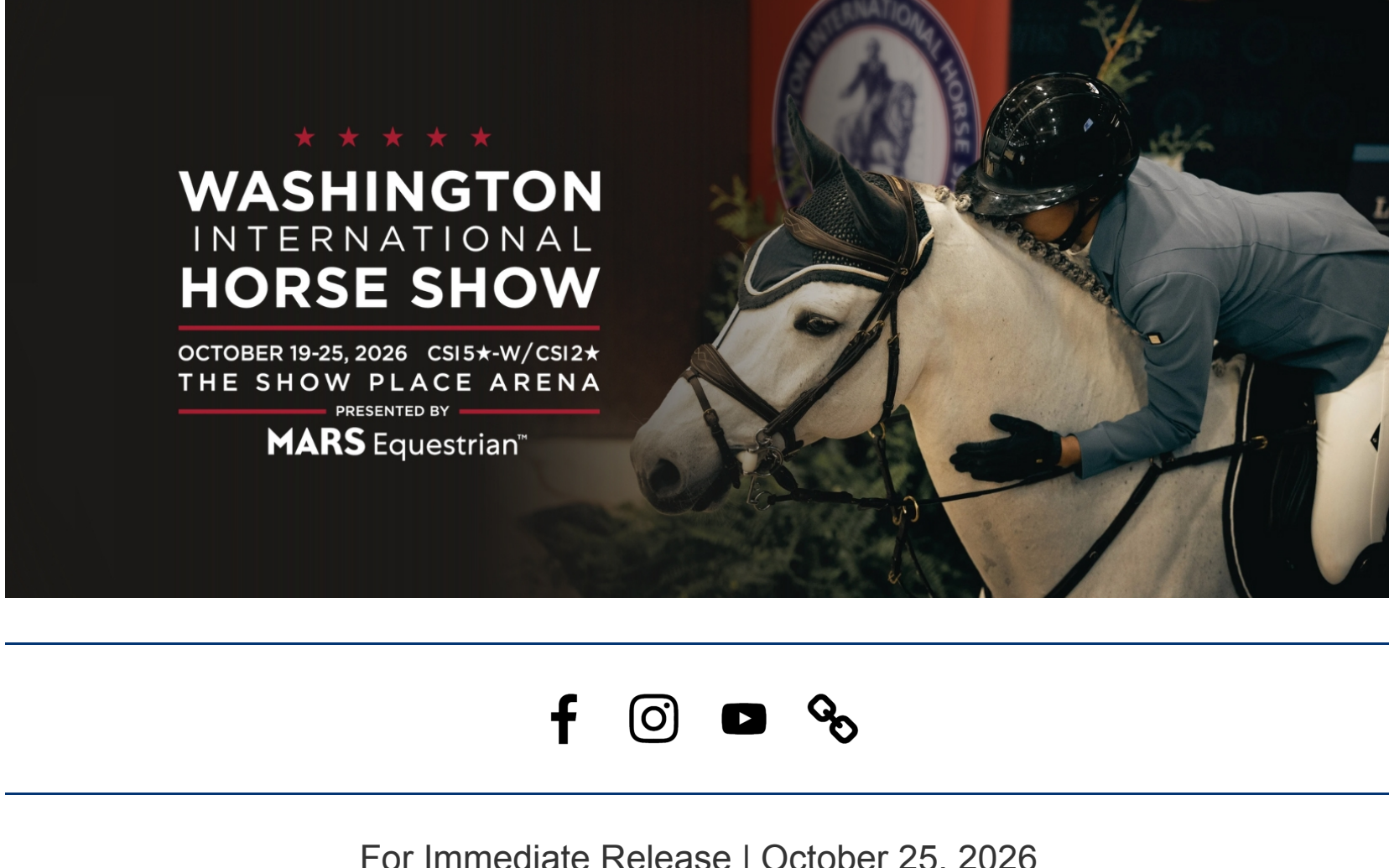




For Immediate Release | October 25, 2026
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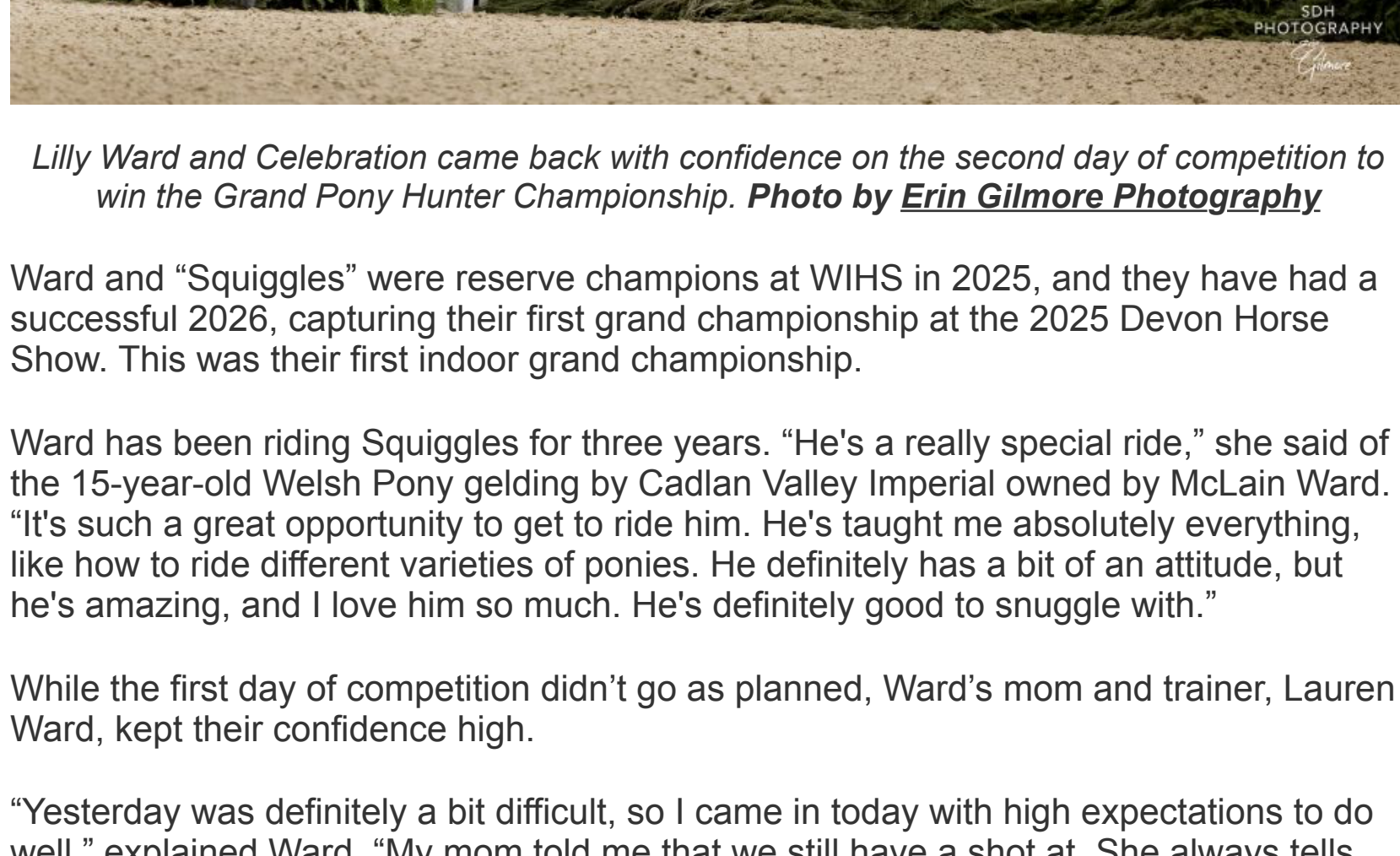
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Lilly Ward Celebrates Grand Pony Hunter Championship

Upper Marlboro, MD – Competition for the 2025 Washington International Horse Show (WIHS), presented by MARS Equestrian™ closed on Sunday, October 25, with the pony hunters and the WIHS Pony Equitation Final. Lilly Ward and Celebration took the top prize in the Grand Pony Hunter Championship, while Sienna Rossano rode Won Wish to win the WIHS Pony Equitation Final.

