US Dressage Finals
presented by Adequan®

An Abundance of Champions Take Day Three of the US Dressage Finals by Storm

October 31, 2026 – Wilmington, OH – The third day of competition at the the 2026 US Dressage Finals presented by Adequan® on Saturday, October 31, was full of spooktacular performances, which saw an incredible 14 champions crowned. Taking place at World Equestrian Center (WEC) in Wilmington, OH, the show runs from October 29 to November 1, with 37 championship awards and more than $100,000 in prize money. Competition coverage of the remaining seven classes from day three will be issued on Sunday, November 1.

Full Results

Chumley and Notorious H2O Live Up to their Name

After what owner-rider Lauren Chumley describes as a “difficult childhood,” Notorious H2O was all grown up to lead the lap of honor in the Fourth Level Open Championship. Chumley has had the now eight-year-old Dutch Warmblood gelding since she purchased the striking foal from U.S. breeder Kendra Hansis. Though he was exceptionally difficult to bring along, the pair reached a turning point when the gelding was a six-year-old. Under the guidance of trainer Michael Bragdell, Notorious H2O went back to basics and groundwork, and that was what made the difference. Just as he was getting into a groove, the flashy gelding suffered a bout of white line disease, and after nine months off after finally overcoming his behavioral challenges, Chumley was unsure what she was going to have to work with.

“He just got better and better,” reflected Chumley, crediting farrier Yancy Russell and vet Jan Henriksen of BW Furlong with Notorious H2O’s recovery. “He never went backwards with his mentality toward the training, which was amazing, because after nine months, I thought I was going to have that really tough young horse again. He ended up coming back really nicely.”

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Lauren Chumley and Notorious H2O claimed the Fourth Level Open Championship. ***Photo by SusanJStickle.com***

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Madeline Wakim and Meteor de Massa Are Stars

Madeline Wakim and Meteor de Massa were the first champions crowned on day three after earning the top score of 68.758% in the Intermediate I Freestyle Adult Amateur Championship from judge at H Sarah Geikie, judge at C Brian MacMahon, and judge at B Lisa K. Schmidt.

Wakim, who is based in Atlanta, GA, but qualified through Region 1, partnered with the now 10-year-old Portuguese Sport Horse gelding by Don Juan de Hus x Mulato owned by Pony Lane Farm three years ago after he was imported from France. To Wakim, the kind grey represented her first serious dressage mount. Though they were both relatively inexperienced, they worked their way up from First Level together with guidance from trainer Karen Lipp. Now with a fresh freestyle designed by Karen Robinson of Applause Dressage, the pair put all the pieces together for an exciting milestone victory.

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Madeline Wakim and Meteor de Massa danced to the top of the Intermediate I Freestyle Adult Amateur Championship. ***Photo by SusanJStickle.com***

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A Long Trip Pays Off for Baileigh Marcotte and Nino Negri

All the way from Louisiana and qualifying through Region 9, Baileigh Marcotte and Nino Negri made their long trip count with a win in the Second Level Freestyle Adult Amateur Championship out of 17 combinations. Their test, choreographed by their trainer Kalie Beckers with music put together by Equidance, featured snippets from the live-action Spider-Man movie, Stranger Things, and The Never Ending Story. The harmonious performance earned 69.465% from judge at H William Warren, judge at C Ulf Wadeborn, and judge at B Michael Osinski.

It was a complete turnaround for Marcotte, as her first test of the weekend with her eight-year-old Dutch Warmblood gelding by Dettori x Eye Catcher did not go to plan when the exciting atmosphere proved too challenging. Coming into the Second Level Freestyle Adult Amateur Championship a day later, Marcotte could sense some nervousness from both herslef and her mount.

Baileigh Marcotte and Nino Negri traveled all the way from Louisiana to win in the Second Level Freestyle Adult Amateur Championship. ***Photo by SusanJStickle.com***

“I feel like every time you go in the arena, you don't totally know what you're going to be working with,” noted Marcotte. “It's up to that moment how you're going to ride that particular movement and that horse for the day. I'm so proud of the fact that we came from such a low yesterday to have such an incredible day today. With the music going, we got to our third movement, and I was like ‘Okay, we can do this. I can take a breath.’’ He gave me such a good feeling. He's a dream come true.”

Laura Gutierrez Fernandez Rides the Polar Express to Victory

A pasture incident kept Laura Gutierrez Fernandez and Polar Express away from the 2025 US Dressage Finals, so they were eager to attend in 2026. In the Prix St. Georges Junior/Young Rider Championship, they claimed the blue-ribbon honors with a final score of 66.471% from judges William Warren at H, Ulf Wadeborn at C, and Michael Osinski at B.

