

★ WASHINGTON INTERNATIONAL HORSE SHOW ★
OCTOBER 26-31 | MILL SPRING, NORTH CAROLINA

Putting The Horse First Pays Off For Foster At The Washington International

Though he was out most of the year with an injury, Figor returns in winning form at the \$215,000 Longines FEI Washington World Cup CSI4*-W.

By Laura Lemon And Kimberly Loushin

In 2017, Andy Ziegler and his wife Carlene Ziegler of Artisan Farms were planning to scale back slightly in their horse ownership. But before they took their foot off the gas, they wanted to make sure Tiffany Foster, who both worked for them and was a close friend and former employee for Eric Lamaze, was set up for success in the future. And part of that future rested on a 7-year-old called Figor.

"I have some amazing, incredible, long-time owners in Andy and Carlene Ziegler and Artisan Farms. They are also real planners," Foster said.

"Eric said to Andy, 'Listen, this will be the last big one you'll need to buy because he's going to be able to do anything,'" she recalled. "And Andy was like, 'OK, listen, I want to make sure that you're set for championships and for the rest of things. So, as we create this string, this seems like an important horse for you to have.' And like they have always done, they really stepped up."

The Dutch Warmblood gelding (VDL Groep Zagreb—Voberlina, Indoctro) bred by H.W. Van Lindenberg placed fifth with German rider Andreas Kreuzer in the Aachen Sparkassen-Youngsters-Cup (Germany) and then entered Foster's string with the intention that he would transform into her next championship-level horse. And according to Andy's plan, the gelding's success would help solidify Foster's future with more owners and more horses.

"They deserve so much credit because they're such unbelievable owners," Foster said. "Their plan was to set me up with a group of horses, to have a really strong

string to take, and then find other owners to supplement that and hopefully take the baton from them."

Since his purchase, Figor has lived up to the expectations placed on him. In 2019, he moved up to be the Canadian rider's No. 1 horse. But at the end of this year's Winter Equestrian Festival (Florida), "Figgy," now 11, got hurt. With Foster's long-term plan focused on the 2022 FEI World Championships (Denmark), the 2023 Pan American Games (Chile) and the 2024 Paris Olympics, she and her team of veterinarian Eduardo Felix, groom Caroline Holmberg and rider Max Manzardo took extra precautions with their star.

"I'm a planner, and I like to try to do my best to plan everything," she said. "It's hard with horses because there's always things that don't go according to plan, and you have to be pretty willing to be fluid and sort of change tack and things. I really plotted a plan with his vet on when would be an appropriate time for him to start jumping again. And we gave him a little extra time for everything. He was meant to have a month off; he had six weeks. Every time, we just made it kind of go as long as we could because I've learned in the past, if you rush these things, they haunt you for the rest of your life.

"Horses like him don't come along very often," she added. "There's horses that can jump five-star grand prix, and then there are championship-type horses who can jump anything that the course designer builds anywhere—and he's one of those horses. And so, when you have one like that in your group, you do want to



Taking her time to rehab Figor after an injury paid off for Tiffany Foster as the pair topped the \$215,000 Longines FEI Washington World Cup CSI4*-W. KIMBERLY LOUSHIN PHOTO

protect them because they're so hard to find."

Following Figgy's rehab plan, Foster took him to his first two-star at Thunderbird (British Columbia) and then headed south to the Tryon International Equestrian Center in Mill Spring, North Carolina, for the Washington International's \$215,000 Longines FEI Washington World Cup CSI4*-W, held Oct. 30 at the Tryon International Equestrian Center. There, Figgy pressed fast-forward on Foster's plan by winning the class above 32 other combinations.