Eleven-year-old Lilly Ward of Brewster, NY, won the Grand Pony Hunter Championship with her pony Celebration after winning the Small Pony Hunter Stake and under saddle classes. For the Small Pony Hunter championship, they were presented with the Stombeck Saddlery Challenge Trophy, and they were presented with the Miles River Moonglow Perpetual Trophy for the grand championship. For the Leading Rider/Owner Award, they were presented with the Potomac Trophy. The reserve championship in the Small Pony Hunters went to Eliza Jane St. George and Dream Big, owned by Just Dandi LLC.

It was the pair's third consecutive time winning the Small Pony Hunter under saddle, retiring the Winchester Marine Challenge Trophy, which was donated by longtime WIHS supporter Robin Wyman 50 years ago.



Lilly Ward and Celebration came back with confidence on the second day of competition to win the Grand Pony Hunter Championship. *Photo by Erin Gilmore Photography*

Ward and "Squiggles" were reserve champions at WIHS in 2025, and they have had a successful 2026, capturing their first grand championship at the 2025 Devon Horse Show. This was their first indoor grand championship.

Ward has been riding Squiggles for three years. "He's a really special ride," she said of the 15-year-old Welsh Pony gelding by Cadlan Valley Imperial owned by McLain Ward. "It's such a great opportunity to get to ride him. He's taught me absolutely everything, like how to ride different varieties of ponies. He definitely has a bit of an attitude, but he's amazing, and I love him so much. He's definitely good to snuggle with."

While the first day of competition didn't go as planned, Ward's mom and trainer, Lauren Ward, kept their confidence high.

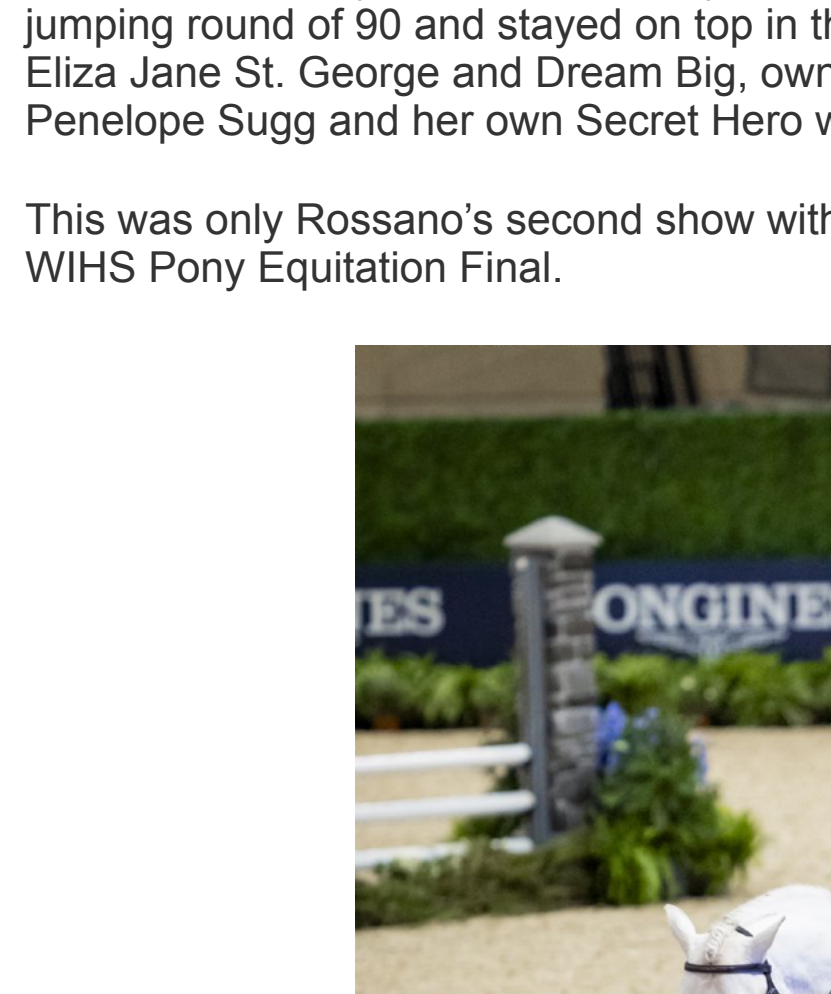
"Yesterday was definitely a bit difficult, so I came in today with high expectations to do well," explained Ward. "My mom told me that we still have a shot at. She always tells me, 'You got this.' We worked on keeping him straight and focused."

