



2007 Rolex Kentucky CCI4* winner Clayton Fredericks proudly accepts the Rolex Trophy from Jane Atkinson of Equestrian Events, Inc.

In what was arguably one of the most dramatic and surprising finishes in Rolex Kentucky history, Australia's Clayton Fredericks and Ben Along Time earned the title of four-star champions at the Rolex Kentucky Three-Day Event, presented by Farnam, held at the Kentucky Horse Park in Lexington, Kentucky, April 26-29. The impressive feat, a first at this level for both horse and rider, came at the expense of overnight leaders, Kristin Bachman and Gryffindor, when Bachman zigged when she should have zagged mid-way on the show jumping track and went off course, resulting in their elimination.

For those who pontificate that eventing has become a dressage test, the last two years at Rolex Kentucky have certainly disproved that theory. Last year's winners, Andrew Hoy and Master Monarch (also Australian), moved up from 17th after dressage to take the blue, and this year only four of the original top ten after dressage managed to finish within that same span, with several at the top of the final standings making huge moves up the leaderboard including Karen O'Connor and Theodore O'Connor (15th to 3rd), Australia's 1996 Olympics team gold medalist Wendy Schaeffer with Koyuna Sun Magic (20th to 6th), and most impressively, Jonathan Holling and Direct Merger (28th to 8th).

And while the crowd cheered enthusiastically for Fredericks and Ben Along Time, a 12-year-old Irish bred gelding (Cavalier Royale – Campaigners Dream) owned by Edwin and Pam McAuley, as they accepted all their trophies, prizes, and accolades, there was a palpable sense of disappointment after the elimination of Bachman

Aussie Upset at Rolex Kentucky

Fredericks and Ben Along Time Win Their First CCI4*

By Amy J. Daum



ABOVE: Australia's Clayton Fredericks and Ben Along Time take their first CCI4* victory lap, with Fredericks displaying his Aussie pride by waving the country's flag
FACING PAGE: The pair jumped a clear show jumping round, adding only one time penalty to finish on a score of 54.

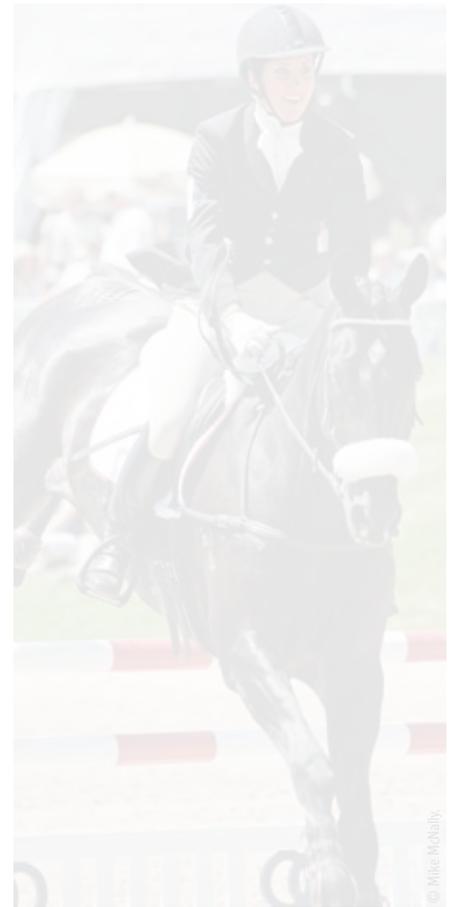


Ams thinking they might consider him. I'd be very proud to ride him there."

Teddy was also named Best Conditioned Horse of the event. They might want to consider renaming that honor. Best Conditioned Equine maybe?

Other notable performances included 20-year-old Young Rider and Idaho native Sara Mittleider and her \$300 off-the-track Thoroughbred El Primero, aka Tony, who finished in 12th. This was the pair's third trip in three years to the U.S.'s only four-star, and for the third year Mittleider was presented with the J.D. Reeves Trophy as the highest placing Young Rider. Her closest competition came from Kristen Bond and Fleeceworks Blackout who finished in 18th.