\$215,000 Longines FEI Washington World Cup CSI4*-W Mill Spring, N.C.—Oct. 30

Horse/Rider/Motion	Faults	Time	Purse
1. Figor/Tiffany Foster/CAN	0-0	35.73	\$53,750
2. Berlanda/Alessandra Volpi/USA	0-0	36.52	43,000
3. Carlichen W/Alex Granato/USA	0-4	35.01	32,250
4. Calhou 24/Karl Cook/USA	0-4	45.86	21,500

Also competed: 5. Amex Z/T. Minikus/USA, 4; 6. Robin De Pontual/S. Riley/USA, 4; 7. Dsarie/B. Mandl/SUI, 4; 8. Sea Tonblue/A. Bourns/IRE, 4; 9. Royce/M. Engle/USA, 4; 10. Rocky Music/R. Moloney/IRE, 4; 11. Benny Legacy/A. Sternlicht/USA, 4; 12. Viva Colombia/B. Goutal-Marceau/USA, 4; 13. Brego R N B/K. Dinan/USA, 4; 14. Blue Movie/R. Willis/AUS, 8; 15. Legacy/D. Coyle/IRE, 8; 16. Kasper Van Het Hellehot/M. Ward/USA, 8; 17. Souper Shuttle/C. Reid/USA, 8; 18. BEC Lorenzo/C. Tyree/USA, 8; 19. Bull Run's Risen/K. VanderVeen/USA, 8; 20. Pepite Con Spita/H. Holloway/USA, 8; 21. Cornwall BH/A. Derbyshire/GBR, 8; 22. Argan De Bellard/L. Sabino/PCR, 9; 23. Coach/K. Strauss/USA, 12; 24. Austria 27/K. Farrington/USA, 12; 25. Paloma/L. Hough/USA, 12; 26. Vivaldi Du Thiel/A. Cunliffe/USA, 12; 27. Areeggi/B. Kemper/USA, 14; 28. Keoki/D. Blake/IRL, 16; Entano/M. McDermott/USA, E; Corpeggia/C. Jacobs/USA, VW; Tulara Colmine/G. Bloemberg/USA, VW; Quintin/H. Moffatt/CAN, VW; Comtas 202/S. Lambre/BRA, VW.



At the Washington International Horse Show, Scott Stewart and Betsee Parker's Charlemagne swept the green conformation hunters to earn the championship in that division, and then he also took the grand green hunter title and grand hunter honors. LAURA LEMON PHOTO

DID YOU KNOW?

Tiffany Foster also works as an interior designer and owns her own company, Rustique Interiors. It all started with Eric Lamaze asking if she'd help him buy some furniture.

"He does a lot of house flipping and things," she said. "He always had an interior designer who would come down from Canada and help him do them. And then one year he sold his house, and he kind of had to move into a place really quickly. And he was like, 'Oh, do you mind just getting some furniture?' So I got it for him. And he was like, 'Well, this is great.' So, then that kind of started that, and so then I did probably like 10 houses for him over several years."

Though she can't take it on as a full-time job—with horses taking much of her attention—she puts on her designer hat for friends and for herself. She designed her Wellington, Florida, barn, from the ground up.

"It's like a nice creative outlet," she said.

"I was not expecting him to be quite as good as he was," the 37-year-old said, "just because he had such a long time off."

"It gives you a feeling of validation when things do work," she added. "He came out of that class looking great—injury didn't look like it bothered him at all, didn't look like it was irritated the next day. I think that those are things that make you feel like, 'OK, sometimes you can make a plan, and then you get paid off for doing the right thing and taking your time.'"

THE BEGINNING OF A BEAUTIFUL FRIENDSHIP

In mid-June 2010 at the Skidmore College Saratoga Classic I (New York), Scott Stewart entered the second year green ring on Way Cool. At that moment,

TIDBITS

- **Sophia Vella** could hardly believe it when the announcer named her and **Just For Kicks** as the winners of the \$10,000 WIHS Adult Amateur Hunter Championship. She'd only qualified the 7-year-old Dutch Warmblood (Durango VDL—Venneyfee) the previous weekend at the WIHS Regional Horse Show (Virginia), and it was "Kitty's" first year jumping.

"She was phenomenal, and she was right with me every stride," said the 24-year-old from The Plains, Virginia. "She's perfect."

Vella recently started a consulting job at Deloitte, and she's often found working from the showgrounds.

"If I can schedule a Zoom call around classes then that's basically the way to go," she said. "I save up the PTO for the big shows."

