

Spring Never Gets Old at Old Salem Farm

By Lindsay Brock/Jump Media



When the grass in the hunt fields turns green and the trees begin to blossom in the Westchester County region, it only means one thing at Old Salem Farm—the Spring Horse Shows are right around the corner.

Returning to the 120-acre farm nestled along the winding country roads of North Salem, NY, the Old Salem Farm Spring Horse Shows welcomed riders from near and far to its picturesque grounds for two weeks of top competition running May 7 to 19. From CSI2* and 3* jumpers, World Championship Hunter Rider (WCHR) competition, a USHJA National Derby for hunters, and specialty events that included Under 25 Grand Prix competition and one of the few remaining North American Speed Derbies, Old Salem Farm was the place to be this spring.

Grand Prix Glory

U.S. Olympic team gold medalist Leslie Howard stormed to victory in the \$133,700 Empire State Grand Prix CSI3*, presented by The Kincaide Group, riding Quadam, a 13-year-old Hanoverian stallion (Quite Easy x Stakkato) during the final day of the shows on May 19. The win was a special anniversary for Howard after she won her first Old Salem Farm grand prix in

1983 aboard Albany, the horse that later carried her to win a team gold medal at the 1984 Olympic Games in Los Angeles.

Not only was the win a cherished anniversary, but also an unthinkable milestone for Quadam. The horse has only been back in the grand prix ranks for a year after a tragic accident sidelined the stallion a short time into his partnership with Howard.

“He got loose in Florida and fell down on blacktop and severed his patella ligament,” said Howard. “He was out of the sport for two years and they said that horses can come back from that injury, but it was pretty major. He was sound very quickly, but he didn’t have any strength.”

It wasn’t until the summer season in Spruce Meadows last year that Howard felt she had her horse back, saying, “He was schooling low jumps and then all of a sudden he started to gain strength and desire. He wanted to do it again and you could feel it. By the time we got to Bromont last year he was back.”

Howard hails just a half hour down the road from Old Salem Farm in Newtown, CT, and grew up riding at Old Salem Farm. “It’s like home for me and this is a very knowledgeable crowd here because this is horse country!” she said.



Leslie Howard and Quadam by The Book LLC



Patricia Griffith and Sonder by The Book LLC



Daniel Bluman and Sancha LS by The Book LLC

Two-time U.S. Olympic team gold medalist and New York State native Beezie Madden of Cazenovia, NY, was unbeatable in the grand prix the first week of the Spring Shows riding young mount Garant to victory in the \$50,000 Old Salem Farm Grand Prix CSI2*, presented by The Kincade Group. Before their win together, Garant, an eight-year-old Dutch Warmblood gelding (Warrant x C'est La Vie), had never competed in a grand prix before. Despite it being a first for her mount, Madden handily took the win over Swiss team Olympic silver medalist Beat Mändli.

"He is just an eight-year-old, but I got him during the fall of his six-year-old year, so we have gotten to know each other a little," said Madden, 55. "He has done some ranking classes, but never a grand prix and I was so pleased with him."

Before joining the John Madden Sales string, Garant, owned by Abigail Wexner, was competitive in young horse competition and won the 2016 FEI World Breeding Jumping Championships for five-year-old horses in Lanaken, Belgium, under the direction of Dutch rider Willem Greve. "He's one we have a lot of hopes for!" said Madden.

While seasoned show jumpers were aplenty at Old Salem Farm, rising stars soaked up their time in the spotlight as well. Adrienne Sternlicht, 26, of Greenwich, CT, has jumped the Old Salem Farm Speed Derby, presented by TownVibe, every year she has competed at the Old Salem Farm Spring Horse Shows, but this year she introduced a new mount to the spectator-favorite event and won aboard Fantast, a 14-year-old Belgian Warmblood (Toulon x Rubes du Ri d'Asse) owned by Starlight Farms.

Sydney Shulman, 24, guided Villamoura, a 10-year-old mare by Diamant de Semilly, to an emotional win in the \$10,000 Under 25 Grand Prix, presented by Miller Motorcars. The mare sustained an eye injury in 2018 and has been sidelined for the past eight months, but the duo returned to the show ring at the Old Salem Farm Spring Horse Shows.



