse Show and the WCHR National Pony Champion. Photo by Tricia Booker/USHJA Archives

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For this South Carolina-based rider, success is all about connecting with the horses.

Story and photos
by Tricia Booker

Strategy plays a major role each year in the WCHR Professional Finals, from deciding how best to ride two unfamiliar horses to the chances you're willing to take in the final Handy Round aboard the mount you choose.

But this year's winner, Liza Boyd, employed a different tactic that she believed made all of the difference at the Capital Challenge, presented by World Equestrian Center. When Boyd met each of her two catch rides, she didn't immediately climb aboard—she took a few moments to pet the horses and ask the grooms for their barn names.

"I prefer to ride horses I know and that I have a long relationship with, so it's not my favorite thing to hop on catch rides," said Boyd. "I like to live with a horse, so in the short amount of time I had, I tried to bond with them and have them like me. I feel like they'll try harder for you, so that was my strategy. I tried to get to know the horse as much as I could in the short amount of time."

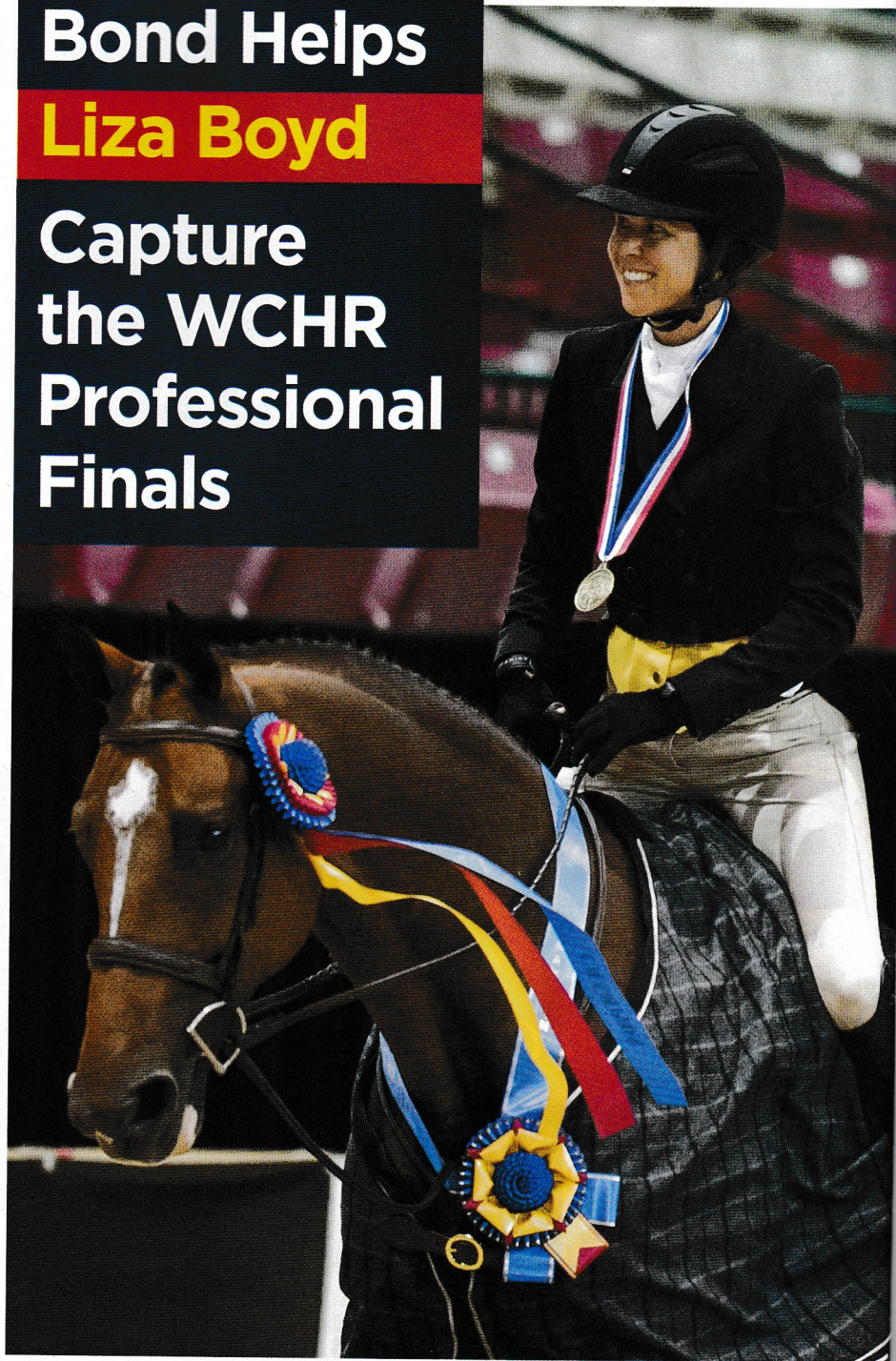
Her philosophy worked. After her two catch rides, Boyd led the way going into the final Handy Round, where she piloted long-time partner O'Ryan to a solid performance. She clinched the win with 275 points over second-placed Hunt Tosh (272.16) and Scott Stewart (270.49) in third. Tracy Fenney, who claimed the \$25,000 WCHR Pro Challenge earlier in the week, took fourth (269.99), while first-time starter Victoria Colvin was fifth (265.32) and defending champion John French was sixth (264.49).

