



IN STRIDE

The Official Magazine of the United States Hunter Jumper Association

*Farewell,
Jersey Boy*
A DERBY CHAMPION RETIRES

Jersey Boy
and Jennifer
Alfano

Derby Champion
Cuba and Victoria
Colvin

Green Incentive
Champion Playbook and
Scott Stewart

Top Hunters Take Center Stage

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Stable Challenge:

Horsemanship, Front and Center

The USHJA Stable Challenge inspires trainers to enhance their students' horsemanship knowledge.



By Whitney Allen

As the summer began in June, so did the USHJA Stable Challenge, presented by *The Plaid Horse*. Now in its fifth year, the program reached a record: more than 1,400 tests taken, a 100 percent increase from 2016. Participants came from all 12 USHJA Zones for the 30-day challenge.

The Stable Challenge originated as a way to promote the Horsemanship Quiz Challenge by engaging trainers to focus on horsemanship with their students. It's now taken a path of its own, and continues to inspire trainers and students to learn more about horses and horsemanship.

Not Just Good Riders—Good Horsemen

Zone 8 winning Stable Challenge trainer Kristin Jacob, of Blue Star Farms in Longmont, Colorado, created a nine-week study session with her riders that included guest speakers and a blog that recapped each session.

Jacob thanked Lisa Munro, an Adult Amateur rider in her barn, for helping organize the sessions. "It takes a lifetime of being around horses to go through all the circumstances that come up," said Jacob. "As it unfolded, we found out that people were really generous and wanted to participate. We

Zone 8 winning trainer Kristin Jacob created a nine-week study session for her students at Blue Star Farms.

got a vet, farrier, a saddle fitter, trainers and a nutritionist as guest speakers."

Jacob shared that the most challenging part of integrating horsemanship into the lesson plans is time.

"The students have an hour with me for their lesson, and then they're off doing other things," she said. "I felt like there were so many things missing; I realize there's so much more that goes on. When I put this course together, I couldn't have done

COURTESY OF BLUE STAR FARMS

it without Lisa because of the time. I'm so busy, and I feel like a lot of other trainers run into that.

"Horsemanship goes beyond 'Can you wrap them? Can you take care of a wound? Do you know when to call a vet?' Really understanding and knowing your horse is another part of it. People are focused on the end goal as opposed to the process. It's hard to try to fit all of that in."

After creating the nine-week study session and having her riders participate in the Stable Challenge, Jacob saw a big difference in the interest level her riders had in horsemanship.

"They were like, 'Whoa! We had no idea what went into all of this.' They would show up after school, and they would take their lesson," she said. "Now, they're more willing to ask questions of the farrier and vet. They really didn't realize what goes on behind the scenes and all the people that are involved in keeping their horses happy and sound."

This was the first time Jacob and her students had participated in the Stable Challenge, and the experience provided her with an opportunity to put together a horsemanship curriculum she may not have created otherwise.

"One of my goals, as far as my career goes, is to make not only good riders, but also good horsemen," she said. "I think having this study guide and making the girls take the



STEPHANIE HICKMAN

Horsemanship Challenge Quiz really helped to create a nice outline for me to educate the girls."

Three's a Charm

Zone 10's Kay Altheuser participated in the Stable Challenge in 2015 and 2016; 2017 marks her third year and her first victory.

"The kids worked hard at this—they all printed out their study guide," she said. "They went through it, and we all got together with our laptops and went over the practice quiz. If they found something they didn't know, they had to look it up in the study guide and read it. Having them work together really made a big difference. They brought snacks and drinks, and made it a fun session."

Altheuser, who works with Jim Hagman and trains in Moorpark, California, at Elvenstar Farm (a USHJA Recognized Riding Academy), has deep roots in horsemanship—and she instills that in her students.

"The riding is really sec-

ondary to the whole package, and if they understand the horsemanship, they're going to understand the riding much better," she said.

