





September 24 - October 5, 2025



Prince George's Equestrian Center
Upper Marlboro, MD

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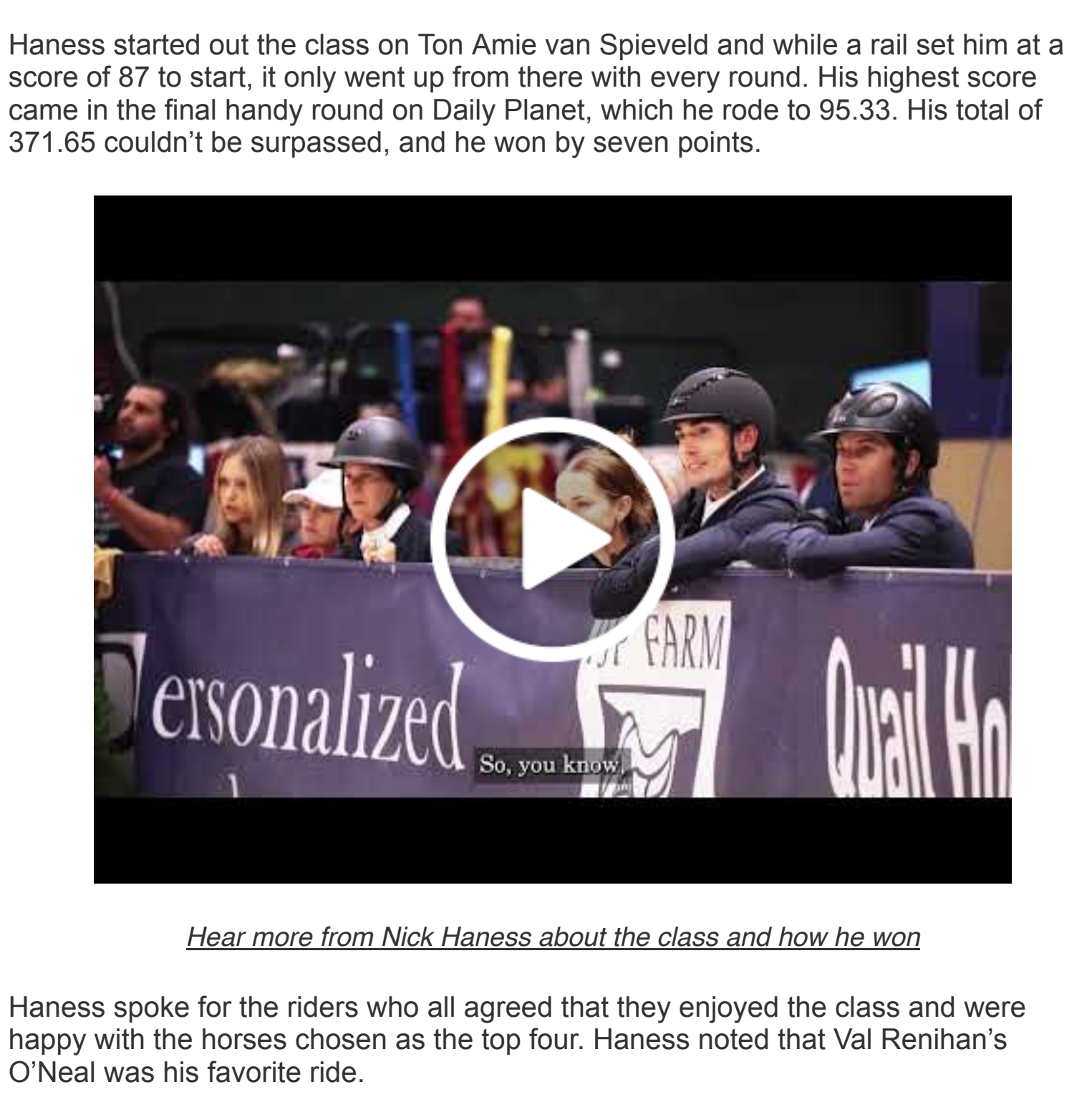



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Nick Haness Tops His Second \$30,000 WCHR Professional Finals

