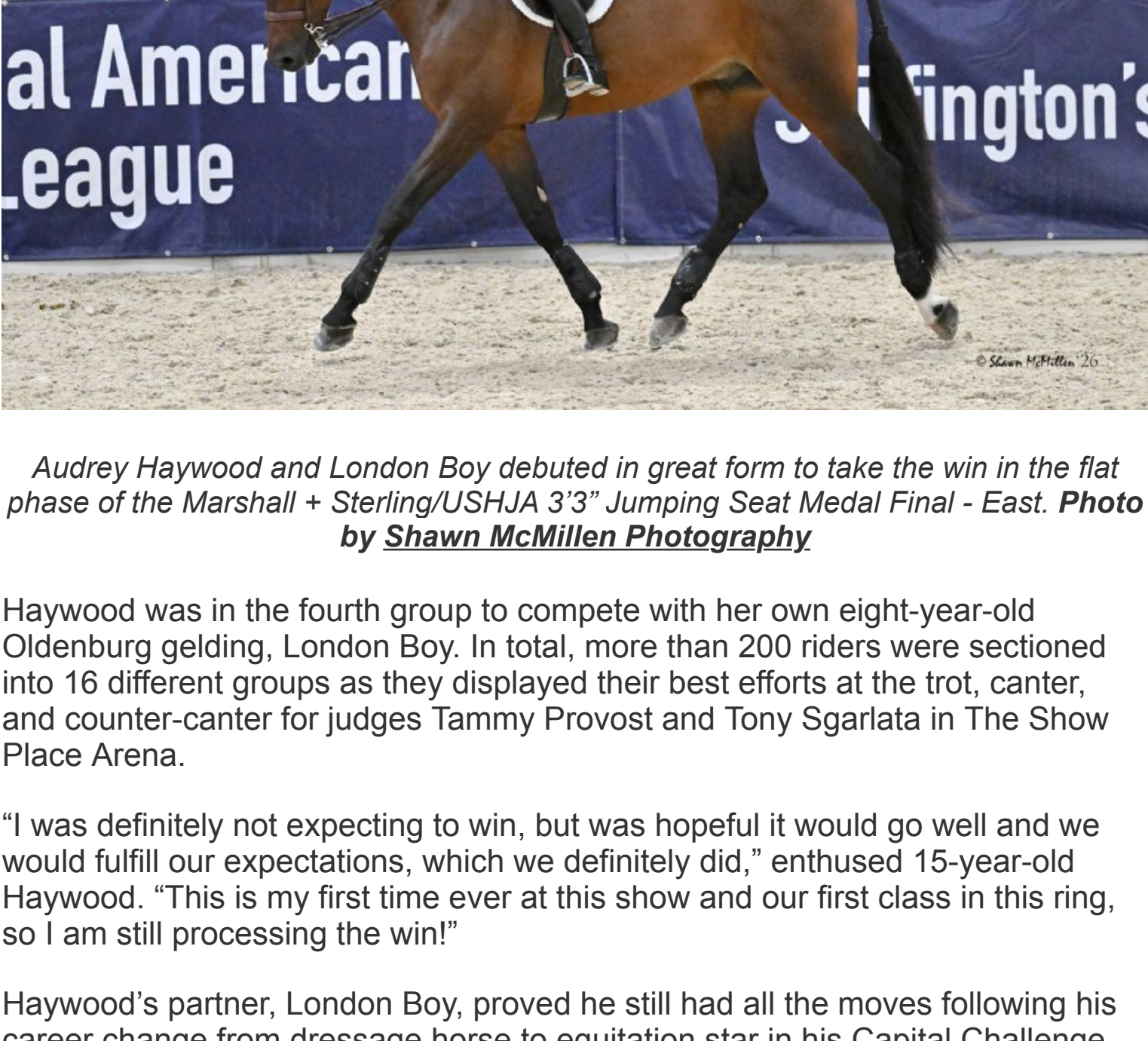


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Audrey Haywood Earns First Capital Challenge Win in Flat Phase of Marshall+Sterling Insurance/USHJA 3'3" Jumping Seat Medal Final - East

Upper Marlboro, MD – The first day of the 2026 Capital Challenge Horse Show Equitation Showcase, presented by BIGEQ.com, kicked off on Wednesday, September 23, 2026, at the Prince George's Equestrian Center in Upper Marlboro, MD. The first horse-and-rider combinations took center stage in the flat phase of the Marshall+Sterling Insurance/United States Hunter Jumper Association (USHJA) 3'3" Jumping Seat Medal Final - East, and newcomer Audrey Haywood holds the early lead after the first phase of the class.

