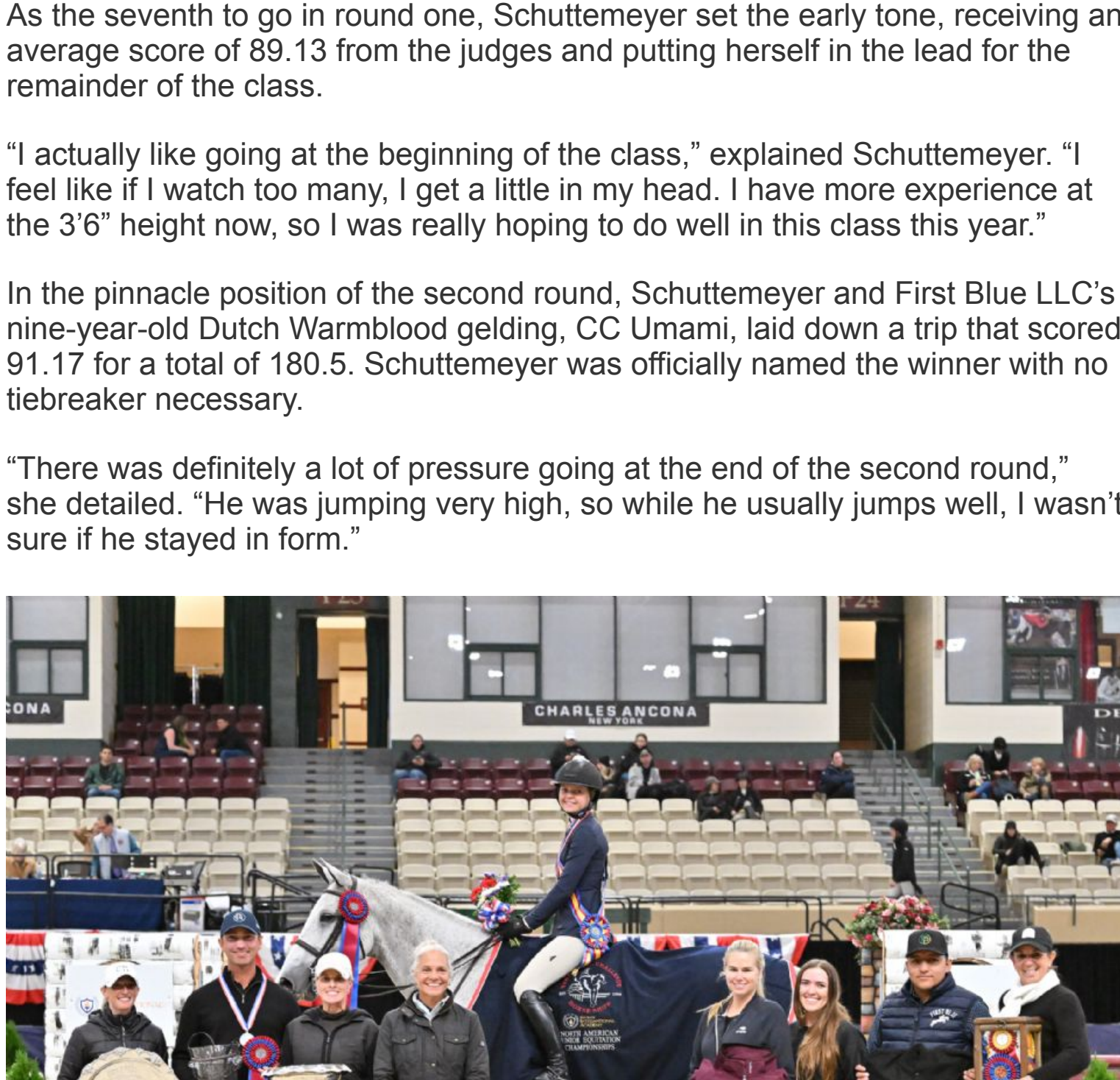


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Faith Schuttemeyer and CC Umami Lead From Start to Finish in PBIA North American Junior Equestrian Championships

Upper Marlboro, MD – Five days of intense equestrian competition came to a close on Sunday, September 27, at the 2026 Capital Challenge Horse Show Equestrian Showcase, presented by [BIGEQ.com](#). The last set of junior equestrian riders took center stage in The Show Place Arena at the Prince George's Equestrian Center in Upper Marlboro, MD, for the [Palm Beach International Academy \(PBIA\)](#) North American Junior Equestrian Championships. After two rounds, Faith Schuttemeyer of Boynton Beach, FL, maintained her lead to emerge victorious.