Boyd, of Camden, South Carolina,

Building a Bond Helps

Liza Boyd

Capture the WCHR Professional Finals



also concluded the year as the WCHR Professional National Champion during the 24rd annual show, held September 29-October 8 at the Show Place Arena in Upper Marlboro, Maryland.

"I thought the Handy was hard," said Boyd of the planning process with her father and trainer, Jack Towell. "Being on

top I wanted to be safe, but Jack said, 'You can't. They've all been so good.' So I tried to be handy but also not mess anything up. I could have done a few things differently, but I was happy to have a nice, smooth round. At that point, you hope to stay in first, but maybe you get bumped to second. But it's better than going for it

and dropping all the way down.”

As an added pressure, Boyd and Stella Styslinger’s O’Ryan were facing such great contenders as Airplane 48, Gotham, MTM Outbid, Private Life and Skyhawk. “I thought that everyone brought their best horses, which was great,” added Boyd. “So for everyone watching, I think that made it more exciting. Great riders on great horses. Who doesn’t love to watch that if you’re a hunter enthusiast?”

Tosh collected the reserve championship title after riding Betsee Parker’s Gotham to a brilliant Handy round. “It’s always a fun class,” he said. “We always laugh and tell jokes and try to help each other out a little bit or make each other nervous—I don’t know which it is!”

With this second victory in the class, Boyd will once again have her name engraved on the All The Way Perpetual Trophy. For the honor, Boyd thanked the entire Finally Farm team for their help during the Pro Finals and throughout the year.

“It’s not just that class that we plan for,” said Boyd. “It’s the hard work we do to prepare for every single World Championship Hunter Rider show during the year. For us, we try to peak at those shows and plan our horses’ schedules around those shows. It’s a lot of strategy to qualify for the class, and then when you get here, all of those riders are great. So, at that point, it’s a little bit the luck of the draw and who has the best night. I’m grateful that it all worked out for me this time!”

Falcon, owned by The Barracks, won the Far West Farms Perpetual Trophy presented to the donated horse with the highest cumulative points of the WCHR Professional Finals. Other donated horses

included: Breanna Bunevacz’ Coco Lux, North Shore Farm’s Chevito, Redfield Farm’s Carolino, Sumner Hill Farm’s Redeemed and Small Oak Investments’ Corsair.

A Trip to Remember

Lee Kellogg Sadrian chose a great moment to have her trip of a lifetime: in front of six prominent judges, a worldwide livestream audience and an arena full of her peers from around the country.

Sadrian topped the card aboard Sochi during the WCHR 3’6” Amateur-Owner

children ages 9 and under. “I really want to thank my trainers,” she said. “I’m a full-time mom, and I don’t get to ride much, and they work so hard, and I’m really lucky. They make riding possible; they’ve got such high standards of care and do such a great job.”