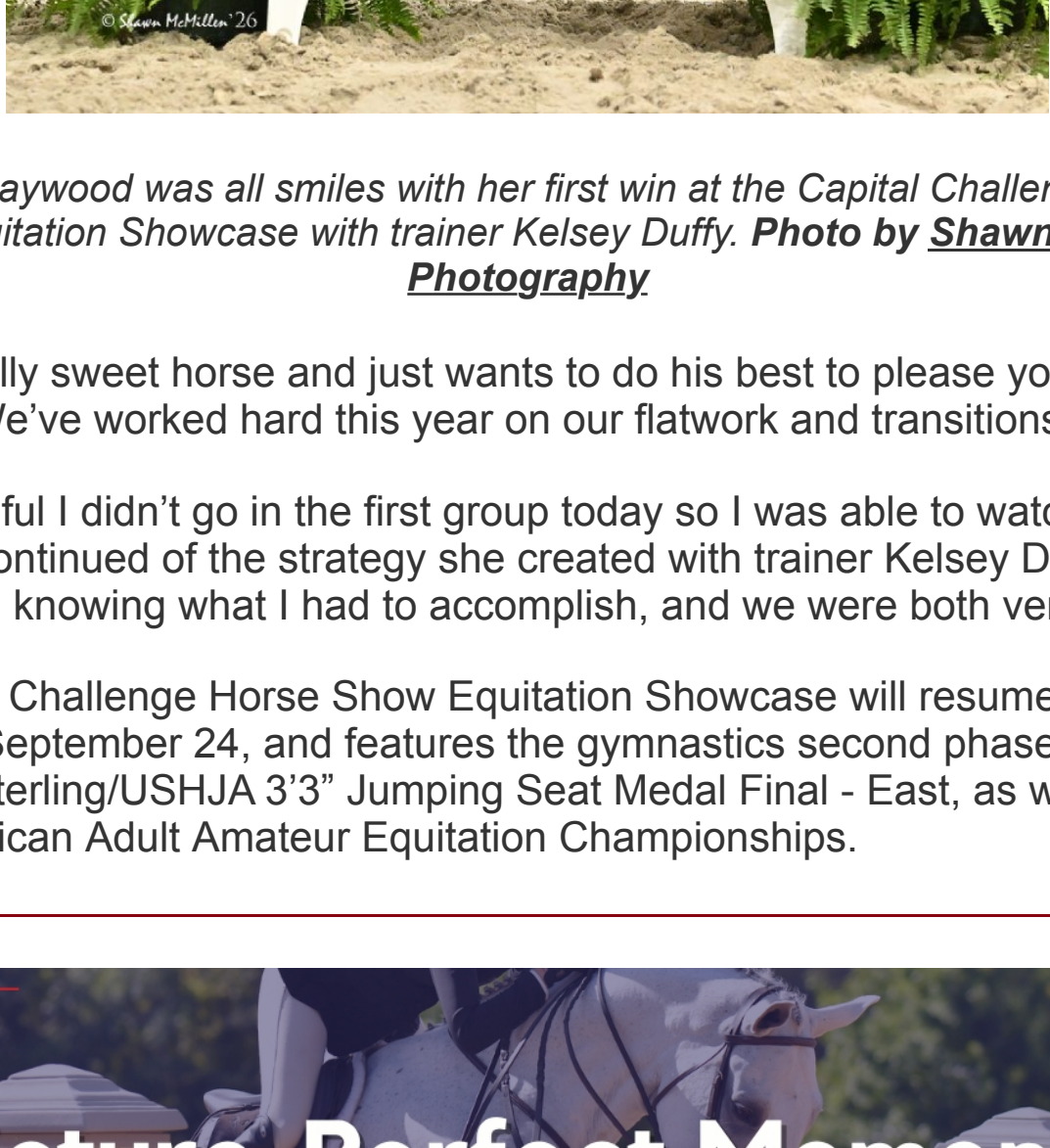


Audrey Haywood and London Boy debuted in great form to take the win in the flat phase of the Marshall + Sterling/USHJA 3'3" Jumping Seat Medal Final - East. Photo by Shawn McMillen Photography

Haywood was in the fourth group to compete with her own eight-year-old Oldenburg gelding, London Boy. In total, more than 200 riders were sectioned into 16 different groups as they displayed their best efforts at the trot, canter, and counter-canter for judges Tammy Provost and Tony Sgarlata in The Show Place Arena.

