



## **Harrie Smolders of the Netherlands Takes the \$50,000 Weston Canadian Open, While Canada Charges up the Leaderboard to Finish Third Through Sixth**

*As the International division looks to it's pinnacle, the veterans of the sport show they still have what it takes.*

November 12, 2010

Toronto, Ontario – With just two International jumper classes left at the Royal, tonight's \$50,000 Weston Canadian Open gave audiences a taste of what is still to come. Tonight was all about going fast and keeping the rails up. With no second chances, Harrie Smolders from the Netherlands was the one to step forward to collect the silver trophy, but he was followed closely by former World Champion Dermott Lennon, and by a raft of top Canadian riders.

“My horse jumped very well,” said Smolders of the 13-year-old Dutch Warmblood stallion Exquis Powerfee. “He is in good shape at the moment. Last week he was third in the World Cup in Syracuse and he did very well this week. I can use him for everything. He is very competitive.”

When recounting tonight's course design by Anthony D'Ambrosio of Red Hook, NY, Smolders stated, “You had to go fast but you had to think too.”

While it's only the second year of course designing at The Royal for D'Ambrosio, he is no stranger to it. “It's good being here. I love The Royal,” he stated quite simply. “I used to compete here a lot. The last time I was here as a rider I was the Open Jumper champion!”

Second place went to Dermott Lennon of Ireland, and the Canadian riders - Ian Millar, Beth Underhill and Jill Henselwood - followed right behind in the 3rd, 4th and 5th positions respectively.

Canada's Ian Millar, who finished with a fault-free round, was on a horse that is new to The Royal this year. Star Power, a 9-year-old Dutch Warmblood, appears to have the potential to live up to his name. Tonight's commentator Nancy Wetmore stated that she was "so impressed with this horse. It jumps better and better every time it gets into the ring."

Earlier in the evening The Royal was host to the \$5,000 Hackney Pony Canadian Championship Stake. The class, judged by Chris Gantley of Paris, Kentucky, finished with a clear winner by the name of Lord Ovation.

"I decided to work the class tonight," stated Gantley. "I needed to see the winner step high at a slower pace and I expected this one could do it. I got to see exactly what I was looking for."

Lord Ovation owned by Kathryn Boyd of Newmarket, Ontario is trained by Larry Ella in neighbouring Schomberg.

Saturday's afternoon matinee features the ever-popular \$15,000 Canine-Equine Challenge starring the President's Choice SuperDogs. Kids of all ages love this fast-paced event, where horse and SuperDog are teamed up, and each jumps a course of obstacles in the ring. The fastest combined time wins. The evening performance will cap off the International division with the \$75,000 Ricoh Big Ben Challenge, which has been won by Britain's Michael Whitaker the past three years in a row.

Sunday brings Christmas to The Royal and a special family feature called "Woof and Hoof" to the Horse Show. This fun compilation of equine excellence will feature special appearances by Curtis Joseph and Wendel Clark, and will be co-hosted by **Heartland's Amber Marshall**. Tickets to this fun, afternoon event are still available through Ticketmaster or the Royal's website [www.royalfair.org](http://www.royalfair.org).

***About the Royal Horse Show and Royal Agricultural Winter Fair** ~ A tradition since 1922, the Royal Horse Show brings top horses and riders from Canada the U.S. and abroad, including Olympic and World champions, to Toronto each November to compete for more than \$750,000 in prize money and Championships. Over 1,000 horses of all shapes and sizes participate in show jumping, dressage, indoor eventing, driving, coaching and so much more, over the ten-days of hotly contested competition. Special features such as the Spirit of the Horse Ring, EquiMania!, the Farmer's Market, Trade-Fair Shopping, educational and agricultural events & competition round out this family tradition. Since its debut,*

*the Royal has been a highlight of the Toronto fall social calendar, visited by Royalty, politicians, farmers and horse-enthusiasts for generations. For more information, The Royal Online's live webcasting, complete schedule, results and to purchase tickets, please visit [www.royalfair.org](http://www.royalfair.org).*

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Media Contact:

Michelle Dunn

AIPS / IAEJ

Royal Horse Show

c. 905-464-3056

[mdunn@royalfair.org](mailto:mdunn@royalfair.org) \$50,000 Weston Canadian Open

Rider / Horse / Hometown / Score

1. Harrie Smolders / Exquis Powerfee / NED / 0:58.11
2. Dermott Lennon / Hallmark Elite / IRE / 0:58.29
3. Ian Millar / Star Power / Perth, Ontario / 0:61.01
4. Beth Underhill / Quelqu'un de la Musardiere / Schomberg, Ontario / 0:68.20
5. Jill Henselwood / Bottom Line / Oxford Mills, Ontario / 4:56.66



Attached Photo: Harrie Smolders of The Netherlands put in a consistent yet quick, clear round, to take tonight's \$50,000 Weston Canadian Open at the Royal Horse Show. Veteran Canadian Team riders finished hot on his heels.

Photo © Ben Radvanyi. Available in high resolution.