

From Green Hunters to Grand Prix: Successful Winter for Hannah Selleck and Descanso Farm

San Juan Capistrano, CA, Thermal, CA, and Wellington, FL – Not many young show jumping professionals are as likely to be found in the green hunter divisions and the young jumper ring as they are in the grand prix ring, but 29-year-old Hannah Selleck is unique in that regard.

As the professional rider for both Meredith Herman's Burgundy Farms in Petaluma, CA, and her own boutique breeding operation, Descanso Farm, Selleck claimed top finishes in all three arenas in Wellington, FL, at HITS Coachella in Thermal, CA, and at the Blenheim Spring Classic CSI₃* in San Juan Capistrano, CA. In the hunter ring, Selleck rode Bayou, owned by Lightfoot Show Stables, to multiple weekly Young Hunter 3'6" championship and reserve championship honors before ultimately sweeping the mid-circuit championship, the second-half circuit championship, and the overall grand circuit championship at HITS Coachella.



Hannah Selleck and Bayou, owned by Lightfoot Show Stables.
Photo by ESI Photography

"When I started with Bayou last year, he was very green," said Selleck of the seven-year-old Hanoverian gelding that she began showing in 2017 at the Sonoma Horse Park. "By the end of the season at Sonoma, he was champion. So going into this season in Thermal, I was excited to show him and knew he had developed a good bit, but he even surprised me with how much of a competitor he was and how consistent he was throughout the circuit."

In the young jumper rings, Selleck is also beginning to see the development of her own horses, bred and raised at her family's Descanso Farm, where they're dedicated to producing top quality sport horses within the U.S.

"It's really exciting to be riding our own horses and now feeling like this is a horse that I can compete and win on," said Selleck, of the Descanso Farm horses, the oldest of which is currently seven years old. "It's such a great feeling as we're now beginning to see the goal through. For a while, when they're very young and in the field, it doesn't feel like as much of a tangible thing if you've never done it before. Now, we're seeing it working and we're seeing them really develop into great horses, and it's very rewarding."

Selleck competed seven-year-old Delphina DF (by Cacique) and six-year-olds Eloise DF (also by Cacique) and Elita Toscana DF (Lamarque—Tosca, Casch) to top ribbons in the 0.90-1.10m jumpers at HITS Coachella and in the Six-Year-Old Young Jumpers at the Palm Beach Masters and the Winter Equestrian Festival (WEF), both in Wellington, FL.



Elita Toscana DF was named the Spy Coast Farm Six-Year-Old Developing Jumper champion during week 12 of the Winter Equestrian Festival.
Photo by Jump Media

"This was Eloise's first show season, and every time, she walked right in and jumped right around," said Selleck of the six-year-old Holsteiner mare. Selleck had given Eloise an extra year to mature before beginning to compete her. "She has more jump than I imagined, so I'm looking forward to working to get her caught up to her age division."

Selleck is equally excited about the future for Elita Toscana DF, a mare that Selleck has a soft spot for. "Her mom was a top horse for me, and she did so much for me," Selleck said of Tosca, a mare she rode to great success throughout her early career, including top-five finishes in CSI₅* competition. "She's very much the same ride, with a lot of the same temperament. We brought her into the six-year-olds at WEF, and she's just been super. She jumped fantastic. She's the furthest along, so it's been very rewarding to see."

With Ilan Ferder in the irons, while Selleck contested the Blenheim Spring Classic CSI3* during week 12 of WEF, Elita Toscana DF finished first and second in the Spy Coast Farm Six-Year-Old Developing Jumpers to ultimately claim the week 12 division championship.

Another special Descanso Farm mare making its way up through the young jumper ranks is Rumpleteazer DF, a five-year-old chestnut by Flexible, currently ridden by U.S. Olympic gold medalist Will Simpson.

"She's a very spectacular mare by Flexible; she's quite bold and has a lot of blood," said Selleck. "We're being very patient with her development and bringing her along slowly because she's one that we really want to produce. She and Will seem to be a really good match, and I know he's very enthusiastic about that mare."

When not working with young horses, Selleck is also continuing to climb the international jumper ranks with her own Barla, a 14-year-old Oldenburg mare. This winter, Selleck and Barla delivered strong performances in both CSI2* and CSI3* competition at WEF and the Palm Beach Masters, before turning in two top four finishes at the Blenheim Spring Silver Tour Final CSI3*.

Selleck and Barla kicked off the show by finishing fourth in the \$5,000 1.40m Speed Stake CSI3* on March 28, and they returned to take third in the \$15,000 1.45m Silver



Hannah Selleck and Barla at HITS Coachella 2018.

Photo by ESI Photography

Tour Classic CSI3* on Friday, March 30.

"Barla's feeling great, and I was so proud of how she jumped at Blenheim," said Selleck of the mare that she's had for the last seven years. "We started back at the Palm Beach Masters, and I had a really consistent winter on her. I know her so well at this point—she's a great consistent mount to jump the bigger tracks."

The next stop on Selleck and Barla's calendar will be the Del Mar National Horse Show, to be held May 1-6, in Del Mar, CA.

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