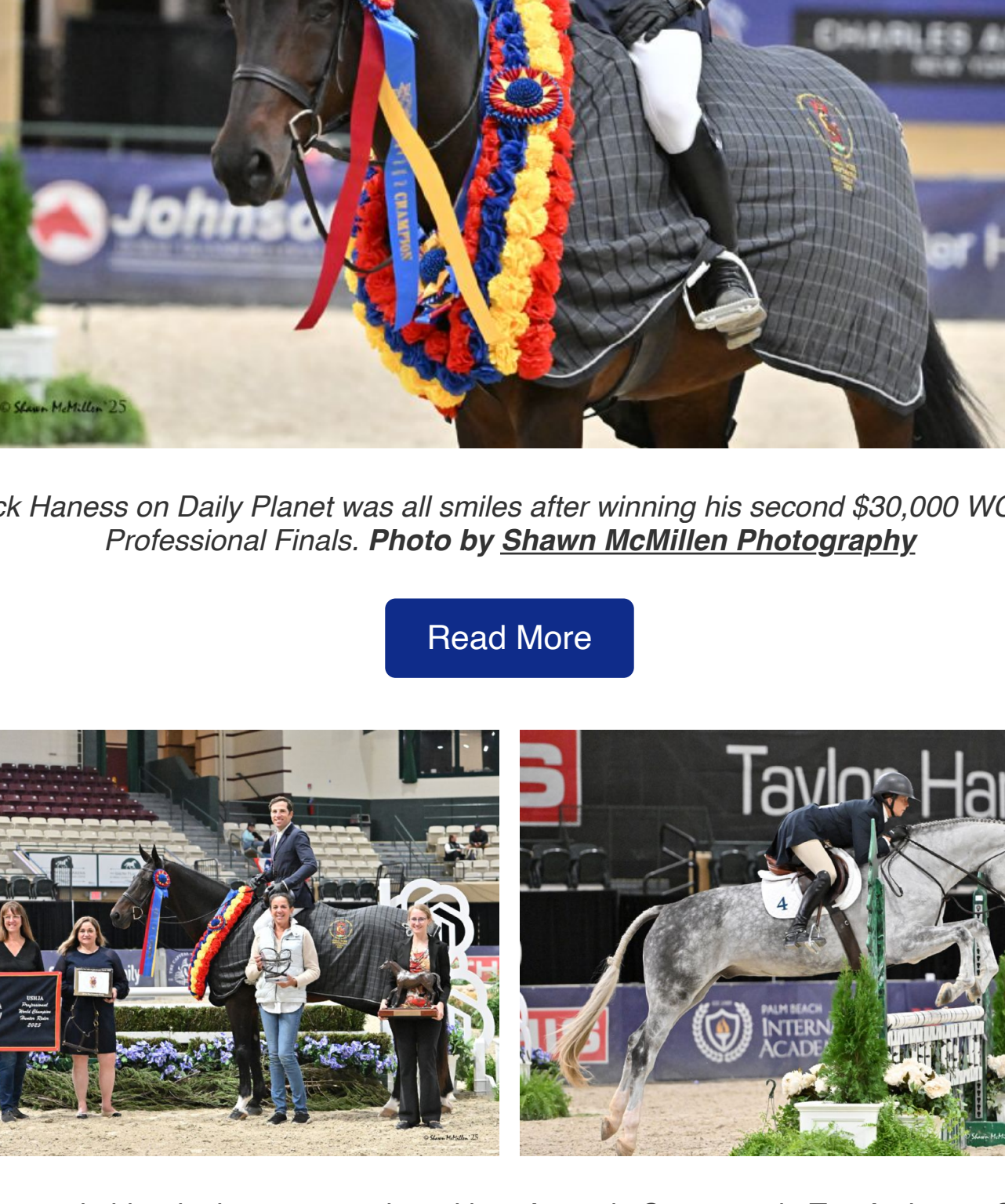
Upper Marlboro, MD – Two major events brought two great winners on Friday, October 3, 2025, at Prince George's Equestrian Center in Upper Marlboro, MD. Nick Haness of Temecula, CA, won for the second time in the \$30,000 World Championship Hunter Rider (WCHR) Professional Finals, presented by [World Wide Technology](#). Earlier in the [Ariat National Adult Medal Finals](#), Hannah Hoch persevered for the win. The Grand Adult Amateur Hunter Champions were also crowned, with Glenda Monkarsch and Wroyal Jester, owned by Tom Rattigan, in the winner's circle. The Capital Challenge Horse Show continues through Sunday, October 5.



