



Vivian Golden piloted Betsee Parker's Brixton to the large pony hunter and grand pony hunter championships at the Washington International Horse Show.

## Washington International Horse Show

OCT. 24-30 | UPPER MARLBORO, MARYLAND

# Golden Dominates The Ponies At Washington International

She and Brixton earn the grand pony hunter title.

Story And Photos By **Mollie Bailey**

When Vivian Golden entered the Show Place Arena for the large pony hunter handy class at the Washington International Horse Show, Olivia Sweetnam and Honor Hill Farm's Prince Charming had just earned a 91. Golden knew she'd have to go for broke to sweep the division en route to the championship, Oct. 24-30 at Prince George's Equestrian Center in Upper Marlboro, Maryland.

"I like it when people get a big, higher score, because I know I can go in and beat them," said Golden, 13. "I know I can ride just as well."

And she did, earning a 93. She won all three jumping classes aboard Brixton for the championship and also earned the reserve title on Royalist, both for owner Betsee Parker. Brixton, a 12-year-old German Riding Pony (Charivari—Vorr), also earned the grand pony hunter title and doubled as Golden's equitation mount, helping her win fourth in the Washington International Pony Equitation Final.

"Brixton was amazing," she said. "He was very light and looking at the jumps. He wasn't too quiet and wasn't too fast. He was just so nice to ride today. [In the barn] he's very sweet and loves to lick everybody. He has a very funny personality. He'll go in the ring and put his ears up to look at everything. He thinks he's the best. I love to ride soft and leave them alone, and he likes that too, so we're a good match."

Golden paired up with Brixton at the beginning of the Winter Equestrian Festival (Florida), and since then they've won the grand title at Devon (Pennsylvania), the WCHR Pony Challenge at Capital Challenge (Maryland)

and the large pony hunter title at the Pennsylvania National.

While Brixton is a seasoned competitor, Royalist, an 8-year-old German Riding Pony (Cappucino Royale G—Valido's B Sunshine), competed in his first U.S. horse show at the start of this season.

"We came here no expectations, just hoping to have a nice round," said Golden. "At Capital Challenge he was amazing; at Harrisburg [Pennsylvania] he was amazing. He's so good. I think he knows that there's some competition."

Golden is the daughter of trainer Olivia Golden and is coached by Amanda Lyerly and Scott Stewart. She drives from Wyomissing, Pennsylvania, to Stewart's Flemington, New Jersey, barn to school Parker's ponies, and she meets up with Lyerly at shows. At home she keeps her leg strong by riding her mother's sale ponies.

### IN IT FOR THE CUPCAKES

Ava Barnes had one goal coming into the Washington International: Go home with some of the Georgetown Cupcakes that are awarded to division champions. While she didn't finish with a tricolor in the hunter divisions, she got her treat when she topped the Washington International Pony Equitation Final.

She laid down a second-best score of 89 in the jumping portion of the event, just behind JJ Torano's 90, and the two swapped places after the flat.

Barnes rode Prestige, an 11-year-old large Belgian Riding Pony (Ive Van De Delthoeve—Bichette Du Moulin De Pierres) that she's leased from Stephanie Ring since the winter of 2021.



After winning the Washington International Horse Show Pony Equitation Final on Prestige, Ava Barnes was joined by (from left) ringmaster Steve Rector, presenter Betsee Parker, last year's winner Maddie Tosh, groom Enrique Pachardo and trainer David Belford for the presentation.

*“He’s right there for you, whatever you’re asking him to do.”*

—David Belford

“He’s very comfortable to ride, and he’s really sweet,” said Barnes, Liberty Township, Ohio.

“The flat phases are my favorite parts of horse shows,” she added. “I feel really confident going into them, knowing I have good horses and ponies.”

This winter she and Prestige were circuit champions at WEF in the large pony hunter division.

“His stride is so adjustable, and he has such a great balance,” said her trainer David Belford. “He’s right there for you, whatever you’re asking him to do. There’s no conversation; he just wants to do what you’re asking. He’s a dream. He fits Ava like a glove.”

Belford praised Barnes’ attitude, which won her the Buttons And Bows Sportsmanship Award at USEF Pony Finals (Kentucky) earlier this year.

