



November 10, 2008

“Weekend Warrior” Jean Rablat Takes the First Leg of Indoor Eventing at The Royal

Toronto, ON – Jean Rablat may be an amateur in the sport of eventing but tonight he beat a handful of Olympians including an Olympic champion to bring home the win in the first round of the Good Crop Services Indoor Eventing Championship at The Royal Agricultural Winter Fair. Competing in indoor eventing for the first time, Rablat, riding for his native France, showed the pros how it’s done, riding in the unenviable leadoff position and putting down a score that would be chased but not caught all night.

Rablat, with his Irish sport horse Bellaney Rock, took the course at nothing if not an all-out gallop, cutting corners and taking inside turns from jump to jump. They knocked down just one rail in the process, adding four time penalties to their initial time of 56.07 seconds. Hot on his heels a veritable “who’s who” of the eventing world, including Leslie Law of Great Britain (2004 Athens Olympics individual Gold medalist), Darren Chiacchia of the United States (2003 Pan-American Games individual Gold medalist) and Canada’s own Waylon Roberts, member of the 2007 Pan-American Games silver medal winning Team and the two-time defending champion of the Good Crop Services Indoor Eventing series.

Previously a full-time riding professional, Rablat is currently vice-president of a Canadian automotive company, riding now just on evenings and weekends, fuelling his drive to compete as a Canadian at the 2012 Olympic Games.

“It’s such a thrill to have the opportunity to expose our sport of eventing to the larger equestrian community here at The Royal,” said Rablat following his win tonight. “I love going in the ring first, which I know is odd! But if I have too much time to watch I start second-guessing myself. Tonight I went in knowing I could start out fast because my horse is naturally respectful of the jumps. I stuck to the plan and he responded very well. He jumped up the bank very well but I ended up taking one jump on too much of an angle, and he knocked it down. Tomorrow night we will change the approach slightly and hopefully go clean. I don’t intend to let Waylon Roberts win for the third year in a row!”

Eventing is traditionally a three-phase competition, likened to a triathlon, in which the horse and rider compete in dressage, cross-country and stadium jumping. Indoor

Eventing at The Royal features a modified course of portable cross-country obstacles including a bank, brush and “keyhole” jumps; mixed with stadium jumps, where poles and planks will tumble down at the slightest touch. Over two nights, the horse and rider with the fewest overall penalty points will reign supreme.

Good Crop Services Indoor Eventing Championship

Rider / Hometown / Horse

1. Jean Rablat (FRA) / Cambridge, ON / Bellaney Rock
2. Waylon Roberts (CAN) / Port Perry, ON / Myrddin's Sebastian
3. Karl Slezak (CAN) / Caledon, ON / Pavarotti
4. Diana Burnett (CAN) / Blackstock, ON / Manny
5. Leslie Law (GBR) / Bluemont, VA / Urban Legend

The final round of the Good Crop Services Indoor Eventing Championship takes place tomorrow night at 7:45pm, followed by a salute to our 2008 Canadian Olympic eventing team and the Jolera Power and Speed class for International jumpers. Over \$795,000 in prize money will be awarded during the run of the show, on now until November 16th. For complete schedule and information, please visit www.royalfair.org.

ATTACHED PHOTO – may be used in conjunction with this press release only.

French rider Jean Rablat and horse Bellaney Rock, take a leap of faith off the bank en route to winning the first round of the Good Crop Services Indoor Eventing Championship at The Royal Horse Show. Photo credit © Warren Liebmann / www.actionpix.ca

