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Impressive Rides Kick Off a Sensational Show for the First Day of the California Dressage Society & Region 7 Championships

*By Yellow Horse Marketing for the California
Dressage Society*



Kelly Casey rode Golden State NRW win the Great American Insurance Group/USDF Region 7 First Level Freestyle Championship on the first day of the 2014 CDS Championship Show. Photo: Jennifer M. Keeler

"Every time I come out to the West Coast, I am amazed at the quality of dressage horses and riders out here," said FEI 4* judge Sarah Geikie of Connecticut on the first day of the 47th Annual California Dressage Society (CDS) Championship Show at the Los Angeles Equestrian Center in Burbank, Cal., September 25 - 28, 2014. A notable roster of judges have joined Geikie in Burbank including Brenda Minor (4* CAN), Joan Macartney (4* CAN), Sandra Hotz (3* USA), and Mike Osinski (3* USA) in addition to USEF "S" judges Sandy Osborn, N. Brent Hicks, Peggy Klump, Cindy Canace, Melissa Creswick, Janet Curtis, Carole Hoffman, William Warren, Sue Mandas, and Kristi Wysocki, all of whom had their hands full with six competition rings of non-stop and impressive performances from which to try to determine top placings.

The first round of Great American Insurance Group/USDF Regional Championship sashes were presented in five Freestyle divisions, and the charismatic Westfalen pony stallion Golden State NRW had his dancing shoes on right from the start to kick things off. With a crowd-pleasing Ricky Martin-themed freestyle, the palomino stallion earned the First Level title for owner Melissa Mulchahey under rider Kelly Casey of Livermore, Cal. on a score of 76.917%. Sundi Prechtl of Riverside also caught the judges' eye with her lovely Lusitano stallion Dotango to earn a score of 76.00% and claim the Second Level Freestyle Championship.

Ricky Martin-themed freestyles seemed to be music to the judges' ears as Nancy Szakacs of Hollister, Cal. also used the popular tunes as the soundtrack for her decisive win with 73.750% in the Third Level Freestyle class aboard her own Westfalen gelding Rudi Regali, while Janelle Dunn's long drive south from Turlock, Cal. to ride in these Championships already looks like a worthwhile trip as she rode Rainier to victory in the Fourth Level Freestyle (72.167%). In the Intermediaire I Freestyle Championship, Jackie Ahl-Eckhaus rode to the win with a score of 73.938% aboard longtime partner Wisdom MVS, a KWPN gelding she bred and trained at her Mountain View Sport Horses in Sanger, Cal.

In addition to a full day of championship rides, in-hand sport horse breeding competition was also featured with the Great American Insurance Group/USDF Breeders Championships - West Coast Final. In the Current Year Foal Championship, German Schneider presented the adorable Dutch Warmblood cross filly Joy to win the tricolor sash for owner Patty Mayer on a score of 74.600%. Si Donna MVS (Sir Donnerhall x Lumara by Flemmingh), a four-year-old Oldenburg filly owned and bred by Jackie Ahl-Eckhaus of Sanger, CA, claimed the Mare Championship by earning a score of 78.200% from judges Kristi Wysocki and Sue Madden-Mandas. Kevin Reinig presented Barbara Crawford's two-year-old Oldenburg filly Silhouette SR (by Sir Gregory) to win the Filly Championship with a score of 73.200%. In the Colt/Gelding Championship, Karen Cornelius presented her own two-year-old Hanoverian colt Fiderello (Fidertanz x Dancing Queen by Diorello) to win the division title with a score of 77.650%. The impressive eight-year-old stallion Sondheim OLD (Sandro Hit x Rohdiamant) earned high praise and the best score of the day (79.075%) from the judges in topping the Stallion Championship for owner Marta Kauffman.

Competition also got underway in a plethora of warm-up classes for CDS Horse of the Year divisions, as well as the first round of the CDS Futurity where 69 talented four, five, and six-year-olds are competing for top honors and more than \$15,000 in prize money. All entries competed in the first of two tests which will be compiled to determine overall champions in each age division. Wrapping up a busy first day of competition, adult amateur riders gathered in the Equidome for the CDS Dressage Seat Equitation Challenge, where Caroline Underwood of Bonsall, CA rode her Dutch mare Aruba to claim the blue ribbon with 82.000%, followed closely by Eric Grimm (La Habra Heights, Cal.) with 80.000% aboard his own Oldenburg gelding Remise.

Complete daily results, schedules, and additional competition information about the California Dressage Society Championship Show is available on the CDS website, www.california-dressage.org.

The California Dressage Society, formed in 1967, is a non-profit organization devoted to furthering interest in dressage. It is one of the largest dressage organizations in the nation with more than 4,000 individual members in its 36 Chapters and a rich history of equestrian sport on the West Coast.