

JULY/AUGUST 2009 VOLUME IX ISSUE 5
WWW.HORSECONNECTION.COM

EST. 1991

HORSE CONNECTION MAGAZINE

HC



RACING INTO TROUBLE

The HC article that has stirred global outrage!

BIG STUDS IN SANTA FE

**PLUS – COOL DESTINATIONS &
THE BOYS OF ARGENTINA!**

Caramel – HC's Newest Horse

My, What



Big Studs You Have



Written and photographed
by Evalyn Bemis

You might think jumping fences measuring up to 5'3" high and 6" wide to be a tough enough task. Factor in trying to have the fastest time on course while leaving all the rails in place. Then allow for visual distractions such as sponsors' banners, fence decorations, potted plants hiding sprinkler heads, Mini Coopers and Ford F350s NOT to be jumped. Add a merry crowd enjoying a catered lunch under a huge white tent set at ringside. Last, but hardly least, picture a course set on sloping terrain with a grass surface made slippery with rain. The 2009 Grand Prix de Santa Fe provided a true test of horsemanship

Sarah Tredennick and Special Verdict show the speed, agility and derring-do that earned them 4th place and a check for \$3200 in the 2009 Grand Prix de Santa Fe



Alex Granato on his veteran partner, Mad Season, in the Grand Prix



Play It Again, owned by Charlie Dennehy

Course designer Ana Catalina Cruz Harris created a track that asked all the questions. Could you bring your horse with the right pace to clear the first fence, a wide oxer next to the patrons' tent, but then continue with control to clear the downhill vertical heading towards the stable area? Could you make the tight turn uphill without a slip, jump the candy-striped rails at fence #3 and then gallop on to title sponsor Las Campanas' signature bell towers? Could you end the course coming downhill towards the in-gate and still leave the Rancho Corazon planks in their flat cups?

A large entry of 23 horses was ready to take the test. Riders used the biggest studs in their kit (i.e. screw-in shoe caulks) but no amount of studding could substitute for having the right balance and pace to the fences. Three pairs had what it took to qualify for the jump-off. Just one of those ended on a perfect score of zero.

Bjorn Icast and "Monte Cristo" were first to go and put in a smooth and seemingly easy effort with no faults. Bjorn held his breath while Canadian Olympic team member John Pearce rode the lovely grey "Chianto" and then the stallion "Slyvester," but each had a rail to end in 2nd and 3rd place.

Bjorn and "Monte Cristo" nearly won in Santa Fe two years ago but for one time fault too many. They had a clean trip over the jumps, but had five time faults to Allison Kroff and Nomograff's four-fault round. Bjorn redeemed himself in 2008 by winning on "Braveheart." Taking the blue ribbon and \$12,000 top prize money this year with "Monte Cristo," a fellow Dane, was another "feather in Bjorn's cap" and evidence that good horsemanship and persistence pay off. Bjorn also piloted "Day Dream" to 6th and "Braveheart" to 7th.



11-year-old Jessica Pyfer of Petaluma, CA, showing the determination that won her the Children's/Adult Amateur Classic on her 14.1 hand mare, Sosha



Zach, a young Grand Prix fan

A new award and perpetual trophy was instituted at the Grand Prix de Santa Fe this year, called The Heart of the Horse. It was created in tribute to four horses owned by the McElvain, McConnell and Klein families that were tragically lost in a trailer fire in April. Famed artist Star Liana York designed the trophy, depicting four jumping horses. The trophy has plaques which are to be inscribed with the names of the horse and rider chosen each year during the show for exhibiting the best qualities of courage, heart and ability. This year's winner was Anne Frankel of Northridge, California on her own "Here and Now." Anne won the McElvain Oil Speed Derby on Friday, and won the Sandia BMW/Mini Junior/Amateur Owner Jumper Classic on Saturday. The Heart of the Horse Award is destined to become a much sought-after honor in the equestrian sport world.

Canadian Olympic team member John Pearce on Chianto in the \$1000 Speed Derby 1.40m class

Sarah Tredennick and "Special Verdict," newly out of the young rider ranks, served notice to their peers with the fastest of the four-fault rounds for 4th place. Brandie Holloway made her drive from Kansas City worthwhile by taking home two checks totaling \$3600, with "Gabriella Z" in 5th and "Argentina" in 9th. Show co-founder Guy McElvain was pleased with his shiny brown 8th place ribbon to match his shiny brown horse, "Chinook."

All who contested this year's classes at the Grand Prix de Santa Fe, whether in the Speed Derbies, Children/Adult Amateur and Junior/AO Classics, or the Grand Prix itself, must have learned a lot. It was also show director Caroline Stevenson's hope that everyone left thinking it was the friendliest show they had ever experienced, and that they will be back next year to test their skills again, against a backdrop of blue skies, mountains, and white tents.



From left to right, John and Shala McConnell, Guy and Sharon McElvain, and Betty McElvain, waiting to present the "Heart of the Horse" award to the best horse-and-rider of the show, Anne Frankel and Here and Now



Co-founder Brian Gonzales wearing his hunt colors in his role as host and emcee for the Grand Prix



Monte Cristo enjoying his winner's bouquet of roses while Bjorn Ikast and wife Clara just enjoy the moment



left to right – George VanValkenberg, Lynn Beasley, Isabella Searcy



(left) Grand Prix de Santa Fe event coordinator Phyllis M. Gonzales and Sandy Cunningham of Uncharted Outposts

A Magical Night of Good Fortune!

Saturday, June 27, 2009, The Grand Prix de Santa Fe's Sixth Annual Charity Gala held a night of magical fun and good fortune on Saturday evening, June 27. The festive party included fine food and wine, dancing, casino games and a silent/live auction. The evening's festivities took place in the VIP tent on the Grand Prix Field at Las Campanas Santa Fe.



Girls just want to have fun



Ian Griffis



Show judge Dianne De Franceaux Grod



Sylvie & Chris Rochettee



Show manager Jeffrey Gilbert & Ylva Aberg