After competing in the WCHR Challenge classes in the ponies and juniors and collecting ribbons over the years, Martha Ingram led her first victory gallop during her amateur debut.

She guided Lyon’s Creek Bellini to the top score of 87 in the WCHR 3’3”

Amateur-Owner Challenge over second-placed Lisa Arena, riding Balou (86.33), and Lee Kellogg Sadrian, aboard Comex Gold (85).

“It’s fun being an amateur,” said Ingram, 20, who trains with Tom Wright. “I get to show with my dad (John Ingram), and all of the amateurs are so nice and such good sports and the



Liza Boyd captured her second WCHR Professional Finals victory.

Challenge with a score of 90.33 over Jean Sheptoff, riding Heartcore (85), and Didi Mackenzie, on MTM Inside Scoop (85).

“He was amazing! I’m so excited about this,” she said. “You never usually have the trip of a lifetime at the right time, and I did it! It’s usually when nobody is watching, and it doesn’t matter. It’s funny. I was cantering to the first fence and I said, ‘OK, take a breath. You’re good.’ And that was it.”

Sadrian, 46, of Summit, New Jersey, trains with Rolf and Jen Bauersachs and credited them for helping her to balance her show career with raising three

horses are of top quality. You really have to be on top of your game if you want to do well.”

Ingram, of Nashville, Tennessee, is a sophomore at Furman University in South Carolina who balances school with riding but was able to take a few days off to focus on showing, which paid dividends. She entered the Challenge wearing the leading rider armband and retained it to conclude the year with the WCHR National 3’3” Amateur-Owner title.

“There was a little bit of pressure, but I had done well earlier in the week, so when you’ve been doing well, it definitely calms the nerves a bit,” she said with a smile. “I just thought about going in and having fun and not worrying about it too much.”

Stories to Tell

Dawn Fogel concluded her one-month lease of Story Teller with a fairytale finish by winning the WCHR Adult Amateur Challenge.

She guided Foxridge Farms Stables' 7-year-old Westphalian mare to scores of 90 across the board for the top call over Christina Smith, riding Chancellor (85.16), and Tracey Gorin-Byrn, aboard Houdini (85).

Fogel, 44, of Crestwood, Kentucky, leased Story Teller for the Kentucky National and Capital Challenge horse shows. Trainer Rick Fancher recommended the mare to Fogel after he showed her successfully in the 3'3" Green and Performance Hunter sections. The partnership was forged quickly, and Fogel and Story Teller earned the reserve championship in Kentucky before traveling to Maryland.

Fogel, who captured the WCHR Midwest Regional Adult Amateur title, also earned the Adult Amateur Hunter, 36-50, reserve championship at Capital Challenge prior to her Challenge victory for a banner week. "It's special to win any class here, because the quality of the riders and horses is very high," she said. "It's an honor to show here, and to win is even better. It means a lot."

When Grace Debney and her Storyteller claimed the WCHR Pony Challenge, the cheers from the in-gate and the stands reverberated—and for good reason. "It was a true team effort," stated trainer Stacey Weiss.

Debney, 13, commutes from Massachusetts to ride and show with Weiss and her daughter Sam Schaefer in Westminster, Maryland. She also trains with Leslie Depardo at home and has ridden with her since her Walk-Trot days.

"A big thank-you to Grace's mother (Karen Debney), who drives her almost every weekend seven hours," said Weiss.



Dawn Fogel guided Story Teller to victory in the WCHR Adult Amateur Challenge.

"They're really devoted. If we need Grace someplace, she's there."

For the WCHR Pony Challenge, Storyteller was there for Debney, as well. The flashy chestnut jumped to scores of 93, 86.5 and 90 for an 89.83 average. Samantha Takacs placed second with Caleche (88), and Saylor Shea earned third with Magical Diamond (87.66).

"He knows when it's a big show, and he knows to make it count," said Debney of Storyteller. "When we get here, he perks up and is amazing to ride."