- While **Jennifer Morris** enjoyed winning the 3'3" amateur-owner hunter, 36 and over, championship with **Staros**, one of her greatest joys with the 13-year-old Hanoverian (Stalypso—Renaissance) doesn't come from showing. The 35-year-old started keeping her horses at home in Aiken, South Carolina, this year, and she can watch him from her home office.

"I've always been a very hands-on horse owner," she said. "I do all my own care, and it's something I'm proud of, kind of managing every aspect of my horses' care. I feel like I know them very well. I know when something's right. I know when something's wrong, so it just makes me that much closer to my horses. When I get home from a show and see them out in the sand—they dig up these sand pits, and they start rolling—it's the happiest feeling in the world for me."

- Before **Dylann Ephraimson** even started in the jump-off for the \$10,000 Adult Amateur Jumper Championship, she felt like she'd won. The 26-year-old from New York City had done this class before with another horse and hadn't jumped a clear first round, so no matter what, simply making it to the jump-off was progress, and that was something to smile about. She turned in the fastest round aboard Marigot Bay Farm LLC's **Vindicator**, a 14-year-old Dutch Warmblood (Odermus R—Z. Adermie 12, Rubert R) to take the blue ribbon.

"I knew that no matter what, he was going to go in and try his best," she said. "It's so cliché to say he always wants to win. I had a plan, and I was going to stick to my plan, and he was such a good boy and knows his job, so I knew he was going to try to execute it."

- **Jimmy Torano** first met Daryl Portela when he was about 10 years old. In the decades since, their personal and professional connections have grown.



Dylann Ephraimson rode Vindicator to victory in the \$10,000 WIHS Adult Jumper Championship at the Washington International Horse Show. KIMBERLY LOUSHIN PHOTO

"She's been in this sport since she was a young kid," Torano, 49, said. "We grew up together when we were 8, 9, 10 years old; we rode together. So, we've known each other forever. And then she became a client. I rode for her father. The story just goes on and on."

But when doctors told Portela she couldn't ride again after sustaining serious injuries in a fall, the pair's relationship evolved in yet another way. Though she couldn't swing her leg over the back of a horse, Portela wanted to watch Torano ride the horses she owned. So Torano kept riding and winning on **Laskano**, a 10-year-old Westphalian gelding (Los Angeles—Laskaja) bred by Wilhelmina Monnich. The pair earned championship honors at the Washington International in the 3'6" green hunter division.

"It's been nice that she kept the horse," Torano said. "It's almost like the horse goes in and wins for her every time."

HORSE SHOWS



Stephanie Zimmerman piloted her own Lights Out to her first Washington International championship when she won the grand 3'3" amateur-owner hunter and 3'3" amateur-owner hunter, 36 and over, titles at the Washington International Horse Show. **KIMBERLY LOUSHIN PHOTO**

the announcer said both their names but with a new rejoinder—"owned by Betsee Parker."

Parker and Stewart had worked together previously, as she supplied his junior client Tori Colvin with unbeatable ponies. Starting with For The Laughter, Parker purchased ponies from Stewart specifically for Colvin.

"Scott found the pony in Europe, and I wanted to buy it, and I wanted Tori Colvin to ride it," said Parker. "That was the beginning—we knew each other before then, but that was the beginning of our partnership."

That similar progression followed into horses with Way Cool and Ovation. But the main focus in those years was Colvin, as Stewart simply rode the chestnut gelding as a precursor for the junior hunters later in the week. Though Parker worked with Stewart through Colvin, she didn't know if he would take her on as a client.

"He had so many customers that he could pick and

choose who he wanted, and I didn't presume that I would be someone he would pick to be one of his customers," she said. "He had many when I came to him."

But soon that relationship progressed beyond Colvin's junior career. To date, their partnership has produced approximately 22 horses.

"We bought some younger horses and went from there," said Stewart. "She shares my passion for finding young horses and bringing them along, so it's sort of unique. Not too many people like Betsee are left that really want to support this. She's an awesome owner."

At the Washington International, the next generation of Parker-Stewart horses sported championship tricolors on their browbands. Stewart topped the high performance conformation division with For Always, a 7-year-old Oldenburg (Arko—Weinfree) bred by Albert Sprehe that Stewart started showing as a 5-year-old. He also earned green conformation tricolors as well as grand green hunter and grand hunter honors with Charlemagne, a 7-year-old Selle Français stallion (Vigo Cece—Bluewenn De Kergane) that he bought off a video from Fontainebleau, France, when the horse was 4.

