



Opening Weekend at The 89th Royal Horse Show Offers Thrills, Spills and Some Red-Hot Riding!

The Canadian Show Jumping Championships presented by Greenhawk, Good Crop Services Indoor Eventing Championships, Horse Hockey and

The Ontario Toyota Dealers Royal Rodeo Headline Opening Weekend at the 89th Royal Horse Show.

Toronto, ON – The Honourable David C. Onley, Lieutenant Governor of Ontario, officially opened the 89th Royal Agricultural Winter Fair this morning, and with it, the prestigious Royal Horse Show at the Ricoh Coliseum.

The action begins tonight with the initial rounds of both the \$100,000 Canadian Show Jumping Championships Presented by Greenhawk, and the \$20,000 Good Crop Services Indoor Eventing Championships where the top talent in equestrian sport meet to vie for titles, cash, and in the case of the Canadian Show Jumping Championships, two coveted berths in the second week's International Division. The weekend's Show Jumping Championship entries include nine-time Olympic veteran Ian Millar (Perth, ON), his long-time Canadian team-mate Jill Henselwood (Oxford Mills, ON) and defending Canadian Champion Yann Candele (Caledon, ON).

In its sixth year at The Royal, Good Crop Services Indoor Eventing 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, walls, and a bank, combined 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 nights of competition and at the end the rider with the lowest score is declared the Champion.

Although Port Perry, Ontario's Waylon Roberts has won the Indoor Eventing Championships more often than not, this year may prove the exception with the addition of 2011 Individual Pan-Am Gold medalist Jessica Phoenix (Uxbridge, ON) and the legendary New Zealand rider Mark Todd, whose biography includes two Olympic Gold Medals (1984 & '88), four wins of the Badminton Horse Trials (first in 1980, most recently 2011) and in 2000 was named Event Rider of the 20th Century by the International Equestrian Federation.

"I'm excited to have been invited to come to Toronto and The Royal," says Olympian Mark Todd, who is based out of Great Britain. "I've competed in our Express Eventing in Britain, and

the horses really seem to enjoy the atmosphere, especially the cross-country in the indoor ring. It's great publicity for our sport, and horse sport in general."

Opening weekend also includes the return of Horse Hockey, part of the Saturday matinee horse show performance, where NHL stars Curtis Joseph, Darcy Tucker, Mark Napier and Darryl Sittler will exchange skates for saddle & steeds in an exciting polo match with professional polo players Dave Offen and Cliff Sifton.

Opening Sunday, November 6th, brings the action-packed Ontario Toyota Dealers Royal Rodeo to the Ricoh Coliseum once more. 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! The star of CBC's Heartland, Amber Marshall will be on hand during the Rodeo and will be holding an autograph session for Rodeo ticket holders immediately following the event.

Following opening weekend, International riders will compete between Tuesday, November 8th and Saturday, November 12th, in matinee and evening competitions including Tuesday's \$31,000 Jolera International Welcome, Wednesday's \$100,000 FEI World Cup Grand Prix, Friday's \$50,000 Weston Canadian Open and the sold-out \$75,000 Ricoh Big Ben Challenge, Saturday the 12th.

All weekday matinee Horse Show performances are free with general admission to the Fair. Thursday evening's performance offers an exciting double-bill featuring International show jumping as well as the \$40,000 CDI 3*** FEI Grand Prix Dressage Freestyle to Music competition presented by Dominion Regalia, where Ashley Holzer will appear to defend her 2009 & 2010 titles. The complete timetable is available at www.royalfair.org.

Royal Horse Show tickets include full admission to all the education, magic and excitement of The Royal.

About the Royal Horse Show and Royal Agricultural Winter Fair ~ A family tradition since 1922, the Royal Horse Show brings world-class horses and riders from Canada, the U.S. and overseas, including Olympic and World champions, to Toronto each November to compete for more than \$780,000 in prize money and prestigious Titles. 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 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" LIVE webcasting, complete schedule, results and to purchase tickets, please visit www.royalfair.org.

Media Accreditation at <http://www.royalfair.org/MediaAccreditation> or contact below for Royal Horse Show specific.

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Media Contact:
Michelle Dunn
AIPS / IAEJ
Royal Horse Show
c. 905-464-3056
mdunn@royalfair.org



Attached Photo: Equestrian legend Mark Todd of New Zealand, will compete this weekend in the Good Crop Services Indoor Eventing Championships Friday and Saturday nights, part of the 89th Royal Horse Show at the Ricoh Coliseum.

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Michelle Dunn | The Royal Agricultural Winter Fair Ricoh Coliseum 100 by
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