As president of the Los Angeles Hunter Jumper Association Horsemastership Competitions, Altheuser has used the Stable Challenge and Horsemanship Quiz Challenge to test the competitors. The competition includes a riding phase, a written phase and a hands-on phase.

"Using the USHJA Quiz Challenge as our written portion is great, because the kids can go and take Level One, and if they qualify, they go on to take Level Two. Their two scores are then their written scores for the LAHJA Horsemastership Competition," she said. "They get the chance to do the national quiz and also the Stable Challenge, so they have three opportunities within the USHJA Quiz Challenge. It's really been a good thing."

Horsemanship Every Day

Zone 3's Susan Deal, of Grovespring Farm in Culpeper, Virginia, utilized her students' involvement with the American National Riding Commission as a way to prepare for the Stable Challenge.

"Besides just being at the stable, participating in the ANRC Junior Horsemanship Challenge and National Championship was the primary prep," said Deal. "Forward riding theory and stable management is a big part of the ANRC, and there's a written test phase of each competition. We also have dinners where we play games and study together."

It's no surprise that Deal and her students won the Stable Challenge in Zone 3. Deal promotes horsemanship to her clients daily and offers horse care classes.

"Our students groom, tack and put away their own horses.

We discuss what each horse might need in terms of care after they ride," she said. "At Grovespring, students are expected to notice the condition of the horse's stall, as well as the horse's behavior. This summer, we're doing a contest where students take on a school horse to groom daily. The student whose project horse has the best overall appearance at the end of the month receives a prize."

In addition to instilling horsemanship in her junior riders, Deal also works with older students.

"We offer a basic horse care course for adults, and camp and clinics for adults and juniors," she noted. "We're fortunate to have professionals in our area willing to have discussions with students regularly. Paul Cronin presents a very educational slide-show discussion on the forward system of riding and another on the history of educated riding. Oliver Brown discusses conformation of horse and hound. Bernie Traurig and Harry deLeyer have both done slide-show presentations here."

Zone Winners

At least three students per trainer had to complete the USHJA Horsemanship Quiz Challenge Practice Quiz from June 15 to July 15 to be eligible for prizes.

At the end of the 30-day challenge, the three top scores under each trainer were averaged to provide an overall



JORDAN KOEPKE

Trainer Susan Deal observed student Megan McCarthy during a jump school. "We discuss what each horse might need in terms of care after they ride," said Deal.

score. Participants who also took the Level One and Level Two HQC quizzes received 10 bonus points for each level they completed.

Each of the high-scoring trainers received a unique, trainer-inspired awards package. This included a helmet from Charles Owen, a hat

from CWD, a one-year membership to Equestriancoach.com, samples from Perfect Products, a pair of Pro Performance horse boots from Professional's Choice, a gift from Rood & Riddle Equine Hospital, a grooming bucket with supplies from Shapley's, gifts from *The Plaid Horse* and

a discount on products from Standlee Hay Company.

For more information about the Stable Challenge, please visit www.ushja.org/stablechallenge. For more information about the USHJA Horsemanship Quiz Challenge, please visit www.ushja.org/HQC.

The Winning Trainers

| Zone | Trainer | Barn |
|---------|------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| Zone 1 | Mitch and Kathy Steege | Red Acre Farm |
| Zone 2 | Brenda Peck | Galemont Farm |
| Zone 3 | Susan Deal | Grovespring Farm |
| Zone 4 | Eleanor Ellis | Evermore Farm |
| Zone 5 | Elaine Schott | River Mountain |
| Zone 6 | Sally Pray | Stillwater Stables |
| Zone 7 | Sarah Trepagnier | Arcadia Hills |
| Zone 8 | Kristin Jacob | Blue Star Farms |
| Zone 9 | Morgan Thomas | Parkside Stables |
| Zone 10 | Kay Altheuser | Elvenstar (a USHJA Recognized Riding Academy) |
| Zone 11 | Amy Quinlan | Dillingham Ranch |
| Zone 12 | Jenny Rousey | Northgate Farm |