"Oh, it's great," said Stewart of winning yet again with his young horses. "That's why we do it. I really like seeing the young horses develop and hoping they can end up as nice as [Charlemagne] is."

All the winning hasn't gotten old for rider or owner.

"Every win has been special because every one has different problems to solve," Parker said. "You've got to get around the course [and figure out] who the animal is. And the most reliable ones can end up bucking you off."

Stewart took the Leading Hunter Rider title, and Parker earned the Leading Owner distinction.

"Scott Stewart and I have a partnership that is really golden," Parker said. "We really are in each other's heads. We know each other. We're like a brother and a sister."

ZIMMERMAN MAKES HER CONTRIBUTION TO THE BANNER

At horse shows, a farm's banner is a point of pride and a way to celebrate accomplishments. The Hunt Tosh Inc. banner is rarely empty, thanks to Hunt and his daughter Maddie Tosh consistently contributing tricolors, but heading into the week at WIHS, student Stephanie Zimmerman hoped she'd be making her own additions to it.

"Eight years ago when I started riding with Hunt, I was so nervous because he is so amazing, and he's so good



Hunt Tosh and the Wheeler Family's Cannon Creek continued their domination, this time taking home a Washington International Horse Show championship cooler in the high performance hunters. **LAURA LEMON PHOTO**

with the horses," she said. "And really I would just get nervous because I'd want to do well for him because he's the one standing at the in-gate."

Waiting at the in-gate of the Tryon Stadium for her rounds with Lights Out, Zimmerman felt a similar flutter of nerves. It was the biggest stage she'd ridden in with the 10-year-old warmblood by Lights On, but "Shady" wasn't fazed. He'd already earned a Devon (Pennsylvania) championship with Hunt in the green conformation in 2018, so he was used to the fanfare.

"It was a little nerve-wracking at first," Zimmerman said. "I wasn't sure how it was going to go. I think, because he had done a lot of the bigger stuff with Hunt, he sort of came in and was like, 'Game on. This is the big time.' He really stepped up to the plate, and he jumped amazing and did everything I told him to do, which luckily was correct."

Zimmerman purchased Shady three years ago during the indoor season. She described the gelding as laid-back and a barn favorite, but even then she worried about whether he'd be a good amateur mount.

"I was a little nervous because Hunt was the only one that had ever shown him, and I was like, 'Oh my God, is he going to be able to do this?'" she recalled. "He really settled into the amateur role really well."

Around the same time she bought Shady, Zimmerman, 47, and her husband moved from Atlanta to Cincinnati, but she decided to leave her horses back in Atlanta. She has a practice horse at home, and Aubrey Sears helps keep her skills sharp between shows.

"It has been phenomenal to work with her and Hunt, and it's really been a good experience," she said. "It's hard when you're not there and you're not riding them all the time, but since I've had him for a couple years, it's seamless when I get to the horse shows."

Their performance at Washington surpassed Zimmerman's expectations, and she ended up with plenty of ribbons to contribute to the banner. They won not only the 3'3" amateur-owner hunter, 36 and over, championship, but also the 3'3" amateur-owner hunter grand championship. In addition to Zimmerman's haul, Hunt won the high performance hunter championship with the Wheeler family's Cannon Creek, and his daughter Maddie closed out her partnership with Storyteller by winning the WIHS Pony Equitation Finals.

STILL LOVING HIS JOB

In April of this year, Laura Sexton wasn't sure she'd be heading to the Washington International with Set To Music, much less earning tricolors.

HORSE SHOWS



“Calvin” had gotten cast in his stall, and while the staff at Whipstick Farm in South Salem, New York, got him up quickly, he spent a month recovering from the ordeal. They then used the summer to rebuild his fitness to meet the demands of showing, and rather than hit the road chasing points, they stayed local in September.

Though their ring-time was light, a nearly six-year partnership helped them scoop up a pair of blue and red ribbons in the amateur-owner hunters, 36 and over, to earn the division title and the grand amateur-owner hunter championship.