Nick Haness and his favorite ride of the night, O'Neal, owned by Valerie Renihan. *Photo by Shawn McMillen Photography*

The top three riders in the United States Hunter Jumper Association (USHJA) National Professional Rider standings – Nick Haness, Geoffrey Hesslink, and John French – qualified for the WCHR Professional Finals along with Wednesday's WCHR Professional Challenge winner, Amanda Steege.

Haness started out the class on Ton Amie van Spieveld and while a rail set him at a score of 87 to start, it only went up from there with every round. His highest score came in the final handy round on Daily Planet, which he rode to 95.33. His total of 371.65 couldn't be surpassed, and he won by seven points.



[Hear more from Nick Haness about the class and how he won](#)

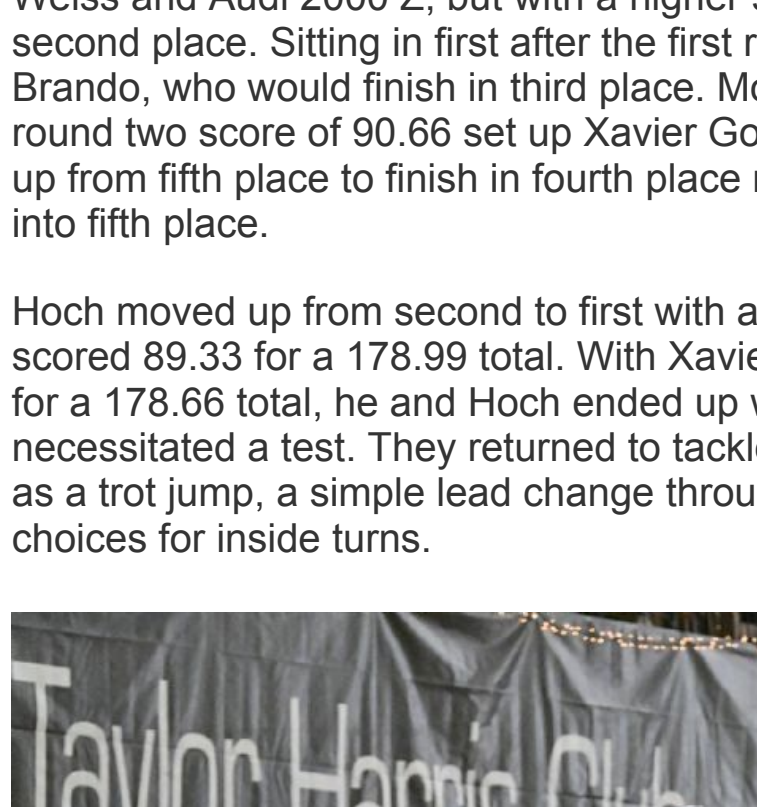
Haness spoke to the riders who all agreed that they enjoyed the class and were happy with the horses chosen as the top four. Haness noted that Val Renihan's O'Neal was his favorite ride.

"They were all really, really nice horses," he said. "They all had different traits. Part of the fun of this class was being able to adjust to each horse and try to study each of these riders. This panel of riders are terrific in each of their own ways, and we all have our strengths and weaknesses, just like the horses do. It's also just a bit of a matter of luck of the draw and being able to just roll with the punches as they come in and figure it out. We are really grateful for this class and for the supporters and the people that gave us horses to ride tonight."