“We’ve been working together since she was on her first small pony,” said Belford. “I’ve never heard her say, ‘No, I can’t.’ There’s never a moment of, ‘I wish it should have been.’ Everything is a positive experience. Kids get green, and they make little mistakes, but she never lets that keep her down.”

WIHS Pony Equitation Final Upper Marlboro, Md. Oct. 30	
Rider	Hometown
1. Ava Barnes	Liberty Township, Ohio
2. JJ Torano	Wellington, Fla.
3. Kaitlyn Linck	Clinton Corners, N.Y.
4. Vivian Golden	Wyomissing, Pa.
5. Helena Timpany	Monroe, Conn.
6. Elle Boyd	Camden, S.C.
7. Isabelle Castellanos	New Canaan, Conn.
8. Rowan Bomar	Marietta, Ga.
9. Ella Tarumianz	Charlotte, N.C.
10. Jole Kosloske	Tampa, Fla.

►25 riders competed.

This year 13-year-old Barnes has shot up in height, so she’s bid farewell to her small and medium ponies, and she’s already started contesting equitation classes.

“For me the future is such a big part of this,” said Belford, Cincinnati.

“She started doing the [Taylor Harris Insurance Services National Children’s Medal] on the horses and the [Hamel Foundational National Horse Show 3’3” Medal]; to me this is a great launching point for her. This pony goes so characteristically of a horse that it’s really such a great gateway into the next phase for her career.”

### NOTHING TO COMPLAIN ABOUT WITH THIS KAREN

When Karen arrived at Skylar Wireman’s barn a year ago, Wireman was told that the mare topped out at the 1.20-meter division. But she did the height so easily that Wireman had an inkling she could do more.

“We literally would just fly around the 1.20-meter [classes],” said Wireman, 17. “I’d only ridden her a couple times, and I couldn’t be beat. I was winning by 4, 6 seconds at a time—no one could catch me. I was like, ‘This is the easiest horse to ride ever.’ We jumped some bigger ones at home, and it was the same thing, just cruise right over them. We went to [the Desert Horse Park] and I stepped her into the 1.30-meter classes. The first 1.30-meter class she did she went around and won, and I was like, ‘Well look at that!’ She kept jumping clear after clear, and she never had a rail. It was so easy for her.”

Wireman and her mother, trainer Shayne Berridge-Wireman, kept inching the jumps up higher, and Karen kept answering the call. By mid-March she was jumping the 1.40-meter level, winning the \$10,000 Welcome Stake at the World Equestrian Winter Classic 14 (Ohio). They placed fourth in the \$50,000 WEC Ride For David Grand Prix a few weeks later.

“We just kind of kept going up, and she was still doing it,” said Wireman. “It’s easy for her. She’s been so fun

## TIDBITS

• **Jordan Gibbs**, Colorado Springs, Colorado, rode Dana Vollbracht’s **Five Star** to the large junior hunter, 15 and under, title and finished third in the Washington International Horse Show Equitation Final on Cent 15.

“[Five Star’s] taught me so much, and we’ve come such a long way together, so it’s really great to win here,” said the 15-year-old. “He’s an over, under, through type of horse—[no matter what], he’s jumping. So he’s really given me a lot of confidence to build off of. He’s taught me to work with pace, and he’s taught me style, just all the pieces to the puzzle.”

• **Ariana Marnell** earned the small junior hunter, 15 and under, championship aboard Marnell Sport Horses’ **Babylon**. The Las Vegas rider just wrapped up her first season showing the 7-year-old Oldenburg (Crumbie—Die Cera), and she credited John French and the team at KPF Stables for helping her develop a winning attitude.

“I used to be a really nervous rider,” said Marnell, 16. “I think part of it is being around our team, which is super calm. Some have been to the Olympics, and John’s been to World Cup Finals. This is all a breeze. I try to remember that this isn’t my end goal. So if things don’t go well I want to fix it next week or fix it two weeks from now. Even winning today I still know what I could have done better. So looking to next week I’m just thinking about what I need to change from this week. [I’m always] looking ahead and [working on] not getting too high or too low.”

• **Blythe Goguen**, 17, won both of Thursday’s large junior hunter, 16-17, classes, one on **Style** and one on **Category**, and followed that up with the division championship aboard Style for Bellhaven Stables.

Goguen, Lexington, Kentucky, started showing Style last summer, taking over the reins from her father and trainer, Tim Goguen, who showed the 13-year-old Dutch Warmblood (Veron—Wisse) in the high performance conformation division.