Samantha Schaefer by The Book LLC



© The Book LLC

Corey Gallais and Tradition de la Roque by The Book LLC

"This is a huge deal for me because she's my best horse, my favorite horse, and this was our goal to be able to show here this year," said Shulman, whose mother Jill has owned Villamoura for four years. "We brought her back nicely and made sure she was fit enough for this. I'm beyond thrilled and so happy to have her back. I really missed her this winter."

Hunters Shine

After a banner first week at the Old Salem Farm Spring Horse Shows, Brady Mitchell of North Salem, NY, led the \$5,000 Mane 'n Tail Hunter Rider Challenge with the high-point title from 3'6" Performance, 3'3" Green, 3'6" Green, Green Conformation, High Performance Conformation, and High Performance Hunter competition during week one of the Old Salem Farm Spring Horse Shows. He guided Mayfield, owned by Dana Schwartz's Float On Equestrian, to Grand Hunter Championship among other honors.

The lead in the \$5,000 Mane 'n Tail Hunter Rider Challenge changed hands during week two, however, with Holly Orlando

leading the charge as well as winning the \$5,000 Voltaire Designs Leading Hunter Rider title for the 2019 season.

Points earned in the \$5,000 Mane 'n Tail Hunter Rider Challenge at Old Salem Farm will be carried over to The Hampton Classic, running August 25 through September 1, 2019, with the \$5,000 award being presented on Friday August 30, in Bridgehampton, NY.

Hunters were also spotlighted in the \$5,000 USHJA National Hunter Derby, presented by The Gochman Family, during the second week of competition with Patricia Griffith winning aboard Sonder. The plan at the start of the week was for Lexi Maounis to pilot her own Sonder in the derby, but a scheduling conflict gave the ride to Heritage Farm trainer Griffith. The last-minute switch proved a positive, and Griffith rode Sonder to scores of 90 and 94 in the two-round derby to take the win over Michael Zukerman and Cue The Blue.

"We got him before Florida last year and his first hunter show was here last year when he was champion in the 3' pre-greens," said Griffith, who hails from New York, NY, and also competes the

mount in the 3'3" pre-green ranks. "He has been a great horse for us and his owner Lexi also shows him in the adult hunters."

Griffith and Sonder bested an impressive field of 50. Their total score of 184 took the lead by nearly 10 full points.

"For these classes you need that super brave, good jumping, athletic horse and he's all of that," said Griffith of Sonder, a six-year-old Westphalian gelding by PR.H. Valeron. "He's up for the challenge and really gets into the handy. When you challenge him like that it always makes him better."

Heritage Farm, based in Katonah, NY, and led by Griffith and Andre Dignelli, made easy work of their 20-minute commute to the farm and competed at the Old Salem Farm Spring Horse Shows in full force. "We love having a show where we can stay in our own beds," joked Griffith. "It's a great facility, and we are so lucky to have it so close to home."

Give It Up For The Grooms

While horse show-goers gathered for an exhibitor party at the Overlook Terrace, set on the bank above the iconic Old Salem Farm Grand Prix Field, attention turned to the hardest working members of the horse show community on the final Friday afternoon of the Old Salem Farm Spring Horse Shows. The \$5,000 Old Salem Farm Grooms Class took place on the Grand Prix Field with Rudy Martinez taking top honors in the hunter section with Adelina, owned by Arriana Boardman, who competed in the Amateur-Owner Hunter, 36 & Over division. Diego Elizondo won the jumper section with Cliff Z, who is owned by Georgina Bloomberg's Gotham Enterprizes, LLC, and competed in the Open Jumper ranks with Gotham North rider Jeremy Sweetnam (IRL).

"It's no surprise to any of us that he won," said Bloomberg. "Diego takes incredible care of our horses and has a great knowledge of the sport. He is someone I trust completely with any horse or for advice. From day one with us he has shown that he not only cares deeply about the welfare of the horses, but he also takes great pride with how they are presented."

"He does a wonderful job with anything and everything in the barn," she continued. "We are all so proud of him and happy to have him as a part of our team."

Each year, the Old Salem Farm Spring Horse Shows serve as competitive preparation for the summer seasons along the East Coast, at Spruce Meadows in Canada, and in Europe. The 2019 events were no different with familiar winners, new stars to watch, and a show for the record books.

Learn more about Old Salem Farm and the Spring Horse Shows by visiting OldSalemFarm.net.



Georgina Bloomberg and Quibelle by The Book LLC



Holly Orlando and Waverly by The Book LLC



Katie Robinson and GranBlue by The Book LLC