"I was definitely not expecting to win, but was hopeful it would go well and we would fulfill our expectations, which we definitely did," enthused 15-year-old Haywood. "This is my first time ever at this show and our first class in this ring, so I am still processing the win!"

Haywood's partner, London Boy, proved he still had all the moves following his career change from dressage horse to equitation star in his Capital Challenge Horse Show debut.

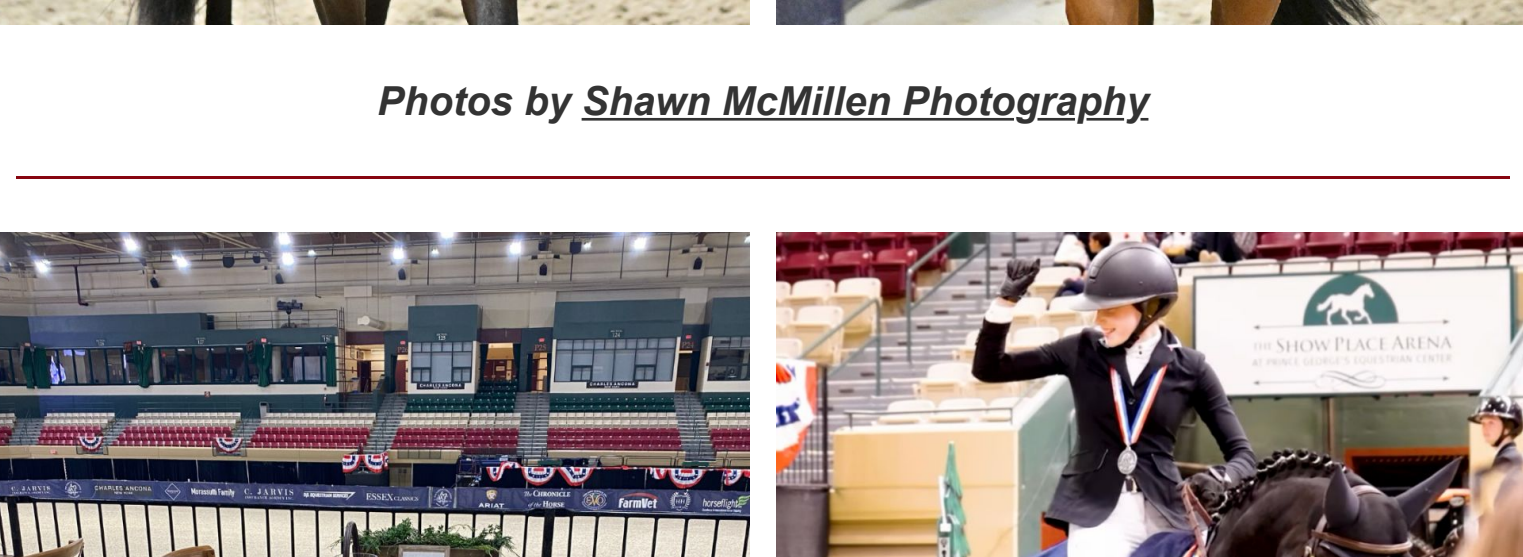


Audrey Haywood was all smiles with her first win at the Capital Challenge Horse Show Equitation Showcase with trainer Kelsey Duffy. Photo by Shawn McMillen Photography