Coming off a late March win at the Galway Downs CIC***-W, Tiana Coudray and King Street made the 3,000-mile trek from California where they train with Bea and Derek di Grazia to test their mettle at their first four-star. They bore the brunt of the worst of Thursday's weather, performing a stellar dressage test despite cold sheets of pouring rain and sloppy, muddy footing (the Horse Park does a fantastic job with its arena, but there's only so much anyone can do in those sorts of conditions). Coudray,



ABOVE LEFT: El Primero put in a stellar performance for 20-year-old Sara Mittleider. Mittleider won the J.D. Reeves Trophy for the highest placing Young Rider for the third year in a row in addition to her 12th place ribbon. ABOVE RIGHT: Fellow Young Rider Kristen Bond piloted Fleeceworks Blackout to an 18th place finish after knocking a single rail in show jumping. BELOW LEFT: Tiana Coudray and King Street had to endure pouring rain and blustering wind during their dressage test on Thursday. The judges rewarded their efforts with a 49.3 after the duo performed a brilliant test with some of the weekend's best flying changes.



Coudray gives King Street a well-deserved soggy hug after a lovely test in the sudden downpour bumped the pair up to the fourth place position after the first day of dressage.

Bruce Davidson Statue Unveiled at Kentucky Horse Park



Bruce Davidson poses with sculptor Jean Claggett and Allen Brill, President and CEO of Rolex Watch U.S.A.

A crowd gathered on Sunday morning April 29 at the entrance to the Kentucky Horse Park museum for the unveiling of a full-sized statue of eventing champion Bruce O. Davidson, Sr. and Eagle Lion. The lifelike bronze statue shows Davidson's lean form stretched back, whip high, as Eagle Lion, ears perked, goes over a Rolex log into the water.

"We're not only unveiling a statue, we're recognizing an achievement," said John Nicholson, Kentucky Horse Park President. "We're at the precipice of a great moment in the sport."

Considered one of the most popular eventing riders of our time, Davidson appeared grateful and emotional during the ceremony.

"Who do you thank for the life you've been given? If there is a way to say thank you to all of you ... my supporters ... my family ... You've backed me for a lifetime and it isn't over yet," Davidson said. His son, fellow eventer Buck Davidson, and the Davidson family came out to pose with him by the statue.

Fans shouted out their thanks. "We love you, Bruce!" and "Ride on!" Davidson acknowledged it all with a polite wave to his admirers.

Sculptor Jean Claggett said the statue was "my chance for a gold medal ... the right horse, the right rider and the right place."

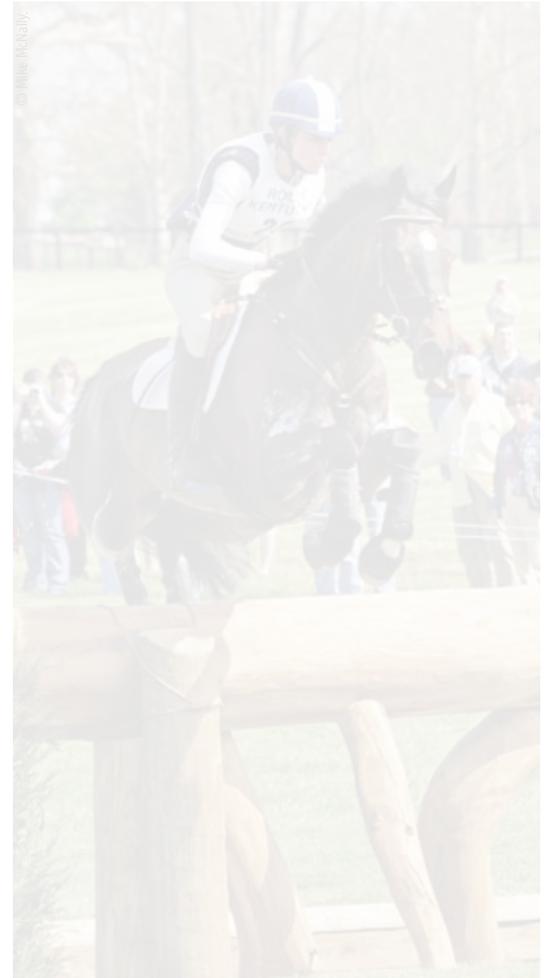
Davidson is truly one of the sports greats—in addition to his gold medal at the 1974 world championship, he won the 1978 championship that helped establish the Horse Park, and also won the Rolex Kentucky Three-Day Event a record six times (according to the statue's plaque).

