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**2008CN FEI North American Junior and Young Rider Championships  
at the Colorado Horse Park Presented by Gotham North  
Culminate with Awarding of Individual Medals  
*Eventing Also Awards Team Medals***

Parker, CO—August 3, 2008—The 2008 CN FEI North American Junior and Young Rider Championships at the Colorado Horse Park Presented by Gotham North culminated with the final competitions determining individual medalists as well as the team medalists in eventing.

The Championships are the premier equestrian event in North America for riders age 14-21. Run in a format similar to the Olympic Games, the Championships feature riders competing for team and individual Medals in the three Olympic disciplines of show jumping, dressage and eventing, as well as the western discipline of reining, which was added to the schedule for the first time this year.

The NAJYRC operates under the rules of the Fédération Equestre Internationale (FEI), the international governing body for equestrian sport. It is the only FEI championship held annually in this country.

**Dressage**

Laura Noyes of Region 8 won the Young Rider individual freestyle Gold in the USDF/Platinum Performance Dressage Division. Riding Syncro, she received a score of 74.750% from the five-judge panel. Brianna Dutton of Region 7 won the Silver with a score of 71.900 on Tibet and Chelsea Pederson of Region 6 won the Bronze with a score of 70.500% on H.S. With Honors. For Dutton and Pederson, it was their second such individual medals this week after having taken the same medals in the individual Prix St. Georges on Saturday. Dutton also won team Gold earlier in the week and Noyes won team Silver.

“He’s been really tense all week but today he was consistent and steady,” Noyes said of her longtime mount who had to miss last year’s championships after getting hurt at the Young Rider World Cup in 2006. “It just takes him a while to relax.”

Noyes said that the heat and high altitude were affecting her. “Each day I felt worse and worse,” she said, “but I have to say that I feel a lot better right now.”

“My goal was to make it to the freestyle and I didn’t put any pressure on myself as to how we’d do,” said Dutton. “I decided that I’d just go in there and try to have fun.”

Unlike Dutton, Pederson felt the pressure of the freestyle. "It is by far the most nerve-wracking ride," she said. "We changed ours and used upbeat music which really fits his personality."

Morgan Heinrichs of Region 5 won the Junior freestyle Gold Medal with a score of 71.900% on Orlando. McKenzie Jenkins of Region 3 won the Silver with a score of 70.900 on Tsarina Bint RII and McKinzie Pooley of Region 7 won the Bronze with a score of 69.450 on Jonkara.

"I really couldn't imagine this happening," said Heinrichs, who also won team Gold earlier in the week, "but I have to say that it feels great."

Heinrichs, who has only had her horse since February, rode to a composition of Swedish music selected by her trainer Jennie Baldwin. "She's Swedish so I guess that's why she chose it," Heinrichs said.

Jenkins, whose music came from the Thomas Crown Affair, said she tried to put all her nerves aside. "I kept telling myself not to get nervous, just to have fun and it turned out to be a great day. I really love my freestyle; it fits my horse so perfectly."

Pooley, who won two individual Bronze Medals last year, cited her previous experience at the Championships with helping her development as a rider. "This is just such an awesome program. It really helps you move to the next level of riding. Since last year, I've really worked on being more consistent and working together with my horse."

### **Eventing**

Jennifer Brannigan of Area VI won the individual Gold in the USEA Eventing Division's CCI\*\*, finishing with a three-phase total of 36.3 penalties on Cooper. Brannigan rode a clean jumping round and, coupled with a clean cross country on Saturday, finished on her dressage score. She was followed by Karen Shull of Area I/IV/V who scored 55.7 on Just My Style and Stephanie Rhodes-Bush of Canada who finished with 57.9 penalties on Port Authority.

"He is such a great show jumper that I had some confidence coming in, but I still worried about making mistakes," said Brannigan who stood second following cross country last year but was unable to proceed to show jumping when her horse Cosmo failed the veterinary inspection. "Cooper recovered very nicely from the heat and I thought he felt really good."

Brannigan credited working with U.S. veteran show jumper Susie Hutchison on her show jumping for helping her. "Riding with Susie at the big jumper shows at Thermal made a big difference."

Shull was happy to hold on for second place. "His strength is dressage and he's not the best show jumper," she said. "His dressage here was just average for him and I was hoping for clean and even though we didn't get it, I'm happy we held our position."

In the CCI\*, Callie Judy of Area IV won the individual Gold with 48.8 penalties on Irish Odyssey. She finished on her dressage score after a clean jumping round to go with a clean cross country ride on Saturday. Lindsay Crnkovich of Area VIII/X won the Silver with 49.1 penalties. She kept the pressure on Judy with a clean jumping round and also finished on her dressage score on Right Back Atchya. Sarah Talaga of Canada won the Bronze with 50.7 penalties on Vena.

“I am in absolute shock,” said Judy who rode in the Championships in 2006 but found herself without a horse last year and groomed for her teammates instead. “It really has not sunk in. We had some problems stopping on cross country last spring and we worked really hard to get it corrected. I’m so happy that our hard work paid off.”

Crnkovich, whose 14.1 hand mount is a Quarter/pony, said she wouldn’t change a thing about him. “His personality is absolutely the best. I love everything about him!”

In the team competitions, Brannigan’s Area VI won the Gold in the CCI\*\* with a team score of 170.4 penalties, followed by Shull’s Area I/IV/V team with a score of 1122.8 and Area VIII/X with 1158.5. In the CCI\*, Judy’s Area IV team won with 161.4 penalties, followed by Crnkovich’s Area VIII/X team with a score of 166.6 and Talaga’s Canadian team with 170.1.

Brannigan’s Gold Medal teammates—Tiana Coudray on Ringwood Master, Max McNamamy on Beacon Hill and David Koss on Candy—praised her riding and emphasized how much fun they had as a team. “Being the only guy with three girls, let me tell you, I need some help!” said Koss who took ribbing from his teammates for getting them all to talk like Borat. Koss noted that his horse doesn’t show jump well, “so I just left it all up to the girls.”

Judy’s Area IV teammates, Hannah Ross who rode Fantasia, Jessa Lux who rode Car Tanga, and Edith Lee who rode Ballycormac Petrocelli, joined her in saying that riding as a team changes things quite a bit. “It really increases the pressure when you know that what you do affects others,” said Lux. “But there’s also a benefit because I knew that if I blew it that my teammates would get the job done.”

### **Jumping**

Hannah Selleck led a sweep of the individual medals by Zone 10 when she won the Young Rider individual Gold Medal on Bauer in the USHJA Jumping Division. Selleck finished with an overall score of 11.76 faults. Karl Cook, last year’s Gold Medalist, won the Silver on Notories Utopia with 12.00 faults, followed by Paige Dotson who took the Bronze with 14.73 faults on Friponnier II CH.

Dotson was one rail from the Gold but the last rail down added four faults to her score to give Selleck the win. “I was thinking that I was almost there and I just needed to leave that last fence up,”

said Dotson who was thrown by her horse in the warm-up ring. “Unfortunately it didn’t happen. I just needed to give him a little more leg.”

Selleck said that she was rooting for her friend Dotson. “I never root for another rider to have a rail. I thought Paige would be clear and I was certainly rooting for her but of course I’m happy to win.”

Cook, who adds the Silver to the team Gold he won earlier in the week and the double Gold he won last year, said that coach Butch Thomas and Zone 10 have a real winning formula. “Our trials really prepare us well for what we face here,” he said. “Butch works with us throughout the year so he knows how to get the best out of us. We all came here wanting to prove that last year was no fluke and I think this shows that we have a lot of good riders in California.”

In the Junior Division, Lucy Davis of Zone 10 added the individual Gold to go with the team Gold she won on Friday. Riding Master Mind, Davis completed an amazing week, finishing her five rounds of jumping without a single fault. Aley Russell of Zone 4 took the Silver with 9 faults on Saint Diego, followed by Martin Guerra of Mexico South who took the Bronze with 14 faults on Latino 125.

“It’s really pretty amazing to be here for the first time and have it go so well,” said the 15-year-old Davis. “I didn’t think it was possible. My horse tried so hard and I’m very lucky to have great trainers, great grooms and tremendous support. I may have gotten the medal, but it’s really a team accomplishment.”

Russell, 18, also competing at her first Junior/Young Rider Championships, said she only decided to come about two weeks before the event. “My teammates called me and said that they wouldn’t have a team unless I came. I guess I’m glad I did.”

Russell had words of praise for Davis. “She was just awesome; she rode like it was an equitation course,” she said. Russell, who had only one time fault in the individual final’s two rounds, added, “It’s a little hard for the rest of us to catch Lucy if she doesn’t have any faults!”

Guerra, 18, said he was helped by the vociferous support of the large Mexican contingent that was so noticeable throughout the week. “Hearing all that cheering and support every time you enter the ring really helps you ride better. It makes you feel confident and I know it helped me.”

### **Reining**

Carlie Thompson led a medal sweep by Team USA winning the individual Gold in the USEF Reining Division with a score of 219.00 on Paid By Corona. Her US teammates, Jason Kvols who scored 217.00 on Sunny Spectacular and Lacey Vernon who scored 214.50 on Duncans Dun It, won the Silver and Bronze respectively. The US also won the team Gold on Friday.

Thompson said that her horse got a little scared of one of the photographers on one of her circles but overall “was really awesome.” The Ohio Wesleyan junior majoring in neuroscience and psychology said that it was different riding outdoors but that she liked it because “it makes for better pictures!”

Kvols, who started his horse career in rodeo, said that all the reiners knew that no matter what happened this week they were making history. “We knew that we would always be the first reiners to ride in these championships. We loved being here and really liked watching the other disciplines. All of us would love to try the English riding but I just don’t know if you can get me to wear breeches!”

Vernon, daughter of veteran reiner Guy Vernon, said that she was, “born on a horse.” She said that she can’t wait to come back next year. “I’m not sure that I’ve ever had a better time than I did here this week.”

Full results and additional information on the 2008 CN FEI North American Junior and Young Rider Championships at the Colorado Horse Park Presented by Gotham North are available on line at [www.youngriders.org](http://www.youngriders.org).

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