"It's so special to win here because the jumpers go here too," commented Ward. "It's so fun to watch my dad compete at night. It's definitely really hard to win at WIHS. There are lots of good ponies here."

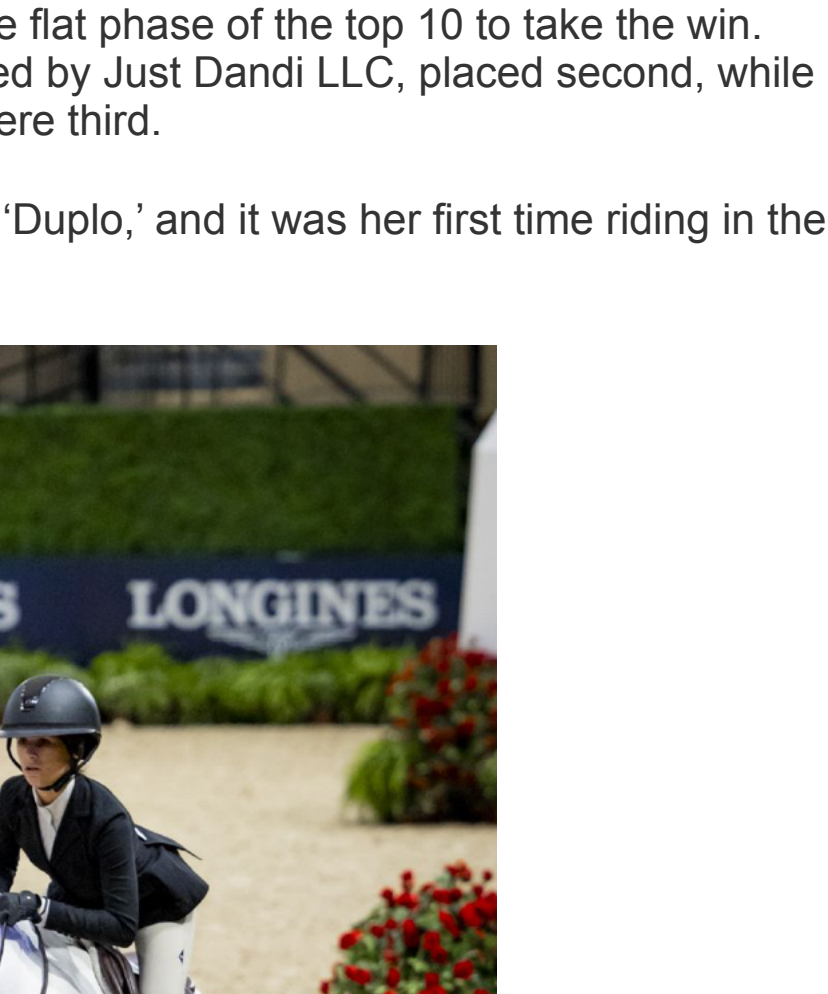


Lilly Ward and Celebration in their winning presentation for the Grand Pony Hunter Championship. *Photo by Erin Gilmore Photography*

