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Brendan Weiss Works Off To Win the North American Adult Amateur Equitation Finals

On the first day of Equitation Weekend, presented by [BIGEQ.com](#), during the 30th anniversary of the Capital Challenge Horse Show at Prince George's Equestrian Center in Upper Marlboro, Maryland, Brendan Weiss rode to victory in the North American Adult Amateur Equitation Finals.

From a field of 37 entries, Weiss, of Wynnewood, Pennsylvania, earned a first-round score of 87.50 from judges Jeff Ayers and Michael Tokaruk to sit atop the leaderboard. The top 10 then returned in reverse order of merit, with Weiss last to tackle the second-round track. His smoothness and consistency were once again rewarded, scoring 86.75 for a total of 174.25. While Weiss's overall score still led the pack, just 1.63 points separated him from Annalise Manooq, resulting in a work-off where the top two riders returned for a test on the flat without stirrups.



Brendan Weiss in his winning presentation for the North American Adult Amateur Equitation Finals with Kim Buzby, Eduardo Garcia, and Camilla Grover Dodge. Photo by Shawn McMillen Photography

"I thought the courses were great, and everything rode nicely based off of the track," commented Weiss, who trains with Kim Buzby at Windfall Farm. "We really had a plan going in and just stuck with it. When they asked us to test without stirrups, it definitely added an extra layer of effort that we needed to put in. The judges made us work for it, but that just adds to the prestige of the horse show, and at a horse show like this, it's important that that level of competition is there."

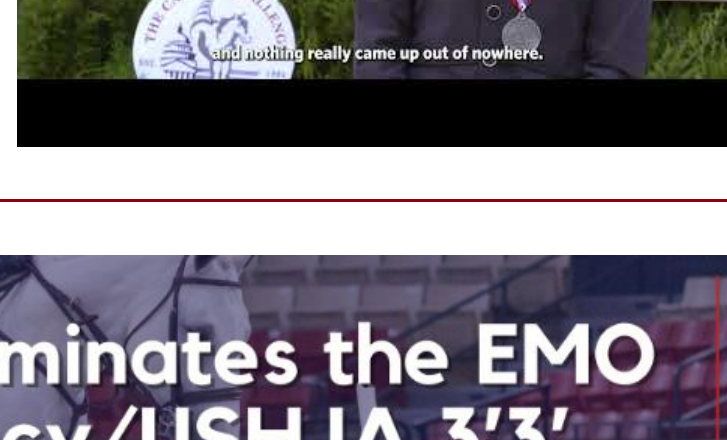
While they looked like a seasoned pair, Weiss only recently partnered with his mount Hello Houston Z a day prior to competing. The nine-year-old Zangersheide gelding was borrowed from Morgan Rosenberg's Topline Imports LLC and owner Elizabeth Cohen, and the quick match paid off.

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WORDS FROM THE WINNERS

Hear from Brendan Weiss following his win in the North American Adult Amateur Equitation Finals!

