



Roberts Secures the Silver while Canadian Olympians have a rough start in the International Division at the Royal Horse Show.

November 10, 2009

Toronto, Ontario – What a night for the three-time Champion of the Royal Horse Show's **Good Crop Services Indoor Eventing**, Waylon Roberts of Port-Perry, ON. From finishing second last, last night, to second tonight – the runner-up position has never looked so good. The win went to 2003 Pan-American Games Team Silver medalist, Penny Rowland of Orangeville, ON, and Sinead Halpin riding for the United States finished third overall.

Roberts noted that mom (Olympian Kelly Plitz) and dad (Olympian Ian Roberts, also a competitor in the series) had made some suggestions following his 20-fault round last night.

"My parents said 'fix it', and then they told me how to fix it, and for once I listened to them!" laughed Roberts following the class tonight. "They said 'just ride it better' so this morning we went back to the basics, working on flatwork and balance, to try to be more in tune with each other." The strategy obviously paid off.

While in previous years the course has been dramatically altered from the first to second nights, this evening's course was nearly identical to that of last night. The changes came in some of the distances between the fences, and in the strategic placement of "decoration" around the ring, which impacts where riders can cut corners and perhaps shave off those all-importance few seconds.

"Some of the angles were different tonight and with the placement of the decorations you really had to think about whether or not to try and make those tough turns," explained Rowland. "I would have tried a couple of those turns but when Oliver had problems I just thought 'nahhhh!' and I played it safe. I was a little slower tonight but went for the clean."

British superstar and current European Champion, Oliver Townend came into tonight in second, having had a fantastic ride on a young horse in the first round last night. Unfortunately they took two chances tonight which just didn't work out, and ended up costing them many valuable seconds in added time.

"He was much improved jumping-wise, in terms of carefulness tonight, but I think I treated him a bit like a more experienced horse and got caught out." explained Townend. "Once he had his run-out at the keyhole I thought we might as well go for a placing – we have nothing to lose – and then we had a stop at the corner. I should have taken a bit more time but that's the difference between winning and losing. I went to win and it didn't work this time. But it will next time!" grinned Townend as he departed.

Today was also the kick-off of the International Division for Open Jumpers, with \$50,000 being disbursed between two classes: the **\$25,000 International Power & Speed** this afternoon and the **\$25,000 Jolera International Jumper Welcome** which started at 10:00 this evening and saw 24 starters.

Top Canadians **Ian Millar** and **Jill Henselwood** would probably rather go back to bed and start over though – Millar parted company from Stedet's Leroy this afternoon; and Henselwood, second-last to jump, misread the placement of the start line and failed to activate the timers before jumping the first fence. Both were eliminated.

Todd Minikus (USA) and Britain's **Nick Skelton** should be considerably happier with their day, however, finishing 3-4 and 1-2 respectively in today's classes. Ireland's **Dermott Lennan** took top honours in the opening event while new Canadian **Yann Candele** snagged third in the Jolera speed event. This week's International courses are being designed by renowned American course designer **Anthony D'Ambrosio** of Red Hook, NY, who also designed the courses at the 2009 World Cup Final in Las Vegas.

Minikus, who went eighth in the order, took one look at the list of riders still to come and figured he better just "go for it."

"I got lucky," summed up Minikus with a chuckle. "I went early, so I thought I had to go pretty good because that list is stout with Nick Skelton, Michael Whitaker, McLain Ward, Margie Engle... so I left a stride out to the triple bar, did a couple of inside turns and Alaska jumped awesome." he concluded.

Minikus will show his other horse, Pavarotti, in tomorrow night's **\$100,000 CN FEI World Cup™ Qualifier**, as Alaska won the President's Cup at the Washington Horse Show and this week it's "Pavarotti's turn to be the Grand Prix Horse."

"I didn't see Todd go," explained runner-up Skelton, "I knew he was quick though so I just went around as quick as I thought I could without going too crazy and having a rail down. I've got to jump him tomorrow night (in the CN class) and I'll be happy if I'm second then too!" Rounding out the top three was **Yann Candele** of Caledon, ON, who has finally received his red jacket to ride for the Canadians, having received his citizenship after riding for his native France in previous years.

"I was very pleased with Mustique tonight – she was very efficient and not 'by description' a speed horse. I went early in the evening so I did what I had to do and took all the options and inside turns available to me to save time. She is a little slower in the air than a regular speed horse – I did all the inside turns which put me in third at 64 seconds, and the winner was 59 so that tells you something! But we were clean which was the main thing."

This year's Royal Horse Show continues with a full slate including the \$100,000 CN FEI World Cup™ Qualifier Wednesday evening, followed by CDI 3* Dressage, presented by Dominion Regalia on Thursday prior to the brand new, \$50,000 Team Challenge also Thursday evening. The event runs through November 15th. By the time the competition ends, nearly \$750,000 will have been awarded in prize money, making The Royal the most prestigious and hotly contested event of the season. For more information, media accreditation, live webcasting, complete schedule, results and to purchase tickets, please visit www.royalfair.org.

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Please advise of web postings.

The Final Standings for the \$10,000 Good Crop Services Indoor Eventing Championship should read as follows:

Rider / Hometown / Horse

1. Penny Rowland / Orangeville, ON / Roundabout
2. Waylon Roberts / Port Perry, ON / Chocco De Pomme
3. Sinead Halpin / Gladstone, NJ / Showdown

\$25,000 Jolera International Jumper Welcome

Rider / Hometown / Horse / Score

1. Todd Minikus / Wellington, FL / Alaska / 0.00:59.090
2. Nick Skelton / Great Britain / Nemo 119 / 0.00:63.740
3. Yann Candele / Caledon, ON / Mustique / 0.00:64.440
4. Gerco Schroder / NED / Eurocommerce Seattle / 0.00:67.170
5. Amy Millar / Perth, ON / Romanov / 0.00:68.920

Attached Photo: Waylon Roberts of Port Perry, ON, vaulted up the scoreboard to finish in second place overall in the \$10,000 Good Crop Services Indoor Eventing Championships with Chocco de Pomme.

USA's Todd Minikus claimed the \$25,000 Jolera International Jumper Welcome with Alaska (pictured here) as well as finishing third this afternoon with Pavarotti.

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