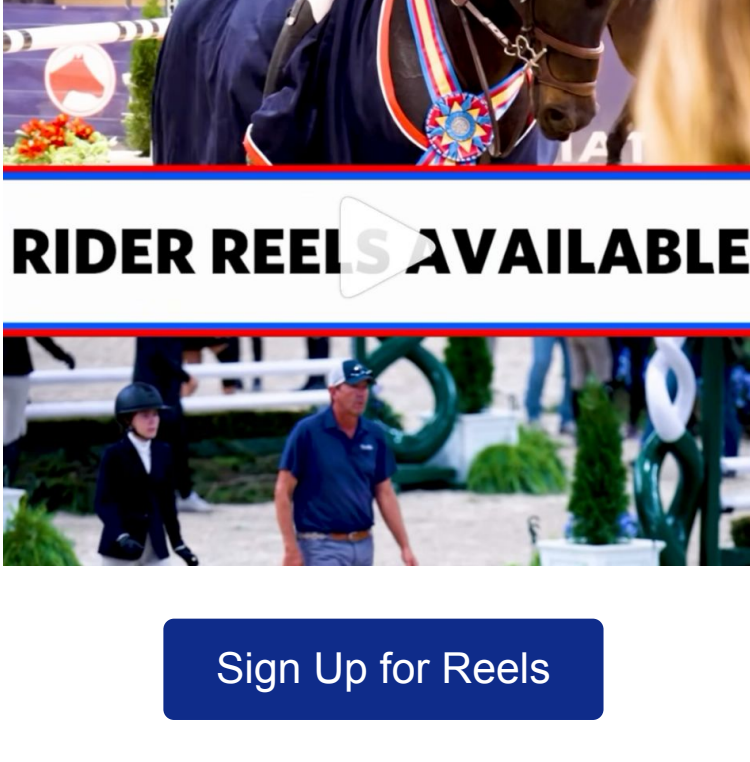
"He is a really sweet horse and just wants to do his best to please you," she detailed. "We've worked hard this year on our flatwork and transitions."

"I was grateful I didn't go in the first group today so I was able to watch them," Haywood continued of the strategy she created with trainer Kelsey Duffy. "I went into the ring knowing what I had to accomplish, and we were both very calm."

