



Young Horse Hands Brittany Burson Double Glory on Day Two of 2024 US Dressage Finals, Presented by Adequan®

November 8, 2024 – Lexington, KY – A slew of new champions were crowned on day two, Thursday, November 8, of the 2024 US Dressage Finals, presented by Adequan®, which runs through November 10 at the Kentucky Horse Park. The event draws competitors from across the nation to vie for the 37 titles and a share of the \$125,000 prize money.

The mark of nine that was awarded to Brittany Burson on Opportunity Knocks by judge Anne Gribbons for harmony was a bellwether for the duo's momentous day, which saw them dominate both the Open Training Level Championship and the First Level Freestyle with huge scores. They were the unanimous winners in both classes, topping them with 74.867% and 75.352% apiece, despite the Spielberg son being just five years old and in his first year of competition.



Brittany Burson and Opportunity Knocks, a five-year-old by Spielberg, claimed both the Open Training Level and the First Level Freestyle Championship classes. Photo by [SusanJStickle.com](https://www.susanjstickle.com).

"We wanted to do well, but I'm floored by these wins as they were such competitive classes," said Burson. "He's a super fun horse to ride and bring along, and he handled the electric atmosphere really well."

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"The Sweetest Horse with So Much Try"

In only their second season together, Adult Amateur Madison Rezaei and her own Maximus were awarded the George W. Wagner Jr. Perpetual Trophy, presented by International Georgian Grande Horse Registry, for their Grand Prix Championship win. Rezaei bought the 13-year-old Polish Warmblood — who is by the Thoroughbred sire Sword xx out of a Kostolany dam — 18 months ago from another amateur rider, and he is her first grand prix horse.

"He's a sensitive, nervous guy and it seemed like when I sat on him, he understood me. He's gotten so much stronger, more reliable, and more confident, and we've built a nice partnership. This is the sweetest horse with so much try, and he was so on today," said Rezaei, who scored 66.92%.



Madison Rezaei and Maximus improve on their 2023 placing to take top honors in the Adult Amateur Grand Prix with 66.92%. Photo by [SusanJStickle.com](https://www.susanjstickle.com).

"We were here last year which was crazy because we had only just started together and came sixth. I was over the moon just to be in the arena, so it's kind of crazy to be winning it this year. I had no expectations, just to ride our best test and have a happy, relaxed horse. I think we did it," added Rezaei.

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A High-Scoring Tussle

It was tight at the top of the Open Third Level Freestyle, with champion Kassandra Barteau and reserve Kymberly Pullen on Mojito both topping 73%. But it was Barteau on Fiorenzo MLW who ultimately prevailed with 73.842%, going one better than in the previous day's straight class to claim top honors.

The rider from Newberry, FL, runs her own Blue Skies Dressage. She has had the ride on Rebecca Mouras's 12-year-old Hanoverian gelding Fiorenzo MLW for six months to show him the ropes of the upper levels for his AA owner. They have won or finished second in all of their 24 starts together.



Open Third Level Freestyle champions Kassandra Barteau and Fiorenzo MLW, by Fidertanz, scored 73.842% in a close race for the winner's blanket. Photo by [SusanJStickle.com](https://www.susanjstickle.com).

"It's a bold freestyle; we have a lot of lead changes in it, and we go for a high degree of difficulty," said Barteau of the gelding by Fidertanz out of a Wolkentanz dam. "It really highlights his big, powerful gaits, and we put a lot of emphasis on that part of the music. He was great today; hitting his music but also waiting for me."

"Riding Is My Physical and Mental Therapy"

Despite the mare's lack of competition experience, Phyllis Sumner's 10-year-old "worker bee" Jonanta M led the AA Intermediate I Championship with 68.676%, edging out Christina Morin-Graham on Ici De La Vigne by 0.5 percentage points.

Sumner bought the Negro x Gribaldi daughter two years ago in the Netherlands, and while the horse had never competed, she believes that Jonanta has what it takes to be her next grand prix horse.



Phyllis Sumner and her lightly competed mare Jonanta M (by Negro) topped the AA Intermediate I with 68.676%. Photo by [SusanJStickle.com](https://www.susanjstickle.com).

"This was a lot from an atmosphere perspective, but 'Moxie' did fantastically," said Sumner, who was making her Finals debut with the horse. "She was super attentive and took confidence from me even though she'd never even been in that arena before. She's very big, very powerful, and hot, but in a good way. She loves to march me to the arena every day. Moxie can be a little intense and hot at times because she's an overachiever, but never ugly or disobedient."

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Kathryn Fleming-Kuhn added a second win to her haul for the week, topping the Open Intermediate I Championship by almost 5% on her own Franziskus HSR, by Franziskus. Photo by [SusanJStickle.com](https://www.susanjstickle.com).

Kathryn Fleming-Kuhn was another rider to receive the unanimous nod from all three judges, securing the Intermediate I Championship. She and Franziskus HSR added another winner's blanket to their Prix St. Georges result the previous day, this time topping the class by almost five Percentge points. Her eight-year-old gelding, by Franziskus is on unbeatable form and scored 72.5%, with reserve champions Lauren Chumley on Leeloo Dallas slotting in with 67.745%. It was a sandwich finish with Fleming-Kuhn also staking claim to third place riding Wilona HSR to 66.814%. Both her horses were bred in the U.S. by Anita Nardine.

Competition resumes on Saturday, November 8, with a bonanza of 14 championship titles up for grabs from First Level to Grand Prix. The full [digital show program is available here](#). Follow the action via the [USDF Facebook page](#) and the [US Dressage Finals website](#), plus live online streaming of all the action from the Alltech Arena on [USEF Network](#). To learn more about the US Dressage Finals presented by Adequan® and read daily news, visit the official US Dressage Finals event website. Start times and results can be found on www.horshowoffice.com.

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By Alice Collins for Jump Media/US Dressage Finals

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