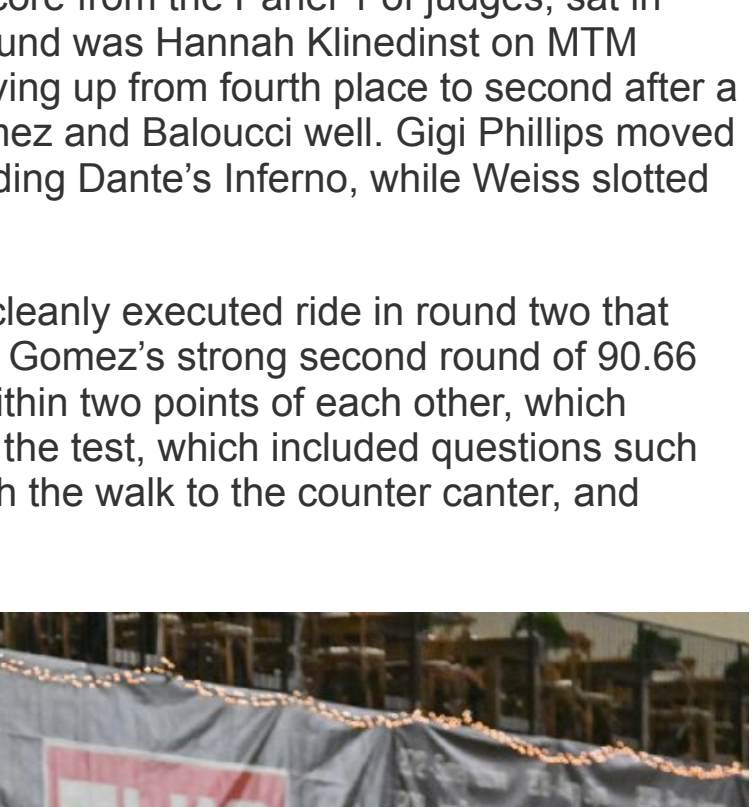


Nick Haness on Daily Planet was all smiles after winning his second \$30,000 WCHR Professional Finals. *Photo by Shawn McMillen Photography*

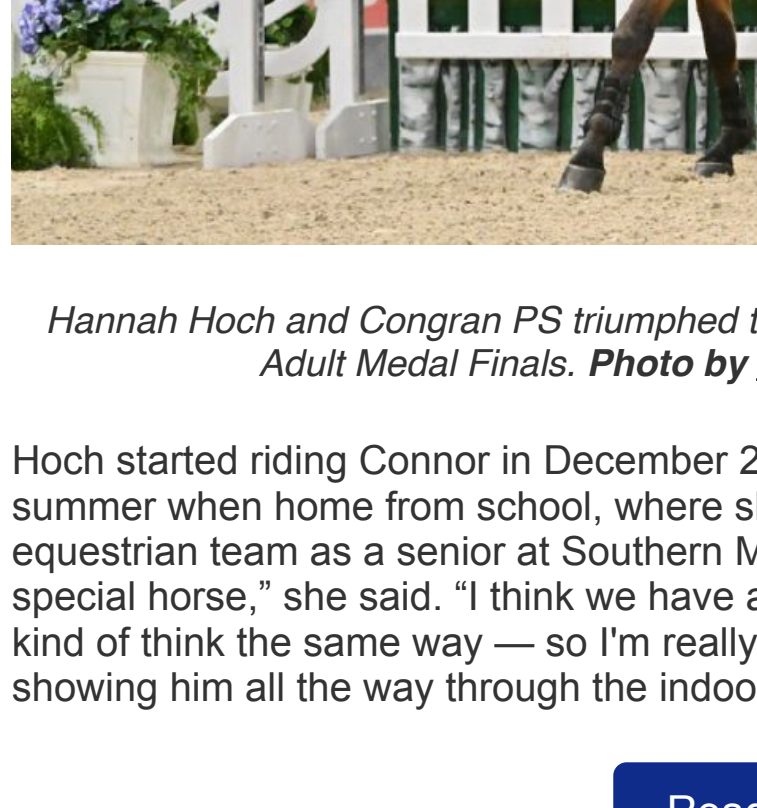
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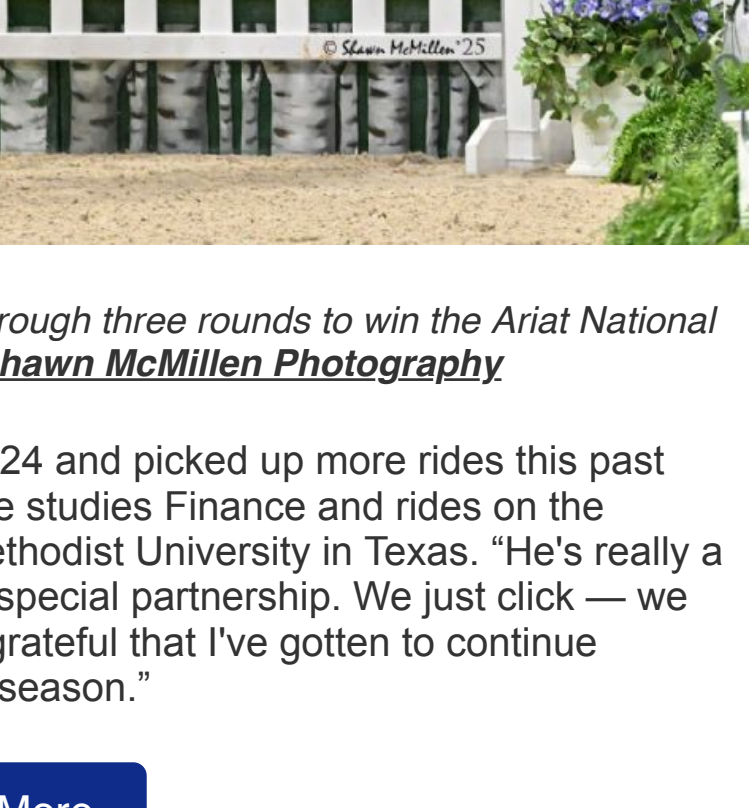
Nick Haness in his winning presentation with Sharon Lynn Campbell, Whitney Allen, USHJA Executive Director, Jennifer Hinman, and Gwendolyn Haag of USHJA.