Valentijn and Marlowe Martin won their over fences class and added three fourth place ribbons to win the Medium Pony Hunter championship. Martin and the 10-year-old Welsh Pony gelding owned by Charlotte Rossetter were presented with the Shenandoah Sundowner Perpetual Trophy. Annie Cooper and Hopscotch, owned by Joe Currais, were reserve champions. With a score of 91, Cooper and Hopscotch won the Best Pony Hunter Stake Round.



Best Child Rider on a Pony, Marlowe Martin, won the Medium Pony Hunter championship with Valentijn. *Photo by Erin Gilmore Photography*



Kenzie Smith swept the Large Pony Hunter division and was champion with Sneak Preview. *Photo by Erin Gilmore Photography*

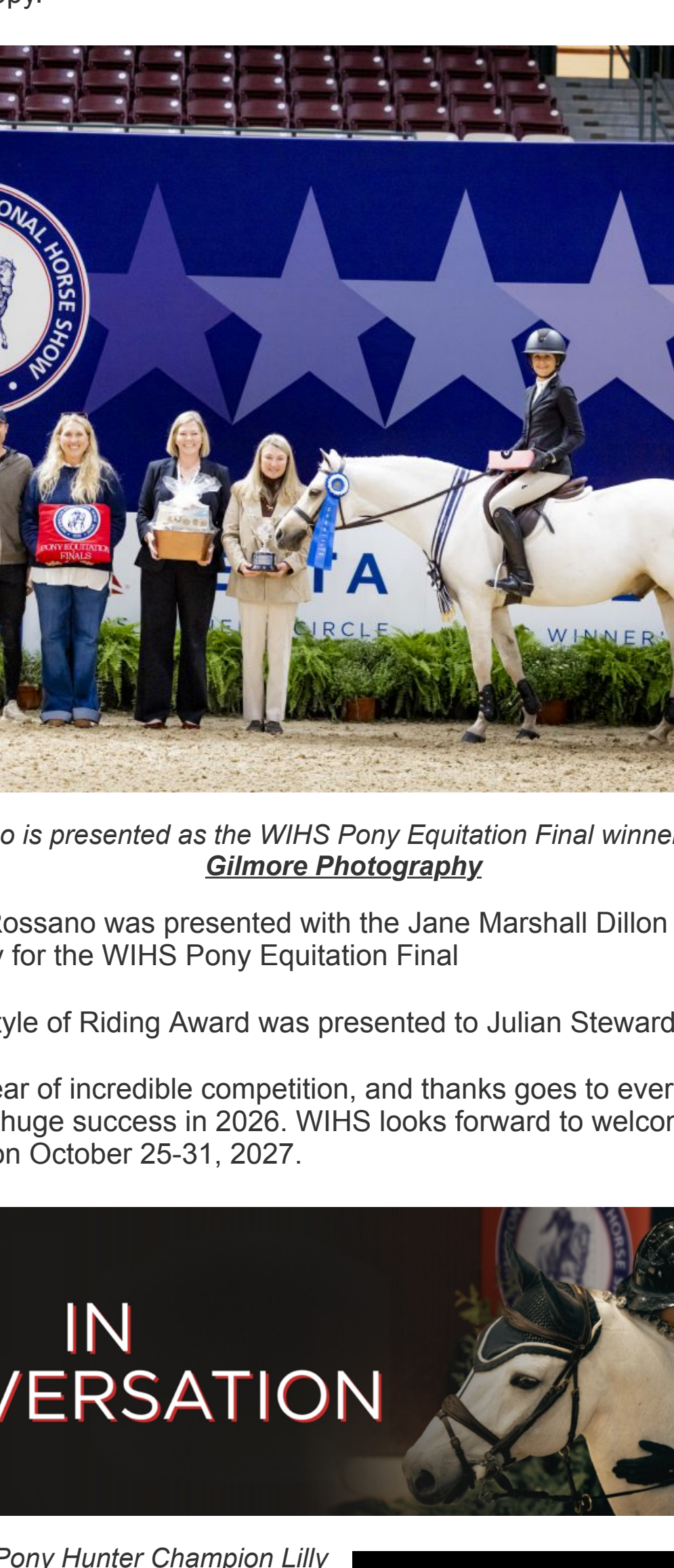
Sneak Preview and Kenzie Smith, a 10-year-old German Riding Pony gelding owned by Rivers Edge, received two seconds, third, and fourth to win the Large Pony Hunter championship, Orchard Zweed, for Rivers Edge.