Course designers Meghan Rawlins, Ken Krome, and Joe Carnicom got to work setting their final equitation course of the weekend, integrating a variety of bending lines, combinations, and unique fences. Three panels consisting of two judges per panel judged the top 125 junior equitation riders in North America. Ginny Edwards and Phillip DeVita made up panel one, Claire Kellner and Tammy Provost acted as panel two, and Tony Sgarlata and Geoff Case were on panel three.



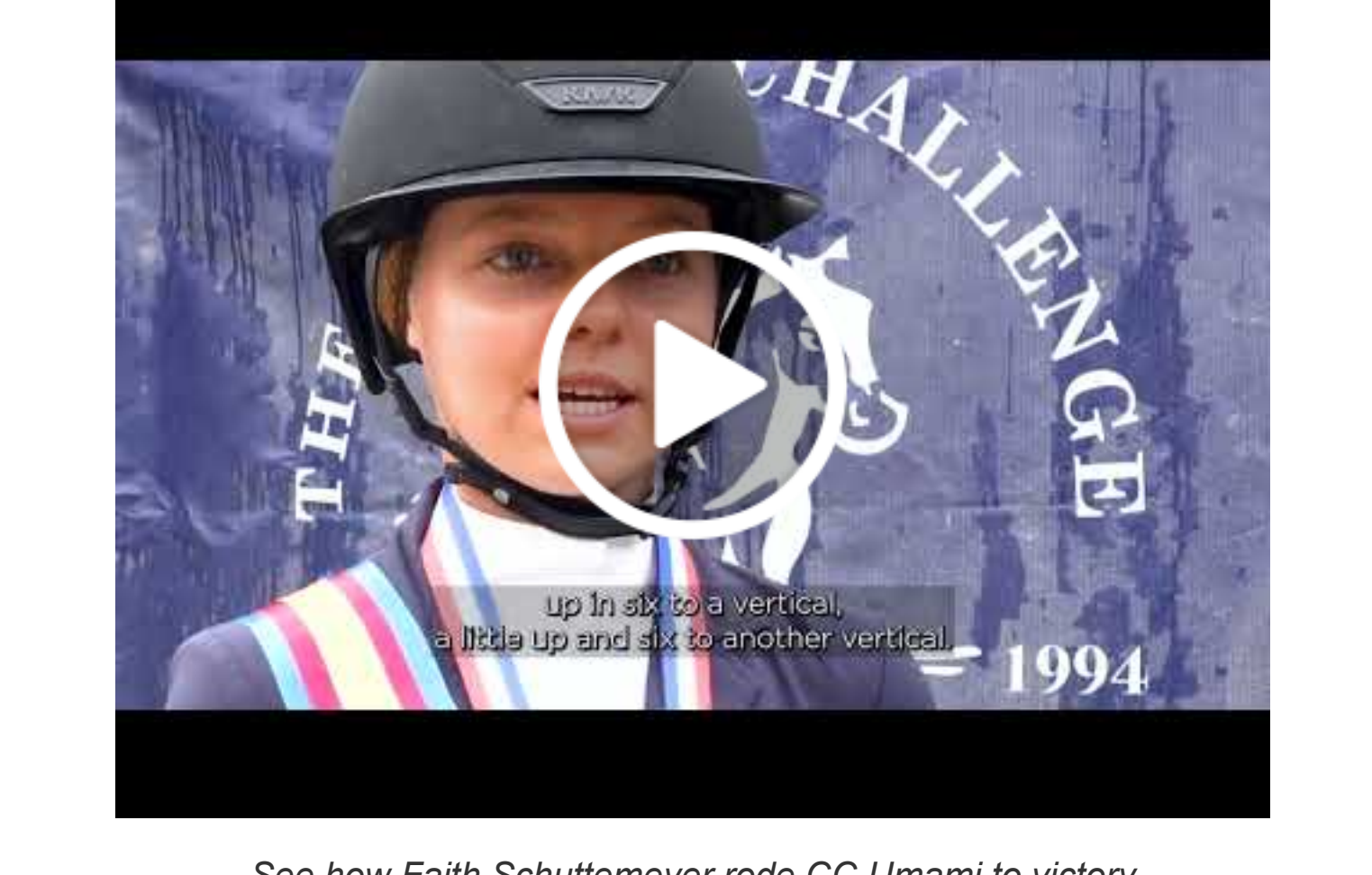
Faith Schuttemeyer and CC Umami displayed excellent form to win the PBIA North American Junior Equestrian Championships. **Photo by Shawn McMillen Photography**

As the seventh to go in round one, Schuttemeyer set the early tone, receiving an average score of 89.13 from the judges and putting herself in the lead for the remainder of the class.

