



THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE  
INTERSCHOLASTIC EQUESTRIAN ASSOCIATION

Take  
the  
**REINNS**

WINTER 2015



**2016 NATIONAL  
FINALS**

**A FOXHUNTING  
PRIMER**

**IEA MEMBERS  
AND ALUMS WIN**



MAKE  
YOUR

# bount

Prove to the world you've got what it takes and earn some good stuff doing it. Earn your points by riding in NRHA Youth classes, and start working on your Youth Lifetime Achievement Award. All kinds of cool stuff will be awarded.

## Point & Prize Levels

### Points = Prizes

Points can be earned in NRHA-approved Youth 13 & Under & Youth 14-18 classes and are broken into levels as follows:

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1,500 points

#### Youth 10 & Under Short Stirrup levels:

25 points  
50 points  
100 points  
250 points



Make your goals today and start earning points!



\*PRIZES MAY VARY

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## BLUE RIBBONS AROUND FOR OUR IEA COMMUNITY

IEA CO-FOUNDER AND CHIEF OPERATING AND MARKETING OFFICER MYRON LEFF

“The IEA has come a long way, but our mission to bring young people into equestrian sport is ongoing. We feel confident that we can accomplish much more because the IEA has the support of our Blue Ribbon community.”

Blue Ribbons are the sign of excellence in our sport. The Interscholastic Equestrian Association has a community of people that are in the Blue Ribbon Class for a job well done.

I can hardly express the exhilarating feeling of accomplishment that those involved with our organization have made in 13 years. From the first discussion in Wayne Ackerer's Ohio barn (after my riding lesson) at 9:00 pm when Roxane Lawrence and he presented the IEA concept to Tim Boone and me, to today when I am so proud to officially announce the IEA surpassed 12,500 members for this season!

It's overwhelming that the IEA has over 10,000 Facebook “likes;” so satisfying that our fifth co-founder, Ollie Griffith, hit-the-road this summer and found trainers/coaches in four western states that started teams and joined the IEA in less than 30 days.

We are thrilled that our organization is now affiliated with the best-of-the-best in the equestrian world, including the National Reining Horse Association (NRHA); the United States Hunter Jumper Association (USHJA); the Intercollegiate Horse Show Association (IHSA), the United States Equestrian Federation (USEF), the United States Pony Club (USPC), the Certified Horsemanship Association (CHA) and the American Quarter Horse Association (AQHA). The pride that one feels when you get to “rub elbows” with life-long equestrians that belong to, and guide, such organizations as they acknowledge the IEA as a contributor to our sport—wow!

The dedicated IEA staff of 20 people who work countless hours to keep the IEA “customer-friendly” while they register members, keep track of scores, set schedules, manage rules, assist teams/coaches, raise funds, organize National Finals, sell sponsorships/advertising and promote the IEA are extraordinarily special. The Board of Directors who provide guidance is immeasurably important to the ongoing betterment of our organization.

Yet, the IEA could not succeed without volunteer moms, dads, family members and friends throughout the 46 States who drive our young riders to shows, haul horses, work at the concession stands, shine boots, adjust clothes, work the in-gates—a big THANK YOU is just not enough. The devotion of the coaches and trainers to “their” kids and the IEA is so very much appreciated.

Our sponsors, donors and advertisers also deserve a “shout-out” for their support and, importantly, the revenue and donations made to the IEA.

To our current riders and alums—your show of gracious sportsmanship is the best “Blue Ribbon” action of all! We believe taking the high road as you compete is difficult, but fulfilling. Ride as an individual; compete for your team while supporting teammates and encouraging competitors alike is very special. Good sportsmanship and having fun are the real reasons for the success of the IEA.

Accordingly, it will be fun and exciting to have both the Hunt Seat and Western disciplines together at our National Finals at the Kentucky Horse Park in Lexington, Kentucky in April 2016. It will be special to watch over 600 young equestrians compete as they represent their fellow IEA riders during what we plan to be an extraordinary event. It will be “the place” for the IEA community to gather and enjoy our riders, families, coaches and friends.