Marlowe Martin won the Best Child Rider on a Pony Award and was presented with the Captain V.S. Littauer Perpetual Trophy.

Sienna Rossano Rides to WIHS Pony Equitation Final

Fourteen-year-old Sienna Rossano of Wellington, FL, rode Won Wish, owned by Julian Steward, to victory in the WIHS Pony Equitation Final. She set the score to beat in the jumping round of 90 and stayed on top in the flat phase of the top 10 to take the win. Eliza Jane St. George and Dream Big, owned by Just Dandi LLC, placed second, while Penelope Sugg and her own Secret Hero were third.

This was only Rossano's second show with 'Duplo,' and it was her first time riding in the WIHS Pony Equitation Final.



Sienna Rossano and Won Wish scored a 90 and were solid in the flat phase to win the WIHS Pony Equitation Final. *Photo by Erin Gilmore Photography*

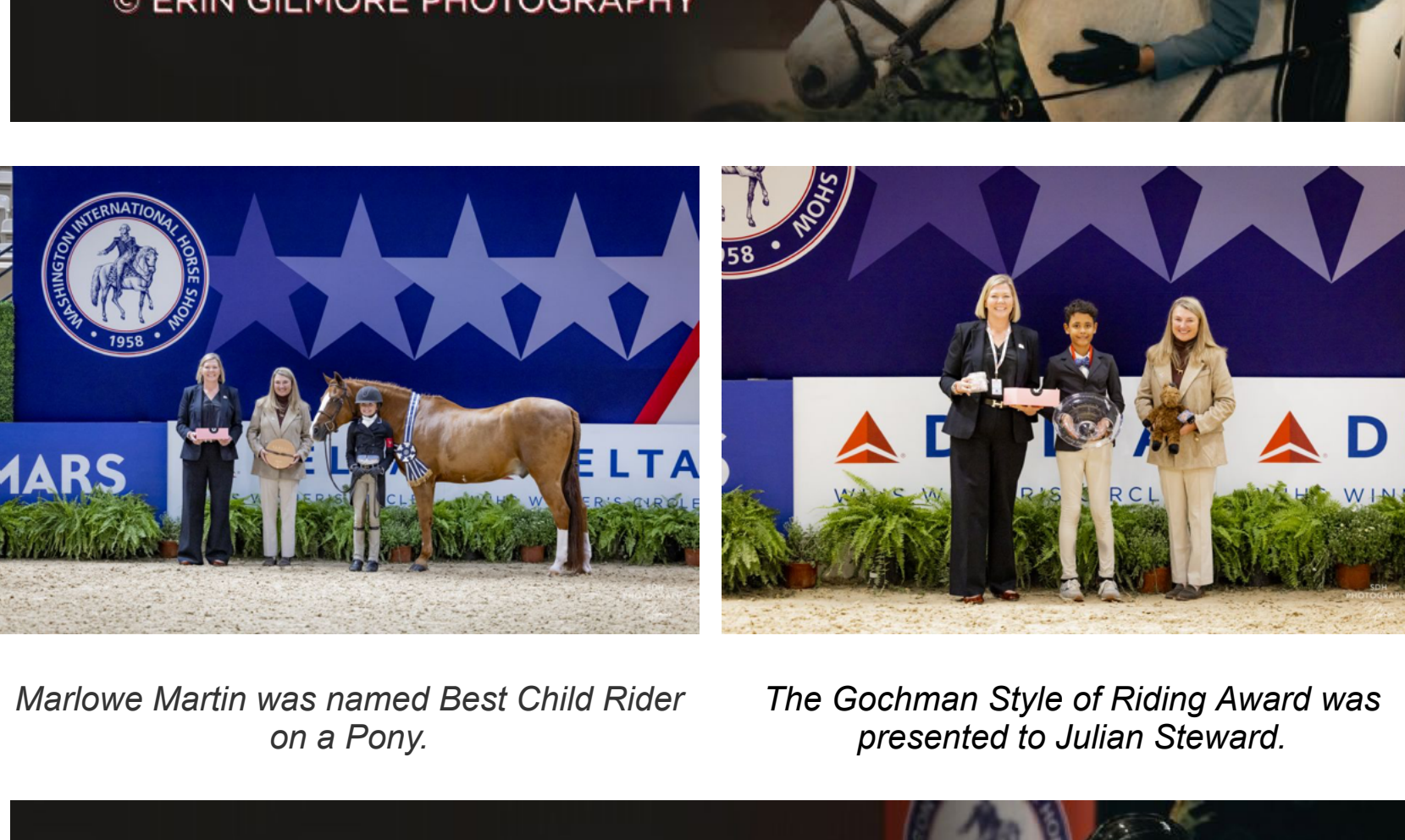
"He's very scopey and reliable, and he has a massive stride. His big stride helped us get up the first line," she said of the nine-year-old German Riding Pony gelding. "He's so sweet and always game for anything. In his stall, he has a little zebra toy that he likes to play with that Julian brought him."