“The fact that he’s here and still loving his job just makes it more special for all of that,” Sexton said.

Though the pair have picked up tricolors at the National Horse Show (Kentucky) and Devon (Pennsylvania) in the past, they’d never competed at Washington.

“He’s just perfect,” Sexton said. “He’s never let me down in any way. [I’ve] never been to Tryon, so it was a lovely experience. And he just always rises to the occasion. He knows his job; I know him, so it’s a good match right now, and it always has been, truthfully.”

Although the rings in Tryon have a different feel than those in the Capital One Arena, where the Washington

Laura Sexton earned the grand amateur-owner hunter and amateur-owner hunter, 36 and over, honors with Set To Music at the Washington International Horse Show. *KIMBERLY LOUSHIN PHOTO*

International traditionally was held until COVID-19 forced its move to North Carolina last year, the 36-year-old from Greenwich, Connecticut, felt her horse would have excelled in either environment.

“He’s pretty lazy, but he has a massive stride for a little horse,” she said of the 15-year-old warmblood. “So any time you’ve got big, open lines like we do here, it tends to suit him very well because he can just walk down them, and the spookier the better. He fires up over anything that’s a little impressive, so this ring he loved today and was impressed and put in some good efforts, but he’s pretty steady Eddie. He’s a good solid citizen, knows his job, takes care of me.” 🐾

Washington International Horse Show Mill Spring, N.C.—Oct. 26-31

- Green Conformation Hunter CH:** Charlemagne, Betsee Parker.
RES: Alajolie, Alexander Miller.
- High Performance Conformation Hunter CH:** For Always, Betsee Parker.
RES: Necofino, Rein Family LLC.
- 3’6” Green Hunter CH:** Laskano, Isalou Inc.
RES: For Always, Betsee Parker.
- 3’9” Green Hunter CH:** Ferrari, Mary Nolan.
RES: Autograph, Ceil Wheeler.
- High Performance Hunter CH:** Cannon Creek, The Wheeler Family.
RES: S & L Exxon Hedonist, S & L Farms.
- Amateur-Owner Hunter, 18-35 CH:** Catena 5, Julia Weiss.
RES: Breaux, Kaitlin Porath.
- Amateur-Owner Hunter, 36 & Over CH:** Set To Music, Laura Sexton.
RES: At Last, Alisa Berry.
- 3’3” Amateur-Owner Hunter, 18-35 CH:** Staros, Jennifer Morris.
RES: Everything Is Gucci, Christina Fisher.
- 3’3” Amateur-Owner Hunter, 36 & Over CH:** Lights Out, Stephanie Zimmerman.
RES: Private I, Kelly Sims.
- \$10,000 WIHS Adult Amateur Hunter CH:** Just For Kicks, Sophia Vella.
RES: Mahalo, Kathryn Kranking.
- \$10,000 WIHS Adult Amateur Jumper CH:** Vindicator, Marigot Bay Farm LLC.
RES: Wender R, Stefani Green.
- International Open Jumper CH:** Catoki, Marilla Van Beuren.
RES: Figor, Artisan Farms LLC.
- Grand Green Hunter CH:** Charlemagne, Betsee Parker.
- Grand Hunter CH:** Charlemagne, Betsee Parker.
- Leading Hunter Rider:** Scott Stewart.
- Leading Hunter Owner:** Betsee Parker.
- Grand Amateur-Owner Hunter CH:** Set To Music, Laura Sexton.
- Leading Amateur-Owner Hunter Rider:** Laura Sexton.
- Grand 3’3” Amateur-Owner Hunter CH:** Lights Out, Stephanie Zimmerman.
- Leading 3’3” Amateur-Owner Hunter Rider:** Stephanie Zimmerman.
- Leading Amateur Jumper Rider:** Caroline Dugas.
- Leading International Jumper Owner:** Marilla Van Beuren.
- Leading International Jumper Rider:** McLain Ward.
- Leading Foreign Rider:** Tiffany Foster.
- Leading Under 25 Rider:** Alessandra Volpi.
- Leading Lady Rider:** Tiffany Foster.