The IEA has come a long way, but our mission to bring young people into equestrian sport is ongoing. We feel confident that we can accomplish much more because the IEA has the support of our Blue Ribbon community.

*This issue's letter was written by Co-founder and Chief Operating Officer Myron Leff. In his role, Myron is responsible for marketing, communications, promotion, membership development, non-membership revenue, licensing, affiliate relations and philanthropy.*

# Big Wins FOR IEA MEMBERS AND ALUMNI

THE PAST AND THE PRESENT IEA COMPETITORS ARE RECOGNIZED FOR THEIR BIG WINS.

## Allison “Allie” Joyce

**Win:** ARIAT Adult Medal Finals at the 2015 Capital Challenge Horse Show in Upper Marlboro, Maryland, and the most prestigious adult medal finals offered in the United States.



SHAWN McMILLEN PHOTOGRAPHY

**Hometown:** Medway, Massachusetts  
**IEA Team:** Rising Star Equestrian  
**Zone:** 1  
**Grade:** Alumni

**More Info:** Allie became a member of the IEA in 2004 when she entered sixth grade, attending her first IEA National Finals in 2006. In 2009, she took first place in the Varsity Open Championship class held at the IEA Hunt Seat National Finals being named the 2009 Leading Hunt Seat Rider. In 2012, at the IEA 10th Anniversary Hunt Seat National Finals, Allie was invited back to compete in the Alumni Varsity Open Championship class and took first place.

After graduating high school in 2011, Allie attended Oklahoma State University (OSU) earning a Bachelor’s Degree in Marketing. Allie competed all four years for OSU on their nationally ranked, National Collegiate Equestrian Association (NCEA) team, earning athletic scholarships for her participation on the team to help support her education. Allie was the OSU Equestrian Team Captain for the 2013–14 season and was named three times to the NCEA Academic All-American First Team.

Allie currently plans to compete with her horse, Loreta, this winter in Ocala, Florida, and is considering returning to school to earn her MBA.

## Ransome Rombauer

**Win:** 2015 Platinum Performance/USEF Show Jumping Talent Search Finals - West



MCCOOL

**Hometown:** St. Helena, California  
**IEA Team:** Sonoma Academy  
**Zone:** 10  
**Grade:** 11

**More Info:** Rombauer was the 2014 IEA Varsity Open Champion.

“It feels great to win the championship. I competed

in the finals last year with the same horse and won the flat, but missed an inside turn in the gymnastics phase so I didn’t get a score. I was under a lot of pressure. I love the new format because a lot of different riders can do it, and it helps riders move up the levels,” said Rombauer.

Rombauer was awarded the Denali Trophy, donated by Maya Hamburger, in addition to a Der Dau certificate provided by Blenheim EquiSport and a new iPad given by Platinum Performance. Karen Healey and Daniel Ighani, who trained Rombauer, were awarded the Leading Trainer Award. The Gulliver Trophy, donated by Karen Healey, was awarded to Alexis Graves’s Lalonde, ridden by Rombauer, who the judges chose as the best horse of the competition.

**Credit:** USEF Network



## Ashley Duvall

**Win:** USEF High School Scholarship

**Hometown:** Scottsburg, Indiana

**IEA Team:** Maelstrom-Little Hunter Farm

**Zone:** 5

**Grade:** Alumni

**More Info:** United States Equestrian Federation (USEF)'s inaugural scholarship for high school seniors. The program was created to support a student who intends to continue his/her equestrian career during college, either through an equestrian-related degree or by riding on an intercollegiate team.

Duvall shared her experiences in her essay, writing, "The opportunities I have been given through my involvement with horses have helped me gain confidence and become a more effective leader. These qualities will be extremely beneficial to me in college because I now know that I can handle a challenge. After learning to set and reach goals with my horse, I have learned that upon reaching one goal, I must set my sights on another achievement."

Duvall's essay earned her a \$1,000 grant that will be used towards her education at Georgetown College in Kentucky this fall.