Rossano was happy that she was able to follow through on what she and her trainers had decided for the first-phase course.

"Going in, I wanted to have a nice, confident ride and execute my plan the way I wanted," she acknowledged. "To the two stride, I wanted to have enough pace, and I was also thinking about the last jump. I stayed out in my turn to the last jump and rode it straight."

While Rossano was reserve champion in the Medium Pony Hunters with High Tops before at WIHS, this is a big victory for her.

"It's very special to win this class," she agreed. "I wasn't expecting to win; I was surprised but happy."



Sienna Rossano is presented as the WIHS Pony Equitation Final winner. *Photo by Erin Gilmore Photography*

For her victory, Rossano was presented with the Jane Marshall Dillon Memorial Perpetual Trophy for the WIHS Pony Equitation Final

The Gochman Style of Riding Award was presented to Julian Steward.

It was another year of incredible competition, and thanks goes to everyone who made the show such a huge success in 2026. WIHS looks forward to welcoming everyone to the 69th edition on October 25-31, 2027.



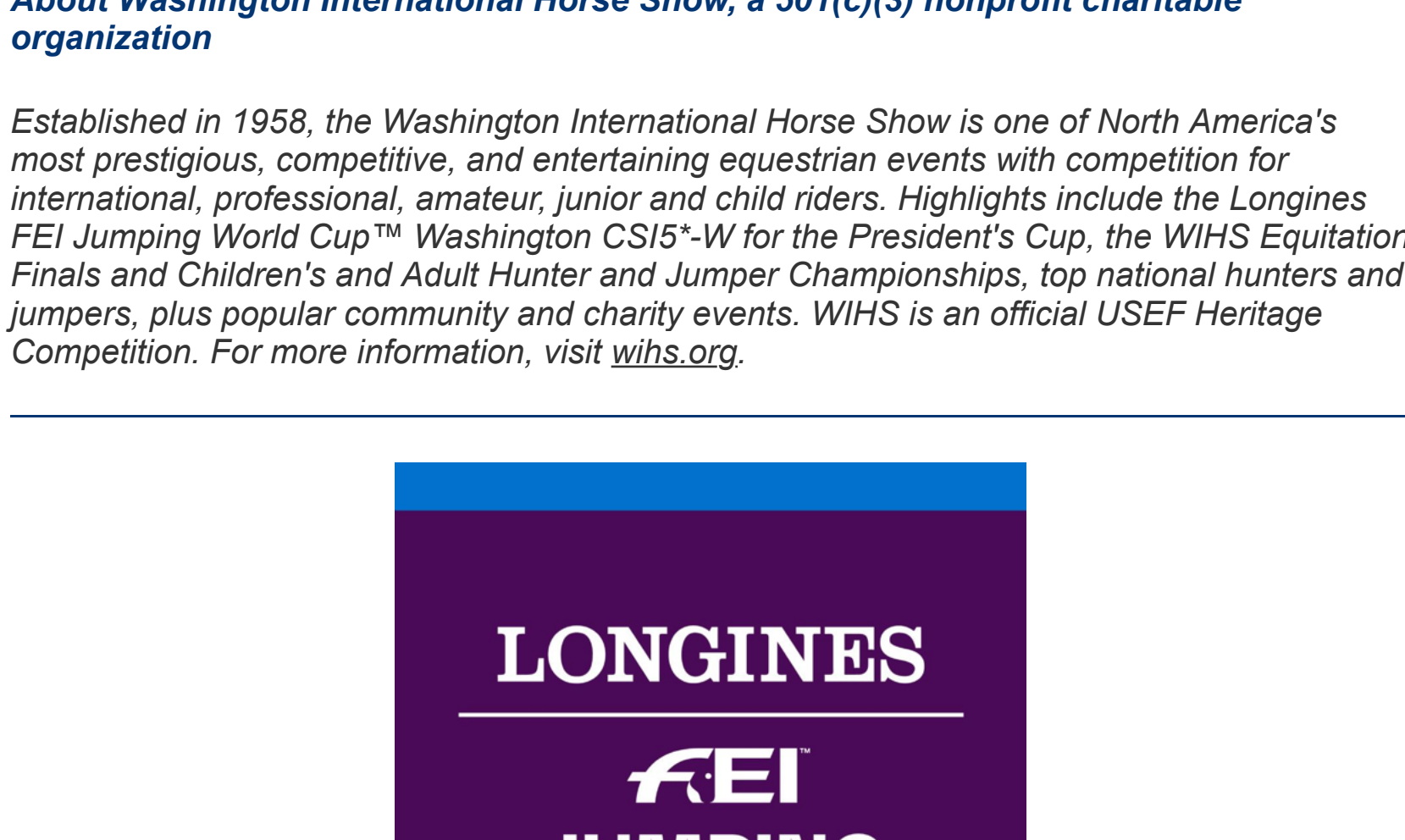
[Hear from Grand Pony Hunter Champion Lilly Ward](#)

Watch



[The 2026 WIHS is a wrap!](#)

Watch



Marlowe Martin was named Best Child Rider on a Pony.



The Gochman Style of Riding Award was presented to Julian Steward.

[Read the 2026 WIHS Souvenir Program](#)

For more information, visit www.wihs.org.

About Washington International Horse Show, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit charitable organization

Established in 1958, the Washington International Horse Show is one of North America's most prestigious, competitive, and entertaining equestrian events with competition for international, professional, amateur, junior and child riders. Highlights include the Longines FEI Jumping World Cup™ Washington CSI5*-W for the President's Cup, the WIHS Equitation Finals and Children's and Adult Hunter and Jumper Championships, top national hunters and jumpers, plus popular community and charity events. WIHS is an official USEF Heritage Competition. For more information, visit wihs.org.