"I actually like going at the beginning of the class," explained Schuttemeyer. "I feel like if I watch too many, I get a little in my head. I have more experience at the 3'6" height now, so I was really hoping to do well in this class this year."

In the pinnacle position of the second round, Schuttemeyer and First Blue LLC's nine-year-old Dutch Warmblood gelding, CC Umami, laid down a trip that scored 91.17 for a total of 180.5. Schuttemeyer was officially named the winner with no tiebreaker necessary.

"There was definitely a lot of pressure going at the end of the second round," she detailed. "He was jumping very high, so while he usually jumps well, I wasn't sure if he stayed in form."

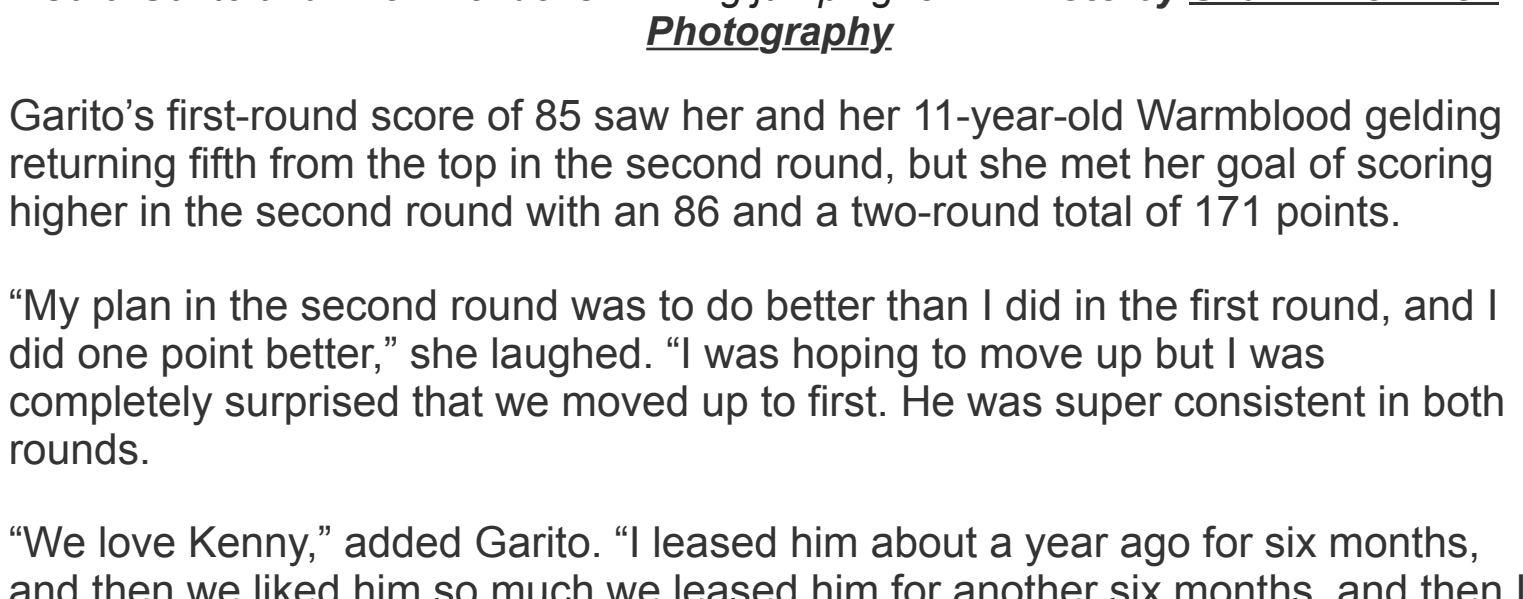


Faith Schuttemeyer stands for her winning presentation aboard CC Umami. **Photo by Shawn McMillen Photography**

The young gelding only moved to the U.S. over the summer when acquired by Jenna Weinfurt of First Blue LLC during the Traverse City Open Sales Auction in July.

