



## The Virginia Festival of Champions

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A Wynning Advantage, LLC

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### **Surprise Wins the \$5,000 USHJA National Hunter Derby, presented by the Heisley Family Foundation**

*Surprise*, owned by Brittany Warden and ridden by Chad Keenum of The Plains, Virginia won the \$5,000 [USHJA](#) National Hunter Derby, presented by the Heisley Family Foundation yesterday, besting a field of twenty-one horse and rider teams.

*Surprise* and Keenum led after the Classic Round with their score of 91.

The Handy round shuffled the standings several times and when *Surprise* and Keenum entered the ring, the leading combined score was earned by Kristen Cox' *Hela*, ridden by Megan Young of Jacksonville, Florida. After a Classic score of 85, they earned a Handy score of 92 for a total of 177, the overall score Keenum and *Surprise* needed to beat.



Keenum piloted *Surprise* around the course designed by Nancy Wallis of Lambertville, New Jersey. The pair earned a Handy score of 87 for a combined 178 and secured the win. "All the distances came up nicely and the course flowed really well," commented Keenum. "I love Megan, she's a great friend of mine and we both train with Rodney Bross. She [Megan Young] did the inside turn after the two-stride oxer and I did the same; the striding really suited us," he commented.

"*Surprise* is a 9-year-old we've had for three years and is owned by Amateur, Brittany Warden. He does the 3'3" Amateurs and 3'6" Greens and he's been a great horse for us. He's going to be doing the 3'6" this year as well as the 3'6" amateurs," he added.

Third place was awarded to *Cobham Park*, owned and ridden by Krysia Nelson of Keswick, Virginia for their combined score of 176.5. *Jarnac*, owned and ridden by Joann Cangelosi of Leesburg, Virginia earned a fourth-place finish for their combined score of 176.

Nelson returned to the winner's circle, this time in the irons of her own *Advocat* for a fifth-place ribbon after earning a combined score of 167.5. Nelson also earned the [EMO](#) Leading Amateur Derby Rider Award.

Missy Chiles' *Mexicali Blues*, ridden by Jocelyn Martin of Louisa, Virginia placed sixth with a combined score of 158 and seventh was awarded to *Mr. President*, owned by Sophia Vella and ridden by Grace Long of Middleburg, Virginia for their overall score of 155.

*Wiser*, owned by Ceil Wheeler and ridden by Ellie Laferty of Roanoke, Virginia, finished in eighth place with a score of 154.5 and ninth was awarded to Mount Fair Equine, LLC's *Roland Park*, ridden by Dudley MacFarlane of Crozet, Virginia for their combined score of 150.5.

Katie Cooper of Owings Mills, Maryland, rode her own *Kenzo* to a tenth-place finish after earning a combined score of 150, and also secured a twelfth-place ribbon with the JP Group's *Jackpower*. Jocelyn Martin rode Michelle Newton's *Dressed in Blue* to an eleventh placing.

Lauren Satola of Fulton, Maryland was awarded the [EMO](#) Leading Junior Derby Rider.

"We thought we were going to have terrible weather today, but it really cleared up nicely. It rained earlier, but the footing held up really well. I watched all the rounds and not one horse slipped or tripped. There wasn't a refusal in this course," said Keenum. "The ring crew has been amazing all week. Nancy [Wallis] designed and set a beautiful Derby course and it rode so nicely," he added.

"We show here 5 or 6 times a year, both in schooling shows and the winter shows. We love coming to the Virginia Horse Center. My clients are the Lowham Ruzzo family, that's TTR Sotheby's, and they sponsor this show because they love coming here. We all especially enjoy the hospitality," he commented.

Photo credits: Teresa Ramsay



Brittany Warden's *Surprise*, ridden by Chad Keenum, won the \$5,000 [USHJA](#) National Derby, presented by The Heisley Family Foundation. Leading Groom Award was presented to Ben Smith.

Photo credit: Teresa Ramsay

## About the Heisley Family Foundation

The Heisley Family Foundation was created as a legacy to the Heisley family and is deeply rooted in Virginia equestrian tradition and sport.

Mr. Heisley's deep and enduring love of Virginia and his family is why the The Heisley Family Foundation supports the Virginia Horse Center and The Festival of Champions.

The Heisley Family Foundation is committed to the promotion of the care and wellbeing of our equine partners and the history of the equestrian sport tradition.



## EMO Presents Derby Leading Rider Awards



Lauren Satola of Fulton, Maryland was awarded the [EMO](#) Leading Junior Derby Rider.

Photo credit: Teresa Ramsay



Krisia Nelson won the [EMO](#) Leading Amateur Derby Rider Award.