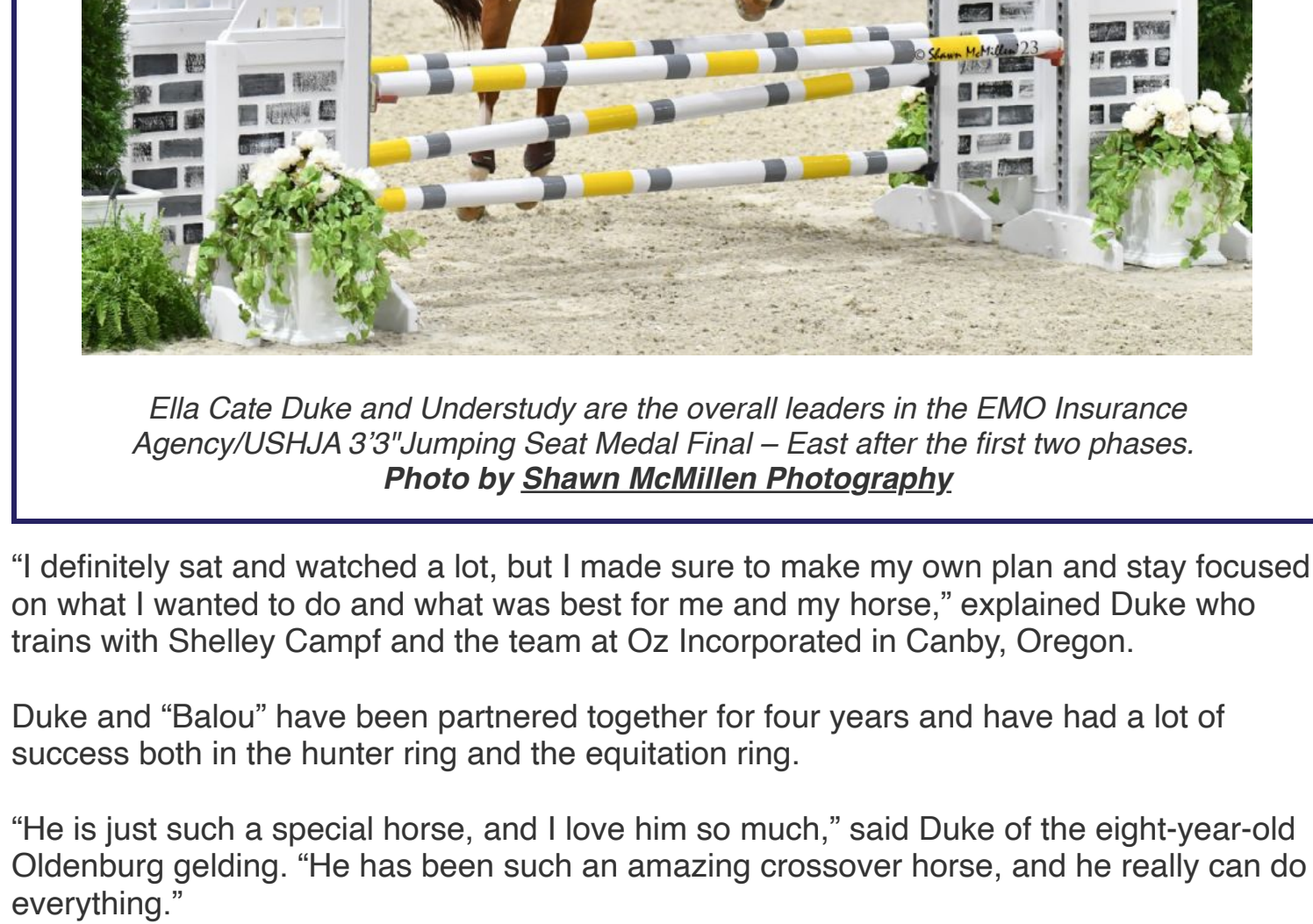
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Ella Cate Duke Dominates the EMO Insurance Agency/USHJA 3'3" Jumping Seat Medal Final – East

Competition in The Show Place Arena on Thursday of Equitation Weekend featured the flat and gymnastics phases of the seventh-annual [EMO Insurance Agency/United States Hunter Jumper Association \(USHJA\) 3'3" Jumping Seat Medal Final – East](#). At the of the day, Ella Cate Duke of Lake Oswego, Oregon, leads the 169-rider field.

It was a full day of action, which got underway at 7:30 a.m., where riders were divided into 14 flat groups. Duke rode in the third group and earned a score of 87.65 from judges Virginia Edwards and Mark Jungheer to sit in 23rd overall. Riders then walked the Ken Krome-designed course for the gymnastics phase at 10:45 a.m. and returned to jump in reverse order of their flat phase placing. Going late in the order around 5:00 p.m., Duke piloted her mount Understudy to the high score of 89. Because scores in the gymnastics phase are multiplied by a coefficient of 1.5, Duke's winning score of 89 gave her a total of 221.15, jumping up the rankings into pole position.



Ella Cate Duke and Understudy are the overall leaders in the EMO Insurance Agency/USHJA 3'3" Jumping Seat Medal Final – East after the first two phases. Photo by Shawn McMillen Photography

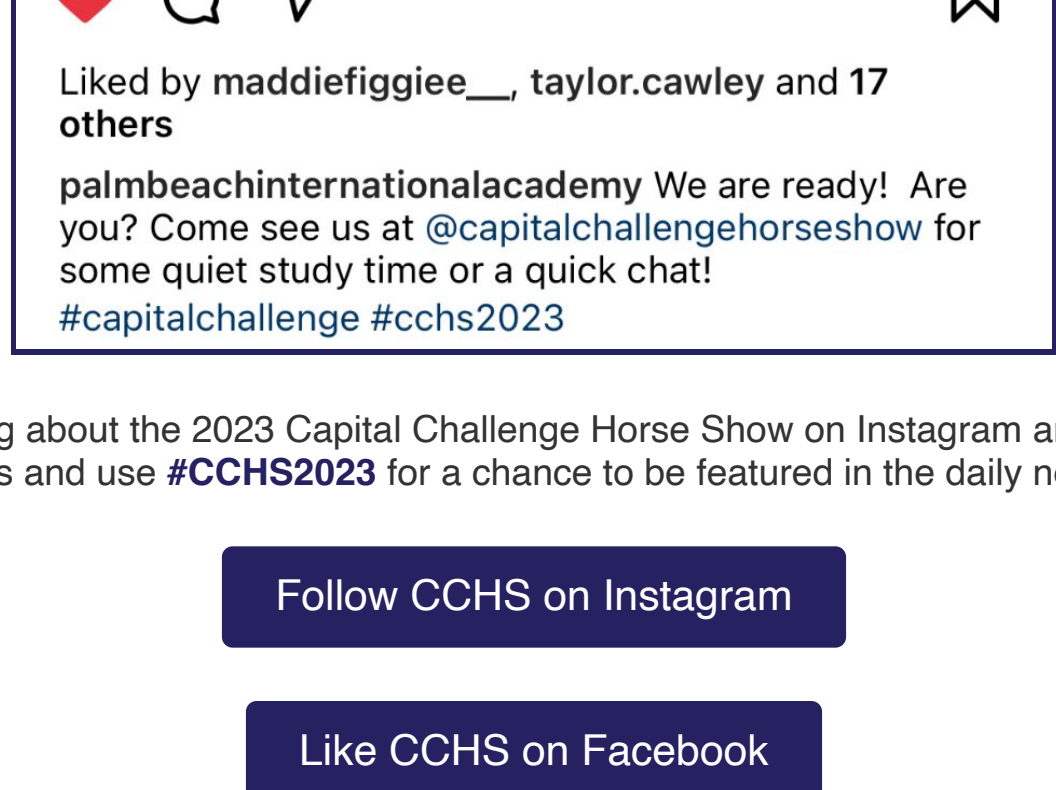
"I definitely sat and watched a lot, but I made sure to make my own plan and stay focused on what I wanted to do and what was best for me and my horse," explained Duke who trains with Shelley Campf and the team at Oz Incorporated in Canby, Oregon.