Thanks to her Challenge victory, Debney also moved up in the standings to capture the WCHR National Pony title. "I was second in the National standings and champion in the Region coming into



Lee Kellogg Sadrian enjoyed her "trip of a lifetime" with Sochi in the WCHR 3'6" Amateur-Owner Challenge.

the show," she said, adding that she didn't feel any pressure. "I had a good weekend, so I just had fun with the Challenge. I think that's the best way to ride him—just let him do his thing. He's just so perfect."

A Rewarding Streak

Stella and Laura Wasserman have developed quite a nice habit at the Capital Challenge. During each of their past three trips from California, they've returned home with a WCHR Challenge victory. This year it was Stella's turn again, as she captured the WCHR 3'3" Junior Hunter Challenge aboard Boss.

"I'm just thankful for Boss. He did it all, and he's the best. He's perfect," said Stella, who won last year's WCHR Pony Challenge riding Trillville. Laura won the WCHR Amateur-Owner Hunter Challenge three years ago, riding Back In The Game.

This was only Stella's third show riding Boss, the star conformation hunter who also captured the show's Grand and High Performance Conformation Hunter championship with John French. In the Junior Challenge, Stella guided Boss to a score of 86.16 for the top call over Bella

Fenny Is a Frequent Flier and Winner

Tracy Fenney logged a lot of miles during the Capital Challenge, both in the saddle and in the air.

She captured the \$25,000 WCHR Professional Challenge, sponsored by the Gochman Family, on Wednesday evening before flying down to the Tryon International Equestrian Center in North Carolina, where she placed second in the \$35,000 Welcome Stake on Thursday. She then returned to Capital Challenge for the WCHR Professional Finals on Friday evening before traveling back to Tryon to win the \$86,000 MD Barnmaster Grand Prix CSI2* aboard MTM Reve Du Paradis on Saturday night.

"I was a little bit tired, because I've been running back and forth doing the Hunters and Jumpers," she said with a laugh.

After scoring 90 in the first round, Fenney, of Flower Mound, Texas, and

Kay, riding Symbolic (85.66), and Bianca Jenkins, aboard Small Occasion (85.66).

Stella noted that this was her best Capital Challenge so far, as she also earned the 3'3" Junior Hunter, Section B, championship with Boss, the Large Pony Hunter reserve champion on Benetton and the WCHR 3'3" Junior Hunter National title.

Under the watchful eyes of trainers Archie Cox and Karli Postel, 11-year-old Stella kept her confidence going into the Challenge class. "I was super nervous since I was champion. I felt like all the pressure was on me," said Stella. "Karli kept telling me there was no pressure and that helped a lot. I just needed to take a deep breath."

Stella gave most of the credit to Boss for their amazing weekend. "He's really nice, and you can snuggle with him," she said. "He's so pretty to watch, too. He's the best horse. He's so fun to ride because he knows his job and he just goes."

Receiving one winning presentation



Tracy Fenney and MTM Outbid

MTM Outbid sat in second place going into the evening finale, where the top 12 jumped a second round for the title.

Fenney was happy that she didn't have to go at the very end of the class. "I think that was to my benefit, to watch one and

then go get ready and do the course. I don't like going last because that's a lot of pressure, so I was kind of glad Louise Serio beat me in the first round."

Fenney's performance in Round 2 was even better, receiving scores of 93, 93 and 95 for an average of 93.66 and a total of 183.66. For their victory, Fenney and MTM Outbid were presented with the Little Brook Trophy, donated by Gary Duffy and Little Brook Farm.

Fenney has ridden MTM Outbid, a 7-year-old warmblood gelding, for two years. "He's always been very brave at everything he does," Fenney said. "Since he's been a baby, we've really liked him. He's just really easygoing and likes to do his job and likes to jump and does it easily. I don't think there's a jump he can't jump."

Serio, of Kennett Square, Pennsylvania, placed second (181.49) with Kings Landing, owned by Meralex Farm, while Liza Boyd and Stella Styslinger's O'Ryan picked up third (176.57).



Stella Wasserman won her second consecutive WCHR Challenge, this time in the 3'3" Juniors aboard Boss.

photo center-ring at Capital Challenge is a special moment for most riders. But Henry Healy repeatedly stepped forward to receive award after award, earning the WCHR Children's Hunter Challenge victory, the Stewart Warner Award and the Best Children's Hunter Rider Award.