**Credit:** USEF Communication Department



SHAWN RUX

## Elena Hurd

**Win:** Youth Reining class at the All-American Quarter Horse Congress in Columbus, Ohio

**Hometown:** Wilmington, Delaware

**IEA Team:** Alred University Interscholastic Team

**Zone:** 2

**Grade:** Senior

**More Info:** Elena competed in the Youth Reining class against

55 other youth 14-18 year old riders Saturday and placed third with her horse CC Enterprise, or "Joker." On Sunday, she went into the Novice Youth class determined to improve on her previous score, and ended the day with a win on Joker and seventh place with her other horse, "Its All About Bud" otherwise known as "Bud" (or, if he's been misbehaving, "Bad Bud").

Her victory this year is made even more special by the fact

that her older sister, Amanda, earned the same title last year on her spectacular horse Whale Of A Whiz ("Montana")—both sisters are proud to have been back-to-back winners at the Congress.

Elena grew up riding with her grandfather, who before recently retiring from judging, was in past years on the Congress panel of judges. Elena, along with Amanda, regularly showed at the Allegany County Fair and other local horse shows. She and her sister also competed at the New York State Fair and placed first and second in the reining class, respectively, in 2014. A high school senior at Tatnall School in Wilmington, Delaware, Elena plans to ride on Texas Christian University's NCEA Division One Equestrian Team next year.

## Grace Barnett

**Win:** New Jersey Humanitarian Award and the Miss Amity Award at the Miss New Jersey Teen USA pageant

**Hometown:** Upper Montclair, NJ

**IEA Team:** Essex Equestrian Center

**Zone:** 2

**Grade:** Junior

**More Info:** Competing against 60 other hopefuls, Grace won a humanitarian award for collecting over 400

coats to donate to Big Brothers Big Sisters of America, which is chosen by delegates and recognizes those competitors who are the friendliest and make the pageant experience the most enjoyable.

**Credit:** Baristanet via <http://baristanet.com/2015/10/mhs-student-wins-miss-nj-teen-humanitarian-award/>

## Ben Beckett

**Win:** NRHA Youth 14-18 Reining, AQHA Youth 14-18 Reining and the NYATT Reining at the 2015 All-American Quarter Horse Congress in Columbus, Ohio

**Hometown:** Dublin, Ohio

**IEA Team:** Dare Equestrian

**Zone:** 5

**Grade:** Alumni

**More Info:** Ben won the 2015 NRHA Varsity Open Reining Team competition at the 2015 IEA National Finals.

Ben is a freshman in The University of Findlay (UF) Western Equestrian Studies Program and is a member of the UF IHSA Western Equestrian Team. 



AMY BARNETT

# National FINALS

## 2016 IEA National Finals

BY MCKENZIE YATES AND  
STEPHANIE KEOUGH

**Y**OU WALK THROUGH THE IN-GATE. YOU TAKE A BREATH to settle your nerves. Your name is announced and you know you've made it! Interscholastic Equestrian Association (IEA) National Finals - the ultimate goal of every IEA member. To work your way through the regular season, qualify for Regional Finals, move on to Zone Finals, and then advance to National Finals takes dedication, discipline, skill and a little bit of luck, not to mention the time commitment from the entire family. This year's National Finals promises to be a welcome reward as we bring our entire IEA family together again for a combined Hunt Seat and Western "spectacular" of a horse show in none other than Lexington, Kentucky, the horse capital of the world.

“It is important for our members to join together for a combined Hunt Seat and Western IEA National Finals event every few years so that everyone gets the opportunity to learn new skills, techniques, and appreciation for other disciplines. A good horseman will put every possible tool in his or her “back-pocket” of knowledge because there is always more to learn. The opportunity to bring both disciplines together in the heart of horse country, Lexington, Kentucky is the perfect setting for us to provide exciting educational opportunities through our partners and sponsors.”

- IEA Executive Director,  
Roxane Lawrence



JASON SALEHI



JENNIFER EATON

Awards table

Lexington, Kentucky's long tradition of equestrian influence is apparent from the moment you drive into the city. The streets are named after famous race horses. Equestrian art fills the galleries, and statues of Thoroughbreds are showcased in the heart of the town. The city is surrