

Royal Horse Show's Opening Weekend Showcases Top Sport Amy Millar to Defend Canadian Championship title, Lauren Kieffer to Make Royal Debut

Toronto, Ontario – Show jumping and indoor eventing will highlight opening weekend at the Royal Horse Show, held as part of the 96th Annual Royal Agricultural Winter Fair, from November 2 through 11, 2018, in downtown Toronto, ON.

Amy Millar of Perth, ON, will defend her title in the \$125,000 Canadian Show Jumping Championship on Friday and Saturday evenings, November 2 and 3. Having claimed her first national title riding her 2016 Rio Olympic Games partner, Heros, at last year's event, Millar is hoping for a repeat performance.

"Heros is in great form and I'm very excited to be back showing after having my baby," said Millar, who recently returned to the saddle after delivering her second child on July 16. "We both understand the job and our mission is to lay down clear rounds, just like we did last year."

No stranger to the Royal Horse Show, Millar has been attending the annual event since she was a child.

"As a competitor, I love the atmosphere," said Millar, who is in the unique position of defending her Canadian Championship title against her brother, Jonathon, and her father, Ian, a 12-time title holder. "The electricity in the building makes riding in the Canadian Championships really special. I'm looking forward to that feeling of excitement and anticipation."

Opening Night of the Royal

Horse Show will feature the \$25,000 Canadian Show Jumping Championship, Round 1, presented by Lothlorien. Following Friday night's speed round, horse-rider combinations will return in reverse order of standing to tackle the \$100,000 Canadian Show Jumping Championship, Round 2, on Saturday night. Acclaimed course designer Alan Wade of Ireland will set the show jumping tracks throughout this year's Royal Horse Show.

In addition to determining who will be crowned this year's Canadian Champion, the Canadian Show Jumping Championship also determines which riders move forward to the Royal Horse Show's international division, held during the second week of the Royal Horse Show and highlighted by the \$205,000 Longines FEI Jumping World Cup™ Toronto, presented by GroupBy. Two spots are open to the top-placed competitors not already qualified. Erynn Ballard, Mario Deslauriers, Kean White, and Ian Millar are pre-qualified based on their standings in the Longines World Rankings while Jump Canada's high performance committee has named Ali Ramsay and Beth Underhill as its two picks for the international division.

The \$20,000 Horsware Indoor Eventing Challenge will kick off the excitement on both Friday and Saturday evenings with the fast-paced thrills that come from jumping solid cross-country obstacles combined with delicate



Amy Millar of Perth, ON, will defend her Canadian Show Jumping Championship title with Heros on Friday and Saturday nights, November 2 and 3, at the Royal Horse Show in Toronto, ON.
Photo by Ben Radvanyi Photography

show jumping fences at high speed. A master of his trade, Great Britain's Mark Phillips will once again design the tracks in the Coca-Cola Coliseum.

Hot off a recent appearance at the 2018 World Equestrian Games, Canadian Eventing Team members Lisa Marie Fergusson, Colleen Loach, and Selena O'Hanlon will be among those looking to take home the lion's share of prize money. Lauren Kieffer, veteran of Pan American Games, World Championship, and Olympic Games competition for the United States, will be making her Royal Horse Show debut in this year's Horsware Indoor Eventing Challenge.

"I have never done indoor eventing before so it will be new

for me," said Kieffer who is based in Middleburg, VA. "Boyd Martin had a lot of great things to say after he did it last year and I thought it sounded like a lot of fun. I'm excited to try it."

Kieffer will have the added challenge of riding an unfamiliar horse. She will be paired with Glendening Avis, a 13-year-old Canadian Sport Horse mare that owner Callie Evans has successfully competed through to the three-star level.

"I've always really quite liked the mare and Callie was kind enough to offer her to me," explained Kieffer. "I've seen her compete before and I've liked her for a while, she's a buckskin and I'm partial to mares, so it worked out well. I've had the opportunity

to catch ride a lot of horses at the upper level so it's not something that is foreign to me. You don't try to push any of your style on them but instead try to adapt to their style so the horse gets comfortable with you as quickly as possible. The biggest thing I'll try to do is get in sync with the mare."

Expressing her excitement for this year's Royal Horse Show, Kieffer said, "The Royal is such a cool place, it's got a lot of great things going for it and a lot of talent across all disciplines. Indoor eventing is a great showcase to get the conversation started about eventing and get people asking questions. The more people we can get interested the better!"

In addition to show jumping and indoor eventing, fans will also be treated to an exciting lineup of featured entertainment on Opening Weekend. Australia's Guy McLean will demonstrate his unique form of natural horsemanship on both Friday and Saturday nights while Pogo Puissance by Xpogo will take jumping to new heights as young athletes attempt to set records by jumping obstacles on pogo sticks.

More than 1,000 horses from around the globe will compete for \$980,000 in prize money during the 10-day CSI4*-W Royal Horse Show. VIP Platinum and Gold seating, as well as group and individual tickets, are on sale now and moving quickly. All Royal Horse Show tickets in-

clude general admission to the Fair.

Purchase Tickets

Follow the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair on Facebook and YouTube, @royalhorseshow on Twitter, and @theroyalfair on Instagram for a behind-the-scenes look at the Royal Horse Show. Please use hashtags: #RAWF18, #RoyalFever, #RoyalHorseShow, #FEIWorldCup, and #Longines if you plan to write about the Royal Horse Show and the Longines FEI Jumping World Cup™ Toronto on your outlet's social media channels.

For more information on the Royal Horse Show, the marquee event of The Royal Agricultural Winter Fair, please visit www.royalfair.org/horshow18.

Funding support for The Royal has been provided by the City of Toronto and the Government of Ontario.

About The Royal

The Royal Agricultural Winter Fair is the world's largest combined indoor agricultural and equestrian event. This year marks the 96th Royal Agricultural Winter Fair runs November 2-11, 2018, at Exhibition Place, Toronto, Canada. For competition schedules, live webcasting, results and to purchase tickets, please visit www.royalfair.org.



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