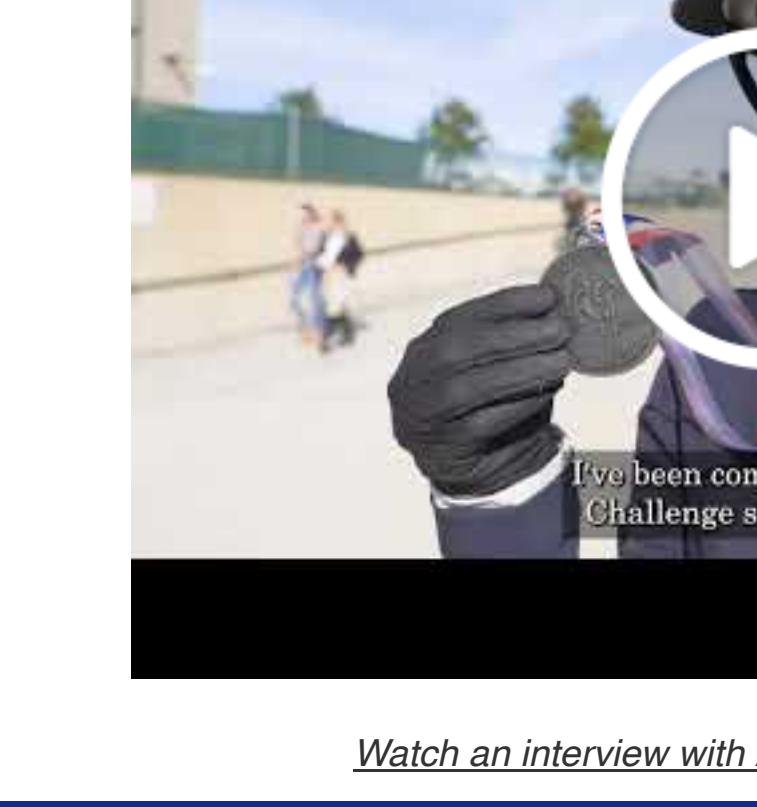
Amanda Steege rode Ton Amie van Spieveld to 91.66 in her second year riding the talented young horse in this class.