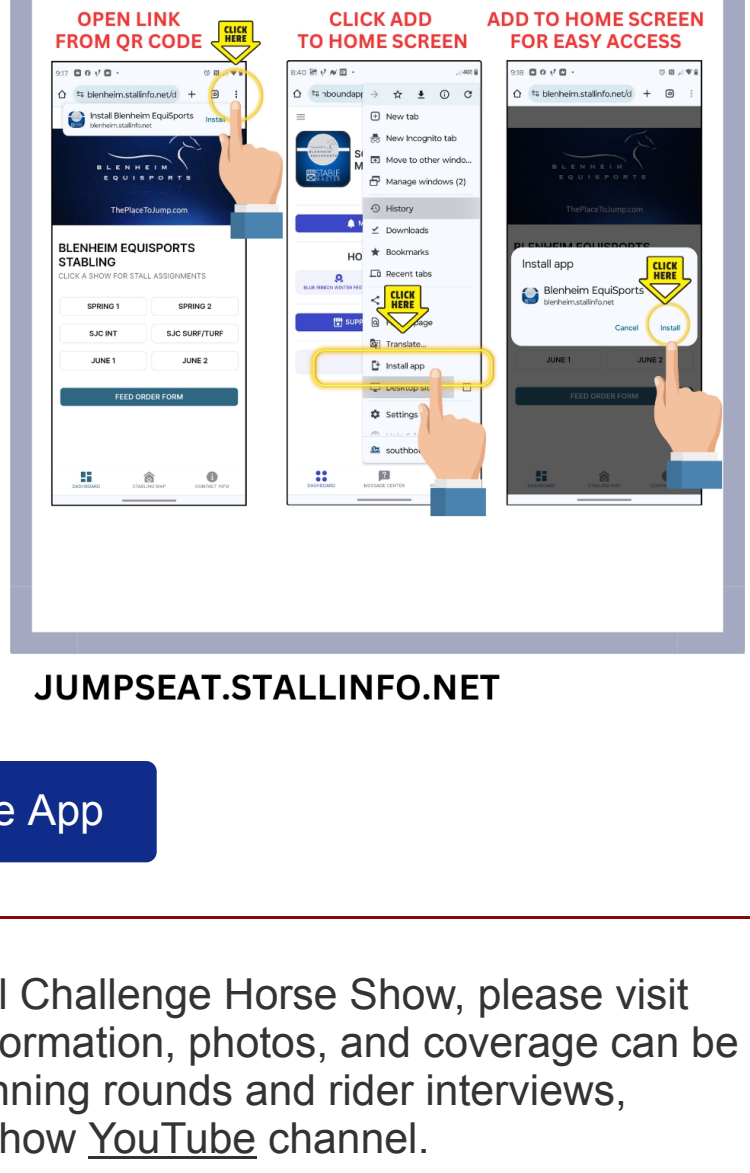
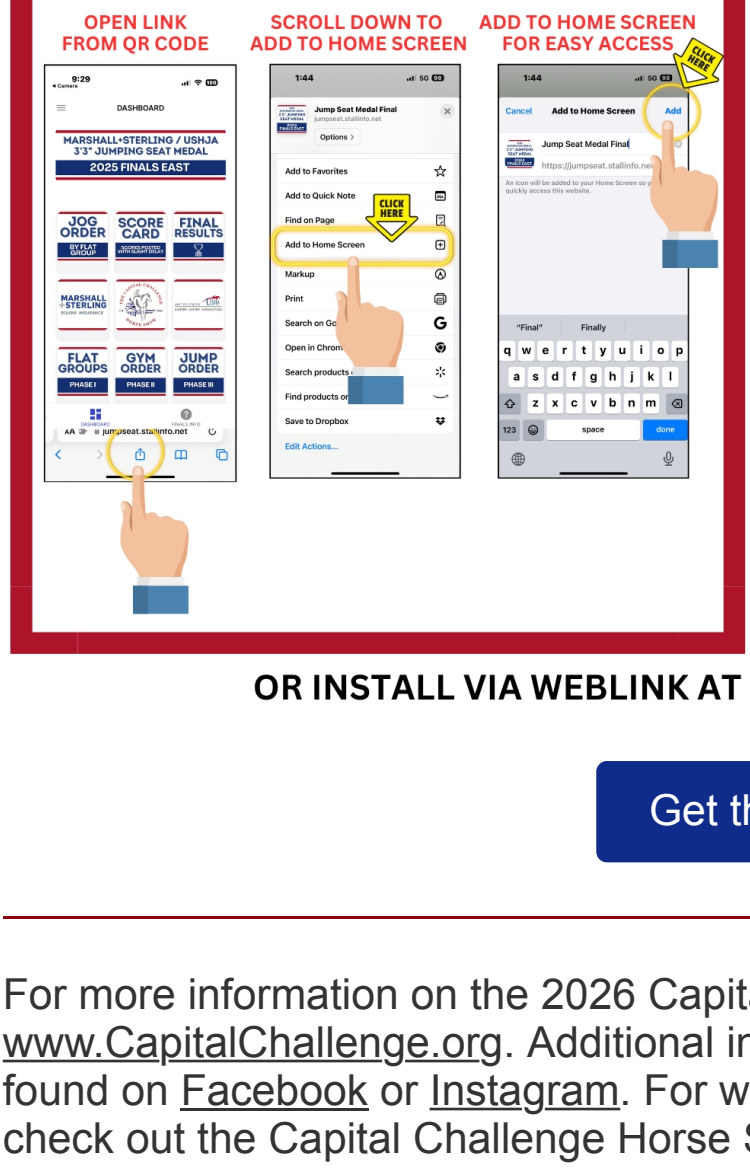
The Capital Challenge Horse Show Equitation Showcase will resume on Thursday, September 24, and features the gymnastics second phase of the Marshall+Sterling/USHJA 3'3" Jumping Seat Medal Final - East, as well as the North American Adult Amateur Equitation Championships.



Ana Failla and Contact were presented with the Best Turned Out Award for their impeccable appearance in Wednesday morning's horse inspection.



Lillian Valiquette and Kingston earned the Best Turned Out Award out of the competing horses in the flat phase.



Photos by Shawn McMillen Photography



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For more information on the 2026 Capital Challenge Horse Show, please visit www.CapitalChallenge.org. Additional information, photos, and coverage can be found on Facebook or Instagram. For winning rounds and rider interviews, check out the Capital Challenge Horse Show YouTube channel.



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 26th edition of the Capital Challenge Horse Show will take place from September 23-October 4. 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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