



Opening Day at The Royal Horse Show was fit for a Prince, a Duchess and Mac Cone, who won Round One of the Canadian Show Jumping Championships presented by Greenhawk.

November 6, 2009

Toronto, Ontario – The 87th Royal Horse Show opened with pomp and ceremony this morning, with Prince Charles and Camilla, Duchess of Cornwall in attendance in front of a healthy crowd of horse show enthusiasts. The Royal couple then toured the Fair separately, viewing agriculture and equestrian displays and interacting with competitors and visitors alike before departing on the rest of their Canadian tour.

Nearly ten hours later, it was veteran Canadian show jumper Mac Cone's turn to be feted in the horse show ring, following his exciting win of round one of the **\$100,000 Canadian Show Jumping Championships presented by Greenhawk.**

Although Cone and his 2008 Olympic partner Ole didn't have the fastest time of the evening they did manage to leave all the jumps up – a feat Cone's Olympic team-mate **Ian Millar** didn't accomplish, dropping him to second place.

Cone cracked a joke following the completion of the class that he was at a "horrible disadvantage" having to go second in the order, while team-mates Ian Millar and Jill Henselwood had the coveted final spots, and as such were able to plan every gallop and turn. That will change in tomorrow night's second round, which is run in the reverse order of standings, putting Cone in the ring in that favoured final position.

"We competed indoors at Syracuse last week which was a really nice setup for this week," remarked Cone following the awards ceremony. "Ole is really on top of his game right now, looking around the turns and to the next jump. Anthony D'Ambrosio sets a good course – it was good to see height and width tonight and not a typical smaller, opening night course. He won't let us off easy tomorrow night!"

Three obstacles on course proved to be the undoing of many a rider tonight. Fences four and 11 were set on the opposing short ends of the ring, on angles, forcing the riders to turn off the rail and cut the corner to save valuable seconds in the speed class. The other 'bogey' was the second jump of the combination at 10A/B, a vertical to oxer combination requiring a height effort first, followed by an extreme width effort which many were simply not able to achieve. Cone was also quicker across the ground than many who opted to try for the 'conservative clear' round, some more successfully than others.

"He's such a quick little horse, the main thing is to keep his brain from buzzing too much, to focus on keeping the jumps up. But he was really happy out there tonight." explained Cone.

Second-place finisher Ian Millar did **not** opt for the conservative clear, putting his foot down from the start to best Cone's overall time, but knocking down one rail in the process, adding four penalty seconds to his overall time. Defending Champion Kean White finished third, and is definitely not out of the running for the overall title. The top two finishers from the Canadian Championships who have not already qualified for next week's International division will proceed through, so at this stage, every point counts.

Round two of the Championships headlines tomorrow's evening performance in the Ricoh Coliseum, which also features the new **Horse Sport Pony Hunter Winner's Stake** and the Canadian Cowgirls Drill Team. Highlights of the second week's International jumper division includes the **\$100,000 CN FEI World Cup™ Qualifier**, the **\$50,000 Weston Canadian Open**, the inaugural **\$50,000 Royal Team Challenge** and the **\$75,000 Ricoh Big Ben International Grand Prix**.

This year's Royal Horse Show will run 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.

Rider / Hometown / Horse / Time

1. Mac Cone / King City, ON / Ole / 65.500
2. Ian Millar / Perth, ON / Redefin / 68.150
3. Kean White / Rockwood, ON / Celena Z / 68.490
4. Beth Underhill / Schomberg, ON / Top Gun / 68.540
5. Erynn Ballard / Tottenham, ON / Simply Ahorn / 69.590

Attached Photos: HRH Prince Charles and Camilla, Duchess of Cornwall officially opened the Royal Horse Show this morning, as part of their visit to the 87th Royal Agricultural Winter Fair. At the podium is Gayle McPherson, President and Chair of the Board and beside the Duchess, Michael Belcourt, past-President of the Fair.

Mac Cone and Ole now lead the Canadian Championships presented by Greenhawk, following their victory in the first leg of the series tonight at the Royal Horse Show.

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