



US Dressage Finals

presented by Adequan®



Absolute Dream Lives Up to His Name for Jennifer Truett on Opening Day of 2023 US Dressage Finals Presented by Adequan®

November 10, 2023 – Lexington, KY – Competitors flocked to the Kentucky Horse Park for the 10th anniversary edition of the US Dressage Finals presented by Adequan® for the opening day of the show on Thursday, November 9, 2023. The marquee national show — which competitors qualify for via the Great American Insurance Group/United States Dressage Federation (USDF) Regional Championships in nine USDF regions — offers a wealth of championship titles and more than \$120,000 in prize money. The competition runs through Sunday, November 12.

Four champions were crowned on the first day of the show. Jennifer Truett's 2022 Intermediate I champion Absolute Dream seamlessly stepped up to claim the Intermediate II Open crown this year, topping the class with 68.235%, with reserve champion Michael Bragdell and Vallos Dreaming Marong just 0.2% behind.

Absolute Dream, a nine-year-old Westfalen gelding by All At Once, looked every inch the developing Grand Prix horse, showing powerful piaffe passage work and expressive, elastic canter work.



Jennifer Truett's 2022 Intermediate I champion Absolute Dream seamlessly stepped up to claim the Intermediate II Open crown this year. Photo by [SusanJStickle.com](https://www.susanjstickle.com).

"I was super proud and thrilled for him to win again. He's a breakthrough horse in my career. He came into the arena and puffed up but stayed with me," said Truett, who is based just two hours from Lexington, near Cincinnati, OH. "He's so powerful and electric that he might just start throwing one tempis in here and there because he really likes them."

Truett, who trains with Olivia LaGoy-Weltz, noted that the step up from Intermediate I to Intermediate II is massive, and Absolute Dream has developed physically as a result.

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Chumley Triumphs From Final Draw

The Prix St. Georges Championship ran for almost five hours in the Walnut Arena. It was the final competitor in the class, Lauren Chumley, who swept in and produced the only plus-70% score riding Leeloo Dallas to capture the winner's blanket and sash. At seven years old, the mare was the equal youngest in the class of 21 starters.

"I had a super lucky draw spot, and my horse is awesome. She's just a baby but she's absolutely amazing," enthused Chumley, who also rides in Eventing and was at a 1* just three days previously. "I rode her a little bit this morning then just warmed up for 15 minutes before the test and she felt super. I thought 'Let's go!' and she went. She rocked on."



Lauren Chumley and Leeloo Dallas produced the only plus-70% score to capture the Prix St. Georges Championship. Photo by [SusanJStickle.com](https://www.susanjstickle.com).

Chumley bought Leeloo Dallas, who is by the Ravel son Gaspard De La Nuit DG and out of a Negro dam from a video when she was a foal. She was bred by Racheal Redman.

"I bought her because she was little and black with four white socks, and I could afford her," said Chumley, who trains with Michael Bragdell. "She is born, bred, and trained in America. All the horses out of her dam are so rideable. They're easy, smart, and sensitive but not stupid."

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The Universe Delivers for Rebecca Lord

Adult Amateur (AA) Rebecca Lord and the 14-year-old Hanoverian Demetrius, by De Niro, were the penultimate combination down the center line in the Intermediate II AA Championship, and their 67.304% proved unbeatable.

This now 58-year-old extraordinary journey to the upper echelons of dressage sport for the win came an extra rider. Lord had a 31-year break from riding, but at age 49 felt compelled to take it up again and take an extended sabbatical from her career training as a medical intuitive.



Adult Amateur Rebecca Lord and the 14-year-old Hanoverian Demetrius won the Intermediate II AA Championship. Photo by [SusanJStickle.com](https://www.susanjstickle.com).

"I'm elated," said Lord, who also finished fourth on Don Amigo. "I work so hard to bring all the learning and knowledge and awareness together and help horses do fantastic job because they're all capable of being fantastic. Today was a reflection of the road of progress that 'Demi' and I are on."

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Finals Specialist Mason Opens Her 2023 Campaign

Heather Mason's accomplished training methods came to the fore once again in the Third Level Open Championship. She led the class on Shmoky Quartz with 71.75% and finished third with her other six-year-old, Manuskript SCF, on 70.083% — sandwiching Brittany Burson and Leonardo Z into second.

Shmoky Quartz is by Shakespeare RSF and was bred in the U.S. by Mo Swanson, and Mason acquired him at an affordable price thanks to his imperfect x-rays. He was the Training Level Open champion in 2022, so has moved swiftly up through the levels and has topped 80% a handful of times at rated shows in 2023.



U.S.-bred Shmoky Quartz repeated Finals victory in 2023 with Heather Mason, taking the Third Level Open Championship. Photo by [SusanJStickle.com](https://www.susanjstickle.com).

These were the first two rides out of a total of 10 for the rider from Lebanon, NJ, who has competed in every edition held of the US Dressage Finals presented by Adequan®.

"Shmoky is green at the level, but he tried very hard and little stayed with me very well," said Mason, who owns a total of 18 horses. "He was a little ahead of my first flying change, but it was clean. He's extra supple with good elasticity. He's one of the sweetest horses I've ever had, but now he's getting stronger, more confident, and cocky. He's developed a lot and is now starting to find the next gear. I'm toning it down for this year, as that's next year's gear."

"Manuskript was a little spooky at the videographer at the end of the test, but they're both only six and it's a big venue for a six-year-old," she added. "I'm glad I brought them both last year."

Competition resumes on Friday, November 10, with nine championship titles up for grabs from Training Level to Grand Prix. Follow the action via the [USDF Facebook page](#) and the [US Dressage Finals website](#), plus live online streaming on the [USEF Network](#). To learn more about the US Dressage Finals presented by Adequan®, view results and start lists, and read daily news releases, visit the official [US Dressage Finals event website](#).

By Alice Collins for Jump Media/US Dressage Finals

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About USDF

Founded in 1973, the United States Dressage Federation is a nonprofit membership organization dedicated to education, recognition of achievement, and promotion of dressage. For more information about USDF membership or programs, visit www.usdf.org, email usdressage@usdf.org, or call 859-971-2277.

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