



US Dressage Finals

presented by Adequan®



Heather Mason's RTF Lincoln Retires At The Top with Freestyle Victory at 2023 US Dressage Finals Presented by Adequan®

November 12, 2023 – Lexington, KY – It was an emotional end to a day of intense competition on Saturday, November 11, 2023, as one of the best known pairs at the US Dressage Finals presented by Adequan® bowed out of top sport. The marquee national show, held at the Kentucky Horse Park in Lexington, KY, celebrates its 10th anniversary this year and concludes competition on Sunday, November 12. Competitors qualify via Regional Championships in nine USDF regions and compete head-to-head for championship titles and more than \$120,000 in prize money.

Heather Mason and her faithful long-time partner RTF Lincoln made the most of their last-ever lap of honor after securing the Grand Prix Open Freestyle with 74.942% — a class they also won in 2022.



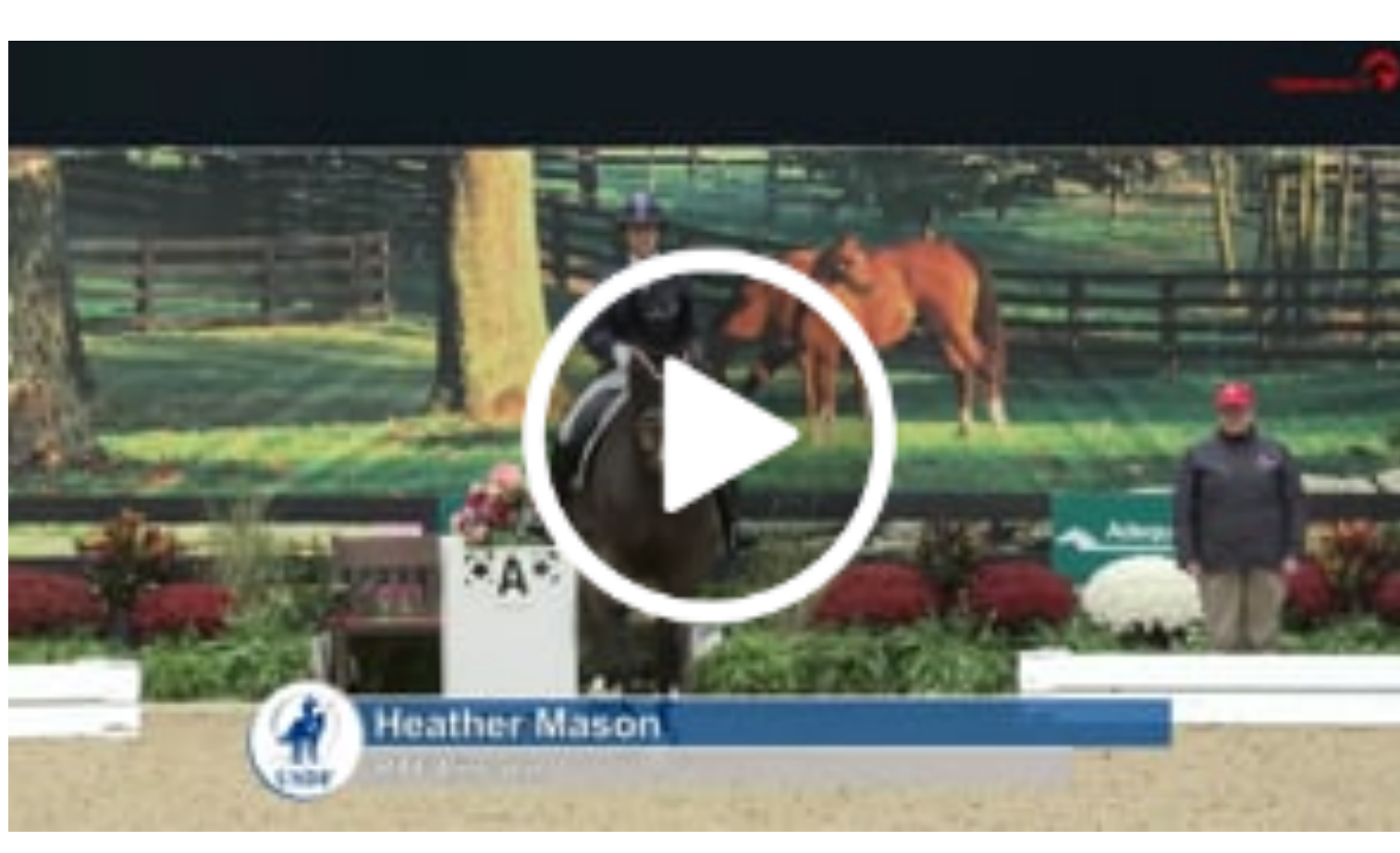
Heather Mason and her faithful long-time partner RTF Lincoln enjoyed their final Grand Prix Open Freestyle together and captured the win for the second year in a row. Photo by SusanJStickle.com.