"It's amazing to be here," said Gutierrez Fernandez, who is from Bloomfield Hills, MI, and trains with Judy Kelly in Clarkston, MI. "Everyone's so nice and so supportive. My horse came out a little impressed with everything today, but I don't think I can pinpoint a favorite part of our test because the feeling was great overall. She was with me the whole time. We've been working really hard on getting her to relax and stay loose over her top line, and we did it today, so we were really happy about that."

Laura Gutierrez Fernandez and her super mare Polar Express bested the field in the Prix St Georges Junior/Young Rider Championship. ***Photo by SusanJStickle.com***

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Young Horse, Big Talent for Heather Mason

After an impressive 2025 season, which culminated in First Level Open Freestyle Championship and First Level Open Championship titles, Heather Mason, who bases in New Jersey and qualified through Region 8, and Rock It P did not miss a beat in 2026. The pair returned to the US Dressage Finals winner's circle a year later, this time in the Second Level Freestyle Open Championship. They rose to the top of 14 combinations with a final score of 71.737%.

"He's a little bit timid, and that showed in the test because he found one area very spooky," explained Mason of her five-year-old KWPN Grand Galaxy Win x Everdale gelding, now measuring just over 18 hands. "We blew a couple of movements, but even so, he's really amazing. He can really turn it on. Even though he was scared and looking, his body stays relaxed, and he tries hard. I was very, very happy with him."

Heather Mason rode her 18-hand five-year-old Rock It P to victory in the Second Level Freestyle Open Championship. ***Photo by SusanJStickle.com***

The canter tour was the big highlight for judge at H Sarah Geikie, judge at C Brian MacMahon, and judge at B Lisa K. Schmidt, who awarded the duo scores of 7.5 and eight. Mason agreed: "His canter is amazing. The extended canter, especially, is so nice. His temperament is great, and he's naturally super balanced. He's just a super horse."

A Double of Double Winners

Jennifer Roth went two for two with Royal DaVinci, the 13-year-old Hanoverian gelding by Royal Prince x Limaro M owned by her partner James Gerhart. After claiming the First Level Freestyle Open Championship on Friday, the pair doubled down to also take the top call in Saturday's First Level Open Championship with 72.963% from judge at H William Warren, judge at C Heidi Gaian, and judge at B Willette Brown.

"I feel like our specialty is the harmony, and at this level, that's just something that the judges look for," reflected Roth, who qualified through Region 2. "I was lucky today that he was good. There were so many fantastic horses and riders in that class — just really extravagant, special things. I did my best to ride a clean, accurate, harmonious test, and it was nice that the math was in my favor."

Jennifer Roth and Royal DaVinci were victorious once again, this time in Saturday's First Level Open Championship. ***Photo by SusanJStickle.com***

Cecelia Stewart, who is based in South Carolina but qualified through Region 1, and Serenade MF, her own 13-year-old American Hanoverian mare by Sir Donnerhall x Don Principe, also notched their second Championship in as many days, taking the blue ribbon out of 15 combinations in the Grand Prix Freestyle Adult Amateur Championship with 69.465% from judge at H Sarah Geikie, judge at C Brian MacMahon, and judge at B Lisa K. Schmidt. Their victory also secured the Calaveras County Perpetual Trophy, presented by Olva Stewart Pharo.

"The music is perfect for her," said Stewart of her freestyle choreographed with help from her coach Chris Hickey and music styled by Gary Patterson. "As soon as we started talking about a freestyle, I said, 'It's got to be Dancing Queen,' because that's what she is. She felt very good again today — a little spicy, but really good."

Cecelia Stewart and Serenade MF were the "Dancing Queens" of the Grand Prix Freestyle Adult Amateur Championship. ***Photo by SusanJStickle.com***

Out and About

Photos by Amanda Morse, Kevin Reinig, and the USDF team

Competition resumes on Sunday, November 1, with the final 10 championship titles to be awarded. Follow all the action via the USDF Facebook page and USDF Instagram page. Full results are published live on HorseShowOffice.com.

Alongside its top-level competitions, gala evening performances on Friday and Saturday nights, competitor parties, and Halloween costume competitions, the 2026 US Dressage Finals presented by Adequan® offers a wide selection of shopping opportunities from an array of equestrian fashion, feed, equipment vendors, and more.

All championship classes are livestreamed on USEF Network via ClipMyHorse.TV, with expert commentary from Kathy Connelly in the Sanctuary Arena. Along with presenting sponsor Adequan®, the 2026 US Dressage Finals is supported by SmartPak and Platinum Performance. Contributing sponsors include Premier Equestrian, Sterling Thompson Equine, Schneiders, and Nutrena. Learn more by visiting the US Dressage Finals website.

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