In 1995, he became the first American to win the prestigious Badminton Horse Trials in England, and he competed in the Olympics five times, winning team silver in 1972, team gold in 1976, team gold in 1994 and team silver in 1996.

18, stayed composed and rode what had to have been one of the best tests of her life. Despite the mud and rain, King Street, a 12-year-old Irish Sport Horse gelding by Master Imp, showed lovely suspension, rhythm, and some of the best flying changes of the two days. The performance put them in fourth with a score of 49.3, though after the second day they dropped to ninth—still impressive in a field of 44, especially considering that the top nine were split by less than 2.5 penalty points.

The pair looked very strong on the first two-thirds of the Michael Etherington-Smith's (GBR) cross-country course, making their way smoothly through the *Head of the Lake* (notoriously difficult but slightly softened this year), but coming to grief at the next fence, the 3'11" high, 9'9" base spread *Creek Oxer*. Coudray said she knew they were in trouble a few strides

RIGHT: Kristin Schmolze's Cavaldi boldly jumps over the *Ditch*. The pair briefly parted ways after the gelding caught a leg over the squirrel tail at *Uncle Frani's Birch*, but Schmolze hopped back into the saddle, none the worse for wear, and continued on to finish the course. BELOW: King Street jumped bravely around the Rolex course for Young Rider Tiana Coudray until the gelding slid into the *Creek Oxer* after the *Head of the Lake*. Luckily, both he and Coudray emerged unscathed from the fall.



out. They came in at an off-stride, both seemed to take a peek into the ditch before take-off, and as a result King Street tried to duck out but ended up in the ditch, while Coudray was catapulted clear on the other side. King Street stood quietly waiting for a team to extricate him from the fence, and Coudray jumped in to keep him company. The cross-country crew had the pair back on solid ground within minutes, and both were unscathed, though decided to call it a day.

Former Young Rider Kristin Schmolze and longtime partner Cavaldi also parted company. Cavaldi caught a leg at element 9B, the squirrel tail, of *Uncle Frani's Birch*. While he stayed on his feet upon landing, Schmolze took a tumble over his shoulder. The 12-year-old Irish Sport Horse gelding took a few trot steps away from the fence and then stopped, possibly realizing something was missing, and turned around to head back to Schmolze who climbed back in the tack and finished the rest of the round without incident, though adding 65 jump plus 49.6 time penalties.

The award for most colorful fans goes to Sharon White and Ronaldo. A legion of orange-and-blue clad supporters, most wearing wild orange wigs, raced around the course to follow White aboard Katherine Pratt's gray gelding. The pair put in a



ABOVE: Lauren O'Brien and her well-seasoned 16-year-old gelding Dunraths Alto put in a spectacular cross-country ride to gain only 4.4 time faults and bump them up to 13th after cross-country. **LEFT:** Sharon White and Ronaldo (shown here at the *Head of the Lake*) had a bold ride until White popped out of the saddle at the *Normandy Bank*, earning them 65 jump penalties. Nevertheless, White quickly reunited with her partner and the duo finished the course in fine form.



strong performance throughout most of the course, but parted ways at the *Normandy Bank* (Fence 25 ABCD). White jumped back into the saddle to finish the day with 65 jumping and a hefty amount of time penalties.

Dunraths Alto put in the most impressive performance of the 15-and-over club. The 16-year-old Irish-bred gelding and owner Lauren O'Brien started out in 24th place after dressage. They leaped into 13th after 4.4 time penalties on cross-country. The first (of only two) double-clear show jumping rounds, they then made the move up to finish in seventh overall. Not bad for a member of the geriatric set! Antigua took the honors as oldest horse of the competition at an amazing 18 years old.

Great Britain's Ian Stark made the trip across the pond for his last hurrah. He and Full Circle II finished the event in 11th place,

an impressive swan song for the pair who both retired after the event. "I like him too much to let anyone else have him," the Scotsman said about his mount. "I came back to have a go at the four-star because of him.... Thank you to the American public. They've been fantastic."

The American public, and some passionate international visitors, came out en force for the event, with attendance for the four days reaching an all-time record of 96,478. In addition, NBC Sports offered a four-day live webcast for \$7.99, and then followed up with a one-hour broadcast on Sunday, May 6. Hotel and camping spots are at a premium, so those planning to attend next year's event, not to mention the 2010 Alltech FEI World Equestrian Games, should make their reservations soon! 