"This is only his third equitation show, but he's really caught into it fast," expressed Schuttemeyer. "We've been practicing bending lines, tight turns, and spooky jumps, but honestly, he's quite smart, and it's been a pretty easy transformation."

Following the second round, Kaitlyn Linck and her 10-year-old Zangersheide gelding, Don Touch de Tiji Z, paired scores of 88.68 and 89.33 to claim second place with a 178.02 total. Parker Peacock and Montverdi, Ashland Farms' 13-year-old Westphalian gelding, rounded out the top three with scores of 87.67 and 90.33 for a total of 178.



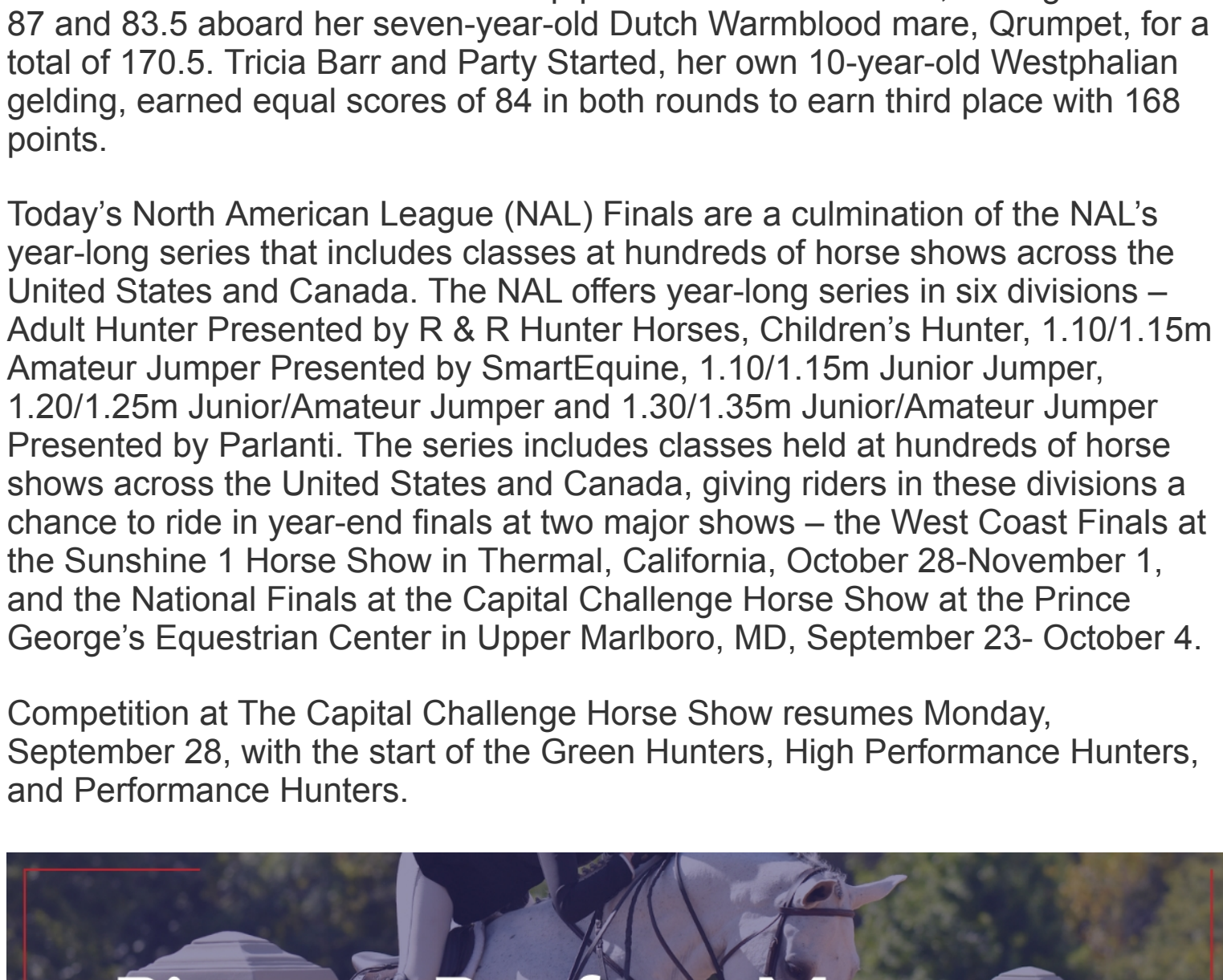
See how Faith Schuttemeyer rode CC Umami to victory

