

Nick Hanes: Winning, Naturally

By Kara Pinato Scro/Jump Media

You might say that top hunter, jumper, and equitation trainer, Nick Hanes, is a natural when it comes to horsemanship and competing. This well-respected horseman has worked hard to climb the ranks and it's paid off for his Hunterbrook Farms, a business he started at age 21 and has now operated for nearly 12 years.

In 2019 alone, Hanes amassed numerous championships and awards including reserve champion in the Platinum Performance/USHJA International Hunter Derby Championship in Kentucky aboard Verdict and the highest-placed rider designation of the Tier II combinations. Hanes was also both champion and reserve champion in the Stal Hendrix Green Futurity Championships in New York aboard Crowd Pleaser and Reese's, respectively. Most notably in 2019, Hanes was named the US Equestrian Federation's (USEF) National Equestrian of the Year.

While this year's competition schedule has been anything but typical, Hanes remains competitive as ever, particularly as shows resume. According to Hanes, Hunterbrook Farms is a smaller boutique-type barn that is show-oriented, with an emphasis on hunters and equitation, as well as jumpers including Grand Prix horses.

With approximately 25 horses in his care year-round, Hanes understands the importance of keeping horses comfortable and happy, especially with demanding show and travel schedules. When he learned that new horses entering his barn were using supplements from Equine Elixirs, a brand offering all-natural, show-safe equine supplements, he was eager to try them with his other horses. Currently, Hanes uses two products in the Equine Elixirs line with almost all of his horses—Positude, a liquid for hormone

support, and Ulceraser, a forage-based gastric support supplement. He also uses Immunox, a whole food immune support supplement loaded with anti-oxidants and anti-inflammatories for other horses in his string. Hanes is also incorporating Calmakazi into his supplement routine as year-end competitions and the winter circuits pick up. Calmakazi's whole food-based ingredients promote optimum nervous system function.

With a renewed focus on showing as competition resumed, Hanes was intrigued by the fact that the Equine Elixirs supplements are all-natural. "[Amid] this era of rules changing with USEF, [being able to use a product such as] Positude has made a big impact, especially with horses that are more challenging or horses that have a difficult time adjusting to a horse show environment," he noted.

Hanes believes that ensuring optimum horse health and well-being is critical during an arduous competition schedule, and that's where Ulceraser's forage-based proprietary blend comes into play. "We're pretty competitive and we're on the road quite a bit," said Hanes. "We horse show a lot, on average 25 to 30 shows per year. [New environments at] shows and trailering put stress on horses, and [because stress can cause ulcers, that's why] the Ulceraser is really good. We want to beat ulcers before they come."

A Horseman of Many Talents

In addition to riding and training, Hanes says Hunterbrook Farms is well-versed when it comes to importing, training, and selling horses, with many of his European imports going on to be very successful with their next owners. This

aspect of his business, Hanes noted, is one that requires unique care and attention to detail. "I think for me, when horses first get to the States and learn a new job, they have to become acclimated to a new climate and are faced with new experiences at the horse shows that can change their stress and hormone levels," said Hanes. "The Positude helps them adjust and settle in more easily."

Positude is made from highly concentrated berry, leaf, and root extracts that act upon the pituitary to maintain even hormone levels in mares, geldings, and stallions. Positude is safe to handle, easy to feed, and its daily delivery system eliminates the peaks and troughs of hormonal fluctuations, which can present as moodiness or freshness. As a good horseman, when it comes to fresh horses, Hanes isn't a fan of tiring a horse through additional workouts. "I tend to try to skip lunging if I can," Hanes explained. "The less I can lunge, and the more the horses can naturally feel relaxed and calm, then all the better."

As Hanes looks ahead to 2021, he shows no signs of slowing down. He feels optimistic about the opportunity to travel to new venues around the country with a key goal of continuing to produce top horses, which will require him to continue to keep his horses comfortable and content with as little intervention as possible. "I think my horses have always looked beautiful and been happy and healthy," Hanes shared, "but I'm always striving to do better and do more for them. A lot of the natural ingredients and [the overall Equine Elixirs] approach to helping the horses have been eye-opening and I'm excited to continue to use these products during what I hope will be a busy year ahead."

Equine Elixirs leads the field in all-natural, equine supplements designed to support equine health. The brand offers four innovative supplements: Ulceraser®, a forage-based supplement for gastric health; Positude®, an orally administered proprietary blend providing hormonal support; Immunox®, a forage-based blend offering immunity and antioxidant support; and Calmakazi®, a forage-based supplement for nervous system support. Equine Elixirs also offers Tidbits™, a healthy treat created to help support gut health and digestion in ulcery horses.

Learn more at www.equineelixirs.com and follow them on Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube.



Nick Hanes aboard Reese's.
Photo courtesy of Shawn McMillen and Nick Hanes



Nick Hanes pictured here with Fair Play at the Desert International Horse Park with Equine Elixirs' Ulceraser in tow. Photo courtesy of Nick Hanes.



Nick Hanes and Verdict receiving their reserve champion award at the 2019 USHJA International Hunter Derby Championship. Photo courtesy of Tricia Booker/USHJA and Nick Hanes