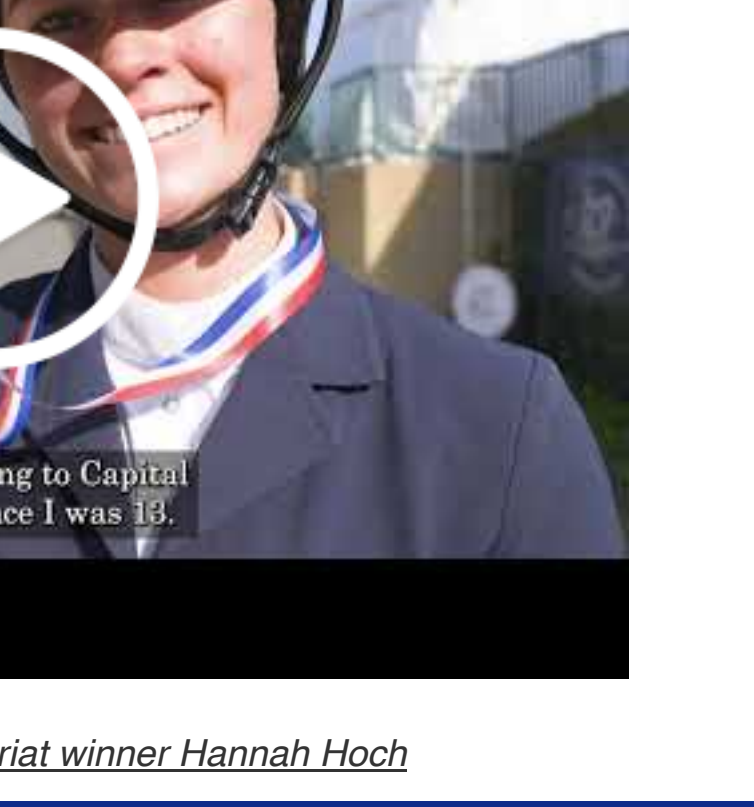
Geoffrey Hesslink, shown here riding Ton Amie van Spieveld to a 92.33 score, was riding in his fifth WCHR Professional Finals.



Sixteen-time WCHR Professional Finals veteran John French piloted Daily Planet to a score of 92.33.



The top four finishers: Nick Haness on Daily Planet, Amanda Steege on O'Neal, Geoffrey Hesslink on Ton Amie, and John French on Klutch.



The Best Horse Award was given to Marlene Holland's Daily Planet, shown here with USHJA's Whitney Allen and trainer Michael Britt-Leon.

Photos by Shawn McMillen Photography

Hoch Is Highest in Ariat National Adult Medal Finals

The Ariat National Adult Medal Finals are one of the few events that highlight amateur riders in an equitation class, and joining the list in 2025 was Hannah Hoch (22) of Whitefish Bay, WI, who competed in the finals for the first time. Hoch piloted Congran PS, an eight-year-old Oldenburg gelding by Conmrio owned by Heritage Farm Inc., through three rounds for the top prize.

Hoch and "Connor" had a first-round score of 89.33, the same score as Brendan Weiss and Audi 2000 Z, but with a higher score from the Panel 1 of judges, sat in second place. Sitting in first after the first round was Hannah Klinedinst on MTM Brando, who would finish in third place. Moving up from fourth place to second after a round two score of 90.66 set up Xavier Gomez and Baloucci well. Gigi Phillips moved up from fifth place to finish in fourth place riding Dante's Inferno, while Weiss slotted into fifth place.

Hoch moved up from second to first with a cleanly executed ride in round two that scored 89.33 for a 178.99 total. With Xavier Gomez's strong second round of 90.66 for a 178.66 total, he and Hoch ended up within two points of each other, which necessitated a test. They returned to tackle the test, which included questions such as a trot jump, a simple lead change through the walk to the counter canter, and choices for inside turns.



Hannah Hoch and Congran PS triumphed through three rounds to win the Ariat National Adult Medal Finals. *Photo by Shawn McMillen Photography*

Hoch started riding Connor in December 2024 and picked up more rides this past summer when home from school, where she studies Finance and rides on the equestrian team as a senior at Southern Methodist University in Texas. "He's really a special horse," she said. "I think we have a special partnership. We just click — we kind of think the same way — so I'm really grateful that I've gotten to continue showing him all the way through the indoor season."