“He has a big stride and a great canter. He jumps great and moves great,” she said. “He’s really so much fun to ride. He’s a little bit lazy but carries himself nicely.”

• **Olivia Sweetnam** earned Best Child Rider on a Pony honors after great rides on Honor Hill Farms’ **Prince Charming**, Take 3 LLC’s **Goldmark** and Twin Island LLC’s **Northwind Tag You’re It**.



Skylar Wireman guided Karen to the medium junior/amateur jumper championship at the Washington International Horse Show.

to ride. She's so awesome. You can trust her with anything. She'll do anything for you."

They represented Zone 10 at the Gotham North/FEI North American Youth Jumping Championships (Michigan) and the Neue Schule/USEF Prix des States Team Junior Jumper Championship (Pennsylvania), anchoring her squad to silver at the second team competition. She also won a \$30,000 grand prix held during HMI Equestrian Classic (California) with the 10-year-old Hanoverian (Levistano—Cleopatra, Cassus 2) owned by MKT Investments LLC, and finished second in that class as well on Coolio 23.

Wireman added another accolade to Karen's resume at Washington, winning the medium junior/amateur jumper championship, the leading junior jumper rider title and the junior jumper style of riding award.

As to the mare's name, which in common parlance has become shorthand for an entitled woman who likes to complain about things, Wireman said it's not too accurate.

"She can be a little sassy with other horses, but she's pretty much perfect," said Wireman. "That name used to have an exclamation point, but for [Fédération Equestre Internationale registration] we had to get rid of that. I think it was better with the exclamation point. It was like 'Karen!' The announcers had fun with it." 🐾

Washington International Horse Show Junior  
Upper Marlboro, Md.—Oct. 24-30

**Small Pony Hunter CH:** Dream Big, Reagan Jarrett.  
**RES:** Baby Blue, Finally Farm Inc.

**Medium Pony Hunter CH:** Paris Charm, Megan D'Amico & the Torano family.  
**RES:** On Your Mark, Sweet Oak Farm.

**Large Pony Hunter CH:** Brixton, Betsee Parker.  
**RES:** Royalist, Betsee Parker.

**Small Jr. Hunter, 15 & Under CH:** Babylon, Marnell Sport Horses.  
**RES:** Inquisitive, Aquitaine Equine.

**Small Jr. Hunter, 16-17 CH:** Bond, Shadowfax Equestrian LLC.  
**RES:** Axel, Blue Mountain LLC.

**Large Jr. Hunter, 15 & Under CH:** Five Star, Dana Vollbracht.  
**RES:** Grand Remo, Kat Fuqua.

**Large Jr. Hunter, 16-17 CH:** Style, Belhaven Stables LLC.  
**RES:** Cascatero, Joey Roman.

**\$10,000 WIHS Children's Hunter CH:** Talisman, Molly Blasdell.  
**RES:** Logan, Ava Scharbo.

**Med. Jr./Amateur Jumper CH:** Karen, MKT Investments LLC.  
**RES, Tie:** Easy Jumper, Katherine Pugliese & Freedom, Ali Nilforushan.

**\$10,000 WIHS Children's Jumper CH:** Nicarmargue, Emma Brody.  
**RES:** Azealia, David Beisel.

**Grand Pony Hunter CH:** Brixton, Betsee Parker.

**Georgetown High-Score Jr. Hunter Owner-Rider:** Babylon, Marnell Sport Horses.

**Potomac Trophy High-Score Jr. Rider, Pony, Tie:** Collin Sweetnam & Reagan Jarrett.

**Grand Jr. Hunter CH:** Bond, Shadowfax Equestrian LLC.

**Jr. Jumper Style Of Riding Award:** Skylar Wireman.

**Gochman Style Of Riding Award:** JJ Torano.

**Best Child Rider, Pony:** Olivia Sweetnam.

**Best Child Rider, Horse:** Augusta Iwasaki.

**Hollow Brook Wealth Management Sportsmanship Award:** Alexander Alston.

**Leading Jr. Jumper Rider:** Skylar Wireman.

**Lugano Memorial Trophy, WIHS Equitation Classic Horse:** Attendu De Lannois Z, Ashland Farms.

**Leading Equitation Trainer:** Chris Iwasaki.