Cara Garito and Ever Wonder Are Wonderful in \$10,000 North American League Adult Hunter Final

The hunters took over The Show Place Arena on Sunday afternoon to cap off competition with the \$10,000 North American League (NAL) Adult Hunter Final, sponsored by R&R Hunter Horses where Cara Garito and Ever Wonder, also known as "Kenny," landed the win.

In the class's opening round, 26 pairs vied for the championship sash, but only the top 12 highest-scoring riders were asked to return for a second round. Contenders worked throughout the year in horse shows across the country to qualify for this featured event.

"I started doing the Adult Hunters in Florida with Kenny, and we did several Classics," explained Garito, "and we were consistent. We kept pecking away at it. We were worried we wouldn't get in, but we were lucky, and it all worked out."



Cara Garito and Ever Wonder's winning jumping form. **Photo by Shawn McMillen Photography**

Garito's first-round score of 85 saw her and her 11-year-old Warmblood gelding returning fifth from the top in the second round, but she met her goal of scoring higher in the second round with an 86 and a two-round total of 171 points.

"My plan in the second round was to do better than I did in the first round, and I did one point better," she laughed. "I was hoping to move up but I was completely surprised that we moved up to first. He was super consistent in both rounds."

"We love Kenny," added Garito. "I leased him about a year ago for six months, and then we liked him so much we leased him for another six months, and then I liked him so much I purchased him. He's never leaving! He is totally reliable and dependable. I walk in any ring on him, and I know he's got me. He just walks in and owns the ring and makes you feel so confident."

For Garito, the win was a sweet welcome back to The Capital Challenge Horse Show, which she hasn't attended in five years.

"When I came here last, I was on a different horse, and I did these same finals five years ago," she stated. "I forget if we came in third or fourth, but I had a very young, green horse who was a little newer to this. To be able to come and win this class today is high on my highlight list, for sure."



Cara Garito was all smiles during her presentation ceremony with Ever Wonder. **Photo by Shawn McMillen Photography**

Sarah York maintained her runner-up position from round one, adding scores of 87 and 83.5 aboard her seven-year-old Dutch Warmblood mare, Orumpet, for a total of 170.5. Tricia Barr and Party Started, her own 10-year-old Westphalian gelding, earned equal scores of 84 in both rounds to earn third place with 168 points.

Today's North American League (NAL) Finals are a culmination of the NAL's year-long series that includes classes at hundreds of horse shows across the United States and Canada. The NAL offers year-long series in six divisions – Adult Hunter Presented by R & R Hunter Horses, Children's Hunter, 1.10/1.15m Amateur Junior Presented by SmartEquine, 1.20/1.25m Junior/Amateur Jumper and 1.30/1.35m Junior/Amateur Jumper Presented by Parlanti. The series includes classes held at hundreds of horse shows across the United States and Canada, giving riders in these divisions a chance to ride in year-end finals at two major shows – the West Coast Finals at the Sunshine 1 Horse Show in Thermal, California, October 28-November 1, and the National Finals at the Capital Challenge Horse Show at the Prince George's Equestrian Center in Upper Marlboro, MD, September 23-October 4.

Competition at The Capital Challenge Horse Show resumes Monday, September 28, with the start of the Green Hunters, High Performance Hunters, and Performance Hunters.



Cara Garito and Ever Wonder on their victory gallop. Faith Schuttemeyer stuck the landing throughout the final round to take the win.



15 Year Old Equitation Section B Champion: Kaitlyn Linck and her own Don Touch de Tiji Z

Isabella Salas was presented with the Michelle Bloch Excellence in Expression Award from Jennifer Glass, Lara McPherson, Jennifer Hinman, and Maddy Lima.

Photos by Shawn McMillen Photography

For more information on the 2026 Capital Challenge Horse Show, please visit [www.CapitalChallenge.org](#). Additional information, photos, and coverage can be found on Facebook or Instagram. For winning rounds and rider interviews, check out the Capital Challenge Horse Show [YouTube](#) channel.



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