The only rider who almost spoiled Lincoln's farewell party was the reserve champion Nora Batchelder, who rode her own 15-year-old Faro SQF to 74.733%. Shelley Van Den Neste partnered Andreas Jeromin's Eyecatcher to third place on 71.525%.

All eyes in the Alltech Arena were on Lincoln as he performed his ultra-difficult freestyle for the final time. Mason came out of the gate with a one-handed double pirouette on the first center line, following that up with 25 one-time changes on a curve before a piaffe fan and another one-handed double canter pirouette. The crowd whooped and clapped along.

"I'm happy because he had two really good rides at the show, and it's nice to go out while he's strong," said Mason. "I finally let him do what he's always wanted to do in the prize-giving, which is fun. I've never done that before because he always gets really hot and then I'm worried about the next test, but this time I didn't have to worry about that. He's really been amazing."

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Watch the final freestyle test for Heather Mason and RTF Lincoln!

Mason logged a further victory on Saturday riding her six-year-old Shmoky Quartz, meaning the American-bred son of Shakespeare RSF was undefeated in all three of his classes at these championships. His final win was his highest score of the show, chalking up 75.316% to top the Second Level Open Freestyle with a complex, difficult test — a hallmark of all of Mason's freestyles. The routine garnered a high score of 78.158% from William Warren thanks to an artistic score of more than 81%.



Heather Mason and Shmoky Quartz were undefeated at this year's Finals after winning their third class, the Second Level Open Freestyle Championship. Photo by SusanJStickle.com.

Angela Jackson Racks Up Another Title

The 12-year-old Holts Le'Mans may look familiar to regulars at the US Dressage Finals. He stepped into the winner's circle in 2022, taking the Third Level Jr/YR class honors under his teenage rider Ella Fruchterman. This year, it was Angela Jackson in the saddle, and she piloted him to the top of the leaderboard in the Intermediate 1 Freestyle Open with 73.175%.

The horse has been tremendously successful with Fruchterman since her family bought the son of L'Espoir sight unseen from Denmark during the pandemic. They won triple gold at the 2022 Adequan® FEI North American Youth Championships and have enjoyed prolific Jr/YR results.

Fruchterman's trainer is now giving the horse a leg-up to the higher levels.



Angela Jackson took over the ride on Holts Le'Mans and won the Intermediate 1 Freestyle Open. Photo by SusanJStickle.com.

"It's a fun freestyle from the movie Spirit," said Jackson, who has lost count of the number of Finals titles she has won over the years. "I recycled it for him because I only took him over in April to give him a little taste experience. It started out a little rough this week — we made silly little mistakes in the Prix St. Georges that were a little unusual — but today he was really ready to go. He even wanted to go bigger; he's a true horse that shows up for a championship and wants to be there for you."

Fruchterman is still riding Le'Mans, and the plans around when Jackson will hand back the competitive reins remain fluid as the Young Rider also has an older schoolmaster to campaign.

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Supersonic Is Untouchable at First Level

Emily Donaldson's faith in the Sewickley Farm Partnership LLC's talented five-year-old Supersonic by Secret was rewarded when they earned the top spot in the First Level Open Championship.

"I'm so happy he pulled off one of his best performances here," said the Pennsylvania-based rider. "It's a bit intimidating having a horse this good and some pressure owning him in partnership with a syndicate. I think he's as good as the best horses you see in Europe."



Emily Donaldson and the five-year-old Supersonic stood out from the crowd in the First Level Open Championship. Photo by SusanJStickle.com.

Donaldson found the horse in Germany as a three-year-old and was blown away by his quality. She had even nicknamed him "Sparkles" before the final deal had been done on his purchase. Her winner's blanket may be useful this winter as she is not spending the season in Florida, as she has done in the past, but consolidating her training at home, which includes working with trainer Tim Mellott.

"I'm hoping to be able to teach him the changes and then hopefully do Third Level next year," added Donaldson. "Maybe I'll do some young horse classes with him."

Scenes From The 2023 US Dressage Finals Presented by Adequan®

Photos by Katie Lewis



Competition concludes on Sunday, November 12, with the final nine championship titles to be decided, from Training Level to Prix St. Georges. 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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