



Action-Packed Opening Weekend at The Royal Horse Show Offers First-Class Competition, Fun and Excitement for the Whole Family!

Canadian Show Jumping Championships presented by Greenhawk, Good Crop Services Indoor Eventing Championships and The Ontario Toyota Dealers Royal Rodeo Headline a Revamped Opening Weekend at the 88th Royal Horse Show.

October 15, 2010

Toronto, Ontario – The 2010 edition of the Royal Horse Show, part of the 88th Royal Agricultural Winter Fair, will open Friday, November 5th and the action won't stop all weekend long!

Kicking off the weekend are back-to-back rounds of the **\$100,000 Canadian Show Jumping Championships Presented by Greenhawk**. The top talent in Canadian equestrian sport will meet not only to vie for the title (and the cash), but also for two berths in the second week's coveted International Division. Among the heavy-hitters will be nine-time Olympic veteran **Ian Millar**, his son **Jonathon Millar** - hot off a solid performance at the recent **World Show Jumping Championships** - and the 2009 defending Canadian Champion and Olympic Medal Team-mate of Millar Sr., **Mac Cone**. Cone brings a new mount to the Championships this year in Unanimous, a horse he has been competing successfully for the past year in and Canada and the United States.

"My Championship partner from 2009, Ole, won't be competing in Toronto this fall but I'm excited to be bringing Unanimous in his place," said Cone. "He's just had a good win and hopefully he will be up to the task of defending the Canadian Championship. He has some big shoes to fill though!"

NEW to Opening Weekend this year is **Good Crop Services Indoor Eventing**. Now in its fifth year at The Royal, this tremendous "hybrid" of the traditional outdoor 'equestrian triathlon' blends the skill and accuracy of show jumping with the thrill and adventure of cross-country riding. Indoor Eventing features a modified course of rugged cross-country jumps such as hedges, solid walls and logs, and a bank mixed with fragile stadium jumps, whose poles and planks are designed to fall at the slightest nudge of a horse's hoof. Penalties accumulate over two rounds of competition and at the end the rider with the lowest score is declared the victor.

Opening Sunday, November 7th, brings the **Ontario Toyota Dealers Royal Rodeo** to the Coliseum once more. The best of the west goes head to head with those from the east in all the original extreme sports. Bull riding, bronc riding and barrel racing are the highlights of this exciting afternoon – you won't want to miss a moment! Thrills and spills, and more than a few minutes on the edge of your seat... it's **RODEO DAY** at The Royal!

Opening Weekend is not *just* about competition however! Feature presentations in the Horse Show include **Stacey Westfall**, a western reining rider who performs without the aid of a bridle; **Tunes, Tempis & All that Jazz**, a dressage pas-de-deux performed to a medley of **Chicago** tunes sung LIVE by **Elizabeth Elming** and **Horse Hockey**, a polo match played by NHL legends **Darryl Sittler, Gary Roberts, Rick Vaive** and **Brad Marsh**. These four hockey greats will be signing autographs between Noon and 1:00pm, with a wristband policy in effect.

From there, highlights of the second week's International Jumper Division include the **\$100,000 FEI World Cup™ Qualifier**, the **\$50,000 Weston Canadian Open**, the **\$50,000 Jolera Gambler's Choice** and the **\$75,000 Ricoh Big Ben International Grand Prix**.

"This year the horse show scheduling exudes tremendous energy from the opening weekend through till the closing Sunday," enthuses President and Chair of the Board, Gayle McPherson. "There is terrific appeal for all and whether you are a knowledgeable horseperson or a family looking for unique entertainment, you will find yourselves cheering your hearts out as the competitors vie for those coveted red ribbons!"

Dressage fans won't be disappointed by the crowd-pleasing **Quadrille** competition or the top level **CDI***** competition, where **Ashley Holzer** will be defending her 2009 crown, coming off a top-ten placing at the recent **World Dressage Championships**. Second Sunday's "**Woof & Hoof**" Matinee will be co-hosted this year by **Heartland's Amber Marshall** and will feature the **One-Armed Bandit**, promising fun for the whole family.

Royal Horse Show tickets include full admission to all the education, magic and excitement of the rest of The Royal, including celebrity chef **Duff Goldman** from "Ace of Cakes" who will open The Fair the morning of November 5th before judging a 'throw-down' style competition between **The Opener & Restaurant Makeover's David Adje** and **Harlem Underground's Anthony Mair**.

This year's Royal Horse Show will run November 5th through 14th, 2010. By the time the competition ends, over \$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.