

THE WARM-UP RING

The Official News of the Jumping Committee

November 2022, Volume 18, Issue 10

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR



There was a lot of excitement surrounding the return of the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair and what a return it was! Anticipation was high with the beloved Royal finally making its return after a forced two-year hiatus. Coupled with celebrating its 100th anniversary, The Royal put a smile on everyone's face and the crowds came out in droves to enjoy the sights, sounds, and spectacles that come with the world's largest indoor agricultural fair.

We were treated to exciting competition across the board in the hunter, jumper, and equitation divisions. From ponies to international show jumping, the best of the best was showcased. Ali Ramsay of Victoria, BC, was flawless over two nights to earn her first Canadian Show Jumping Championship title while another BC native, Lily Elliot, won the JC National Medal Final. Hailing from closer to home, Carly Campbell Cooper, who has been a regular competitor in all three disciplines at The Royal over the years, scored her first Canadian Hunter Derby Championship title while Lauren Esdale displayed her talent with a win in the Under 25 national finals.

The international show jumping division attracted a competitive field with five of

the top 20 athletes in the Longines World Rankings making their way to Toronto. Olympic champion Ben Maher of Great Britain was in attendance while two other Olympic gold medalists, Laura Kraut and McLain Ward, both of the U.S., make The Royal a regular stop on their competition calendars. Canadians held their own amongst a stiff field with Tiffany Foster advancing to the three-horse jump-off for the \$250,000 Longines FEI Jumping World Cup™ Toronto – the only World Cup qualifying event to be held on Canadian soil – while Ramsay narrowly missed out by one time fault to finish fourth. Canadian course designer Michel Vaillancourt set the show jumping tracks to rave reviews over 10 days of competition while Meghan Rawlins, the first Canadian female course designer to handle course design duties for The Royal's hunter and equitation divisions, was back for the 100th anniversary edition.

One of the best parts of The Royal is having the opportunity to experience other horse sports. Whether it's the thrilling indoor eventing, the high-stepping hackneys, or the splendor of the Green Meadows coaching classes that transport the audience back to another era, there is so much to experience. Seeing a total of 10 six-horse hitches (that's 60 heavy horses!) gathered in the Coca-Cola Coliseum on closing night is truly a sight to behold. Add that to daily performances of the RCMP Musical Ride and The Royal has a winning formula that simply cannot be matched.

The amount of planning, not to mention problem-solving, that goes into producing such an event is a momentous undertaking. We salute the organizing committee on a fantastic production, congratulate The Royal on its centennial anniversary, and look forward to many, many years to come!

Jennifer Ward
Editor
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