Duke and "Balou" have been partnered together for four years and have had a lot of success both in the hunter ring and the equitation ring.

"He is just such a special horse, and I love him so much," said Duke of the eight-year-old Oldenburg gelding. "He has been such an amazing crossover horse, and he really can do everything."

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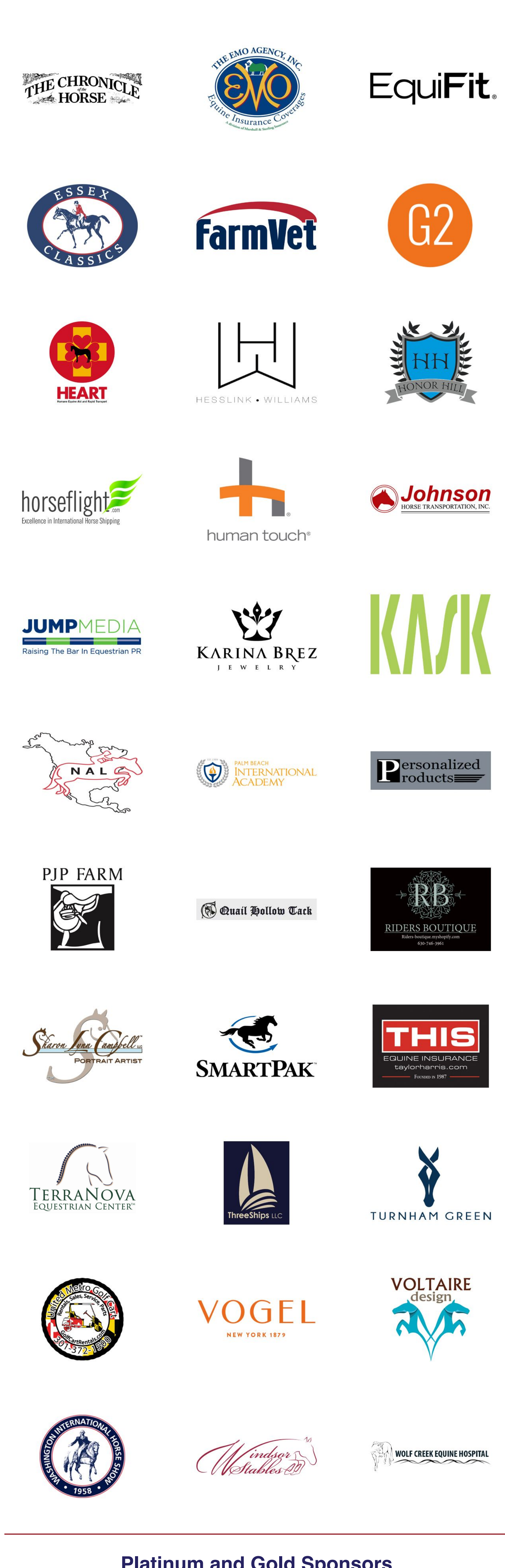
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About the Capital Challenge Horse Show

The Capital Challenge Horse Show, an official USEF Heritage Competition, has a distinct and unique focus on preeminent hunter and equitation competition. The 2023 edition of the Capital Challenge Horse Show will take place from September 28-October 8. The 11 days of competition will include prestigious equitation events, jumper divisions, the World Championship Hunter Rider (WCHR) Finals, the \$25,000 3' and 3'3" Green Hunter North American Championships, and more, with many of the country's best horses and riders competing in junior, amateur, and professional divisions.

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