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[Watch an interview with Ariat winner Hannah Hoch](#)

Monkarsh Wears the Grand Adult Crown

On Thursday in the Outdoor Arena, the Adult Amateur Hunters ran throughout the day with three age divisions. Glenda Monkarsch and Wroyal Jester placed second and third over fences and won the under saddle to take the top prize in the Adult Amateur Hunter 36-49 division. Monkarsch also finished as reserve champion with her horse Hush Money, who was first and third over fences and fourth in the under saddle.

Monkarsh and Wroyal Jester were awarded the Grand Adult Amateur Hunter Championship sponsored by Steve Martines. They were presented with The Equus Entries Challenge Trophy donated by Equus Entries and Sue and Ralph Caggiano. Monkarsch won the Best Adult Amateur Rider Award sponsored by Phoebe Wesely and River Run Farm LLC. Her trainer, Nick Haness, was presented with The Gail Knieriem Memorial Trophy sponsored by Evermore.



Monkarsh and the young stallion Wroyal Jester, who is also American-bred, won the Grand Adult Amateur Hunter Championship. *Photo by Shawn McMillen Photography*

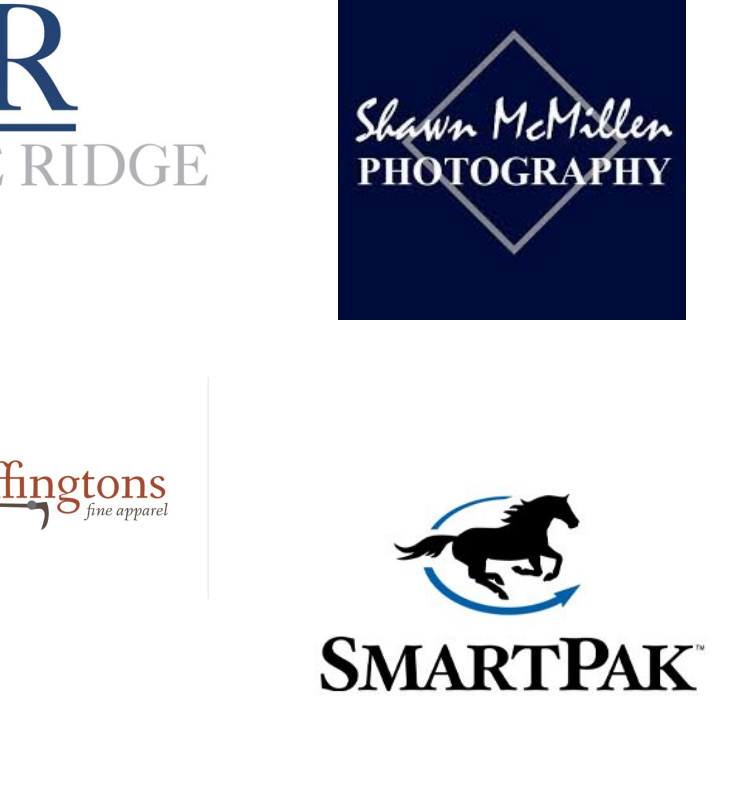
Having ridden as a "lesson kid" in Ohio at Jeff Gogul's Maypine Farms, Monkarsch continued riding in adulthood. In her first appearance at Capital Challenge, Monkarsch was bucked off and broke her pelvis, spending five days in the trauma center in Maryland. The fall necessitated a break from riding, but she returned to horses and showing afterward with the support of her husband and daughter, who is now 12 years old.

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Gallery of Champions



Adult Amateur Hunter 50 & Over
 Sponsored by Ocean Echo
 Champion: Chilled, Rindy Dominguez,
 Reserve: Lord Fantasy KWG, Mimi
 Moulton, Privet Farm, LLC



Adult Amateur Hunter 18-35
 Sponsored by Lainie Wimberly and Brigadoon Show Stables, Inc.
 Champion: Kalvarie, Madeline Briggs, The
 Kalvarie Group
 Reserve: Symbolique, Morera Equine
 LLC, Erin Morera

Photos by Shawn McMillen Photography



HERITAGE COMPETITION

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 2025 edition of the Capital Challenge Horse Show will take place from September 24-October 5. The 12 days of competition include prestigious equitation events, jumper divisions, the World Championship Hunter Rider (WCHR) Finals, the 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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