



## **Margie Engle Takes \$75,000 Ricoh Big Ben Challenge, Ending Whitaker's Three-Year Streak**

*Ireland's Dermott Lennan named Leading International Rider for the second year in a row while Ian Millar named Leading Canadian Rider and his mount, Victoria, takes the "All Canadian Cup" for top Canadian horse.*

November 13, 2010

Toronto, Ontario – One of America's most successful show jumpers of all time, Margie Engle of West Palm Beach, Florida, won the \$75,000 Ricoh Big Ben Challenge in Toronto this evening, closing the week of international competition for another year. A standing-room only, capacity crowd of nearly 5,700 spectators created an electric atmosphere in the Ricoh Coliseum.

Engle, who has been riding at The Royal nearly every year since 1989, delivered the only fault-free performance in the seven-way jump off, emerging victorious with Indigo, a horse she has only been riding since April of this year.

"The Royal is one of our favourite indoor shows," said Engle following the awards. "It's one of the older, traditional shows where everybody still gets dressed up, and it's a very educated group of spectators which always makes it nice for the competitors."

The pair, who won the \$100,000 World Cup Grand Prix last week at an event in Syracuse, ended a three-year winning streak of this class by Great Britain's Michael Whitaker. Today was not without success for Team Whitaker, however, as Michael won the ever-popular Canine-Equine Challenge in this afternoon's matinee horse show.

Former World Champion, Dermott Lennon of Ireland, had the unfortunate luck of riding first in the jump-off tiebreaker, laying down a quick time of 36.97 seconds but pulling a rail down in the process to finish second. Lennon was crowned

Leading International Rider this week, following consistent results in all the major classes. McLain Ward of Brewster, NY, rode a more conservative round but also dropped a rail to round out the top three.

Tonight's highest-placed Canadian was 19-year-old sensation Sarah Johnstone, of Orangeville, Ontario, who rode aggressively in the jump off but just couldn't keep the jumps up over the difficult course designed by Anthony D'Ambrosio of Red Hook, NY. She finished in fourth with just one rail down, on a time of 41.65 seconds.

Dermott Lennon was also named Leading International Rider for the week, with Millar taking top honours as the Leading Canadian Rider. Millar's mount Victoria, who is owned by a Millar Bro student, Karen Matthews Sparks, was named the top Canadian horse, taking the "All Canadian Cup."

The week-long "battle of the First Families of Royal show jumping" between the Millars and Whitakers also came to a head this evening, with the total dollars won on each side tallying out as follows: Team Millar – grand total of \$30,460 over the International week and Team Whitaker – grand total of an impressive \$44,840, resulting in a decisive win for the Brits following a fantastic week of competition from both sides.

Another family connection was made today in the Horse Show, in the form of a horse named Glass Slipper, who was competed by both father and daughter this morning in the Lieutenant Governor's and Governor General's Cup classes. David Ballard showed on the line in the Governor General's Cup and Erynn Ballard rode under saddle in the Lieutenant Governor's Cup. Glass Slipper was victorious on both occasions.

His Excellency, the Right Honourable David Johnston, Governor General of Canada, was in attendance at the horse show tonight to make the presentations for the two classes.

Tonight capped off the International show jumping division at this year's Royal Horse Show, where a field of 25 competed for over \$365,000 in prize money this past week.

Sunday brings Christmas to The Royal and with it a special family edition of the Royal Horse Show called "Woof and Hoof." This exciting 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 and can be purchased same-day at both main entrances to the Fair. The matinee begins at 1:00pm and matinee tickets include full general admission to the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair.

***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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### \$75,000 RICOH BIG BEN CHALLENGE

Rider / Hometown / Horse / Score

1. Margie Engle / West Palm Beach, FL / Indigo / 0:40.81
2. Dermott Lennon / IRE / Hallmark Elite / 4:36.97
3. McLain Ward / Brewster, NY / Antares F / 4:38.16
4. Sarah Johnstone / Orangeville, ON / Starlet / 4:41.65
5. Karen Cudmore / Omaha, NE (CAN) / Southern Pride / 4:42.08



Attached Photo: Margie Engle guides Indigo to victory in the \$75,000 Ricoh Big Ben Challenge, capping off the International week at The Royal Horse Show.

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