Healy, 12, of Cincinnati, Ohio rode Blue Mountain LLC's Best Of Me, a 7-year-old Dutch Warmblood mare, to the top of the WCHR Children's Challenge on a score of 89.

"Henry is one of the hardest working kids on the grounds," said trainer Patty Rogers. "He rides every day, he tacks his own horses at home and he takes care of them. He's a really, really hard-working kid."

Although Healy piloted the flashy chestnut like a professional, he credited his mare, nicknamed "Mimi," with the win.

"Mimi's a really good girl, and we haven't had her for too long. She's really young, and I'm just really proud of her,"

More 2017 WCHR Accolades

The late Dr. John R. Steele earned the **WCHR David Peterson Perpetual Trophy**, donated by Kavar Kerr and Jim Anderson, for a person who exemplifies dedication and commitment to the care and well-being of the horse.

The late J. Arthur "Bucky" Reynolds II will have his name engraved on the **WCHR Old Springhouse Perpetual Trophy** for the WCHR Lifetime Achievement Award. Reynolds also received the **Daniel P. Lenehan Perpetual Trophy** for the person who exemplifies dedication and a lifetime commitment to judging show hunters.

Junior rider Emma Kurtz, of Hudson, Ohio, earned the **Charles Johnson Memorial Perpetual Trophy** as the high-point rider from the WCHR Midwest Region.

Each year, the WCHR Task Force recognizes one individual for exemplifying the ideals of sportsmanship with the **Winners Run Sportsmanship Award**, which is donated by Patricia Bosley in memory of her mother. This year, Lynn Walsh, of Magnolia, Texas, received the honor.

The **Derbydown Trophy**, donated by Louise Serio, was won by A Million Reasons and Scott Stewart, who scored a 92.5 in the High Performance Hunter sec-



Lynn Walsh

tion. This trophy is given to the professional rider earning the highest numerical score in the professional sections at the Capital Challenge.

The **Jeffrey Katz Memorial Trophy**, donated by Lisa Cudahy, went to Scott Stewart and Private Life. This trophy honors the horse-and-rider combination that accumulates the most points in the First Year Green, Second Year Green or Green Conformation Hunter sections from the horse's top four WCHR Member Event shows, plus its section at the Capital Challenge.

Won this year by Laura Wasserman's Boss, the **Rox Dene Perpetual Trophy** was donated by Elaine and Chanda Boylen.

This trophy goes to the professionally ridden high-score horse that accumulates the most points in the Performance Working Hunter 3'6", High Performance Working Hunter, First Year Green, Second Year Green, Green Conformation or Regular Conformation sections, from the horse's top four WCHR Member Event shows plus its section at the Capital Challenge.

The **Alabama Clay Conformation Hunter Award**, donated by the Weisman Family, was presented to Betsee Parker's Private Life as the WCHR high-score horse that accumulated the most points in the Green Conformation or Regular Conformation sections, from the horse's top four WCHR Member Event shows plus its section at the Capital Challenge.

Betsee Parker's Dedication won the **Small Town Perpetual Trophy**, donated by Iwasaki & Reilly. This trophy is presented to the owner of the horse ridden by a Junior rider who has earned the most points in the Junior Hunter 3'6" or Junior Hunter 3'3", using the horse's top four WCHR Member Events plus its section at the Capital Challenge.

The **Urlala Perpetual Trophy**, donated by Kimberly and Terry Maloomian, went to XOXO and Jef Lauwers as the Adult Amateur horse-and-rider combination earning the most points in the Adult Amateur section from their top four WCHR Member Events plus the Capital Challenge Horse Show.

he said. "It means a lot to win a Capital Challenge because it means that I put a lot of hard work into it."

Mimi has also collected many accolades in the 3' Green Hunter section this year with rider/trainer Jeff Gogul in the irons. In addition to earning a fourth-placed ribbon in the second round of the Platinum Performance/USHJA Green Hunter Incentive Championship (Kentucky) in August, they picked up eighth place at the Capital Challenge in the North American Green Hunter Championship.

"It was an amazing day and, truthfully, for such a young horse with such little

2017 WCHR National Champions

RIDERS

Professional—Liza Boyd, Camden, South Carolina
 Developing Professional—Dustin Goodwin, Portland, Oregon
 Amateur-Owner 3'6"—Becky Gochman, Wellington, Florida
 Amateur-Owner 3'3"—Martha Ingram, Nashville, Tennessee
 Adult Amateur—Jef Lauwers, Magnolia, Texas
 Junior 3'6"—Augusta Iwasaki, Calabasas, California
 Junior 3'3"—Stella Wasserman, Beverly Hills, California
 Children's—Lola Head, Houston, Texas
 Pony—Grace Debney, Hampden, Massachusetts
 Handy—John French, Paso Robles, California

OWNERS

Professional—
 Betsee Parker,
 Middleburg, Virginia
 Developing
 Professional—
 DS Holdings LLC,
 San Antonio, Texas

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PALM BEACH MASTERS
GREAT LAKES EQUESTRIAN FESTIVAL
GREAT MEADOW INTERNATIONAL
JERSEY FRESH INTERNATIONAL
THREE-DAY EVENT

Photography: David H. H. H.



**Maverick Helmer
Stars in the USHJA
3'3" Jumping Seat
Medal Finals East**

After three testing phases and a challenging work-off, Maverick Helmer rose to the top in the inaugural USHJA 3'3" Jumping Seat Medal Finals—East.

Judges Linda Andrisani and Chance Arakelian presided over the class, which attracted 39 entries over two days of competition. Following the Flat, Gymnastics and Jumping phases, Helmer and Rachael Davis were fewer than 5 points apart. Therefore, they were required to work off

Maverick Helmer and Canterbury

over a second, shortened course with a tight time allowed.

Davis went first and accrued 5 time faults, scoring a 79, and provided Helmer with the opportunity to consider his strategy. In the end, Helmer's speedier track scored an 80 and clinched the title without time faults.

"The work-off was really fun," he said. "It tested your ability to ride at a quick pace but still required you to think and execute really well. Helmer, 16, of Roanoke, Virginia, credited his horse Canterbury, as well as Stacia Madden and the team at Beacon Hill, for helping him to achieve success this year. He finished with a score of 477 points, with Davis as reserve champion with 474.5.

"As an inaugural class, I think it's absolutely awesome that I'm the first to win," said Helmer, a high school junior who attends Stanford University's online high school. "It's something special to keep, and, of course, it's my first major championship win, so that will always be close to my heart."

Alexandra Worthington, who placed third overall, won the Jumping Phase with a base score of 92. Contelido, ridden to sixth place overall by Sophie Gochman, received the Best Equitation Horse Award.

A special thank-you to the 2017 USHJA WCHR Program sponsors: *Shapley's, Best Turned-Out Award Sponsor; Charles Owen, Inc., the Official Helmet of the USHJA; CWD Sellier, the Official Saddle of the USHJA; Rood & Riddle, the Official Equine Hospital and Veterinary Pharmacy of the USHJA; Standlee Hay Company, the Official Forage of the USHJA; Professional's Choice, the Official Horse Boot of USHJA; and FITS, Awards Sponsor.*

mileage, she always tries to win," said Gogul.

In the \$5,000 WCHR Developing Pro Challenge, sponsored by the John R. Ingram Fund, Dominique Damico clinched the win riding Rockette with a two-round score of 178.33. Erica Quinn rode Celtic Fire to second (177.91), and Erin Hastings guided LPF Woodford to third (172). Damico, of Berwyn, Pennsylvania, has been riding Rockette, a 9-year-old warmblood mare she co-owns with Katie

Williams, for three years. The 32-year-old trainer is based at Ramble On Farm, where she works with Seth Vallhonrat.

"I know it sounds clichéd, but this is my passion," said Damico, who turned professional at the age of 18. "I'm so lucky to be able to do something I love so much, and I enjoy it. It doesn't feel like you're going to work every day. I'm really lucky to have a nice group of horses and people, and I'm really excited about that." 