Photo credit: Teresa Ramsay

## About the EMO Agency

[The EMO Agency](#) is the sponsor of the Leading Amateur Rider and Leading Junior Rider Awards in the \$5,000 [USHJA](#) National Hunter Derbies, presented by the Heisley Family Foundation.

Not every business or company can claim they have stood the test of time. It means continuing to serve with dedication over many years if not decades. It means making a commitment and always staying the course through thick and thin.

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## Start them Young

Brylee Durso of Shepherdstown, West Virginia won the Virginia Horse Show Association Pony Jr/Amateur Handler Award yesterday with her own three-year-old Welsh pony, *Yo Gotti*.

Nine-year-old Durso said, "I started riding ponies when I was two and just started showing in them in hand. This is the sixth time I have done this," said Durso.

Her mother, Sarah Lowe commented, "She started doing the handling at Upperville last year with a three-year-old and got a fourth." Lowe, a lifelong horsewoman said, "Brylee is learning how to show in hand. She's starting to figure it out and she loves it. This pony, we call him *Lenny*, was a gift from Kym Smith to Brylee. Brylee has done all the work with him; she broke him and does walk trot and canter. *Lenny* is like a puppy dog. All my ponies are like that; I have fourteen and though they're not all mine, most of them are," she laughed.

"We've been showing at the Virginia Horse Center for years and used to come to all of the local shows here. The Virginia Horse Center is a couple of hours from our home in West Virginia, but it is so easy to get to," commented Lowe. "Brylee has been riding the hunters and she'll start riding in the jumpers this summer. We have been doing all the big A shows for about three years now and we're really into it. She's having so much fun," she added.

*Photo credit: A Wynning Advantage*



Cheryl Maye and Harmony Sporthorses' Free Style

*Photo credit: A Wynning Advantage*



Brylee Durso and *Yo Gotti*

*Photo credit: A Wynning Advantage*

## On Deck at the Encore!

The Lexington Spring Encore is underway at the beautiful Virginia Horse Center in Lexington, Virginia. The action-packed week will round out the second installment of the Virginia Festival of Champions which benefits the [Virginia Horse Center](#).

Upcoming highlights this week include:

Saturday: \$25,000 George L Ohrstrom, Jr. Grand Prix

Sunday: \$5,000 Jr. A/O 1.35m Classic

*Photo credit: Teresa Ramsay*



# About the Virginia Festival of Champions

The Lexington Spring Encore, the second installment of the Virginia Festival of Champions, is underway.

The Lexington Spring Premiere and the Lexington Spring Encore are events owned by the Virginia Horse Center Foundation and are benefit events for the Foundation. The Lexington National Horse Show concludes the 2022 Festival of Champions August 10th-14th.

If you would like to [donate](#) to the Virginia Horse Center, please [click here](#).



For those of you planning on competing at these world-class events:

The [prize list](#) is online. Enter [online](#) and [reserve your stalls!](#)

Show highlights include:

- [USEF](#) Premiere AA Hunter Competition
- [WCHR](#) Recognized Event
- \$5000 [USHJA](#) Hunter Derby presented by The Heisley Family Foundation Week 1 & 2
- \$10,000 [Nutrena](#) Open Welcome Class each week
- \$25,000 Grand Prix each week
- [USHJA](#) Green Incentives
- Jumper 4 Star

Weekly schedules can viewed here for [Week II](#).

The third installment of the Virginia Festival of Champions takes place August 10-14. If you would like to sign up for the emailed version of the August prize list, [let us know!](#)

For more information, please contact Keedie Leonard [colebelle@msn.com](mailto:colebelle@msn.com)

*Photo Credit: Teresa Ramsay*

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## Become a Sponsor

[Become a sponsor of the Virginia Horse Center!](#) Support the sport and the magnificent facility.

[Please click here](#) if you're interested in supporting the Virginia Horse Center. For those interested in the barn renovations or the efforts to improve the footing, please contact [Glenn T. Petty](#).

For those interested in the Banner Sponsorship Program, please email [judy@dcbishops.com](mailto:judy@dcbishops.com).

Interested in sponsoring the Virginia Festival of Champions series? Email Lisa at [festivalofchamps@yahoo.com](mailto:festivalofchamps@yahoo.com) for more information.



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## About the Virginia Horse Center Foundation

The [Virginia Horse Center Foundation](#) provides a world-class facility hosting regional, national, and international equestrian events. The Virginia Horse Center Foundation envisions a unique, bucolic landmark to honor and celebrate the timeless, special bond between mankind and the horse through safe, fair and spirited equestrian competition.

If you would like to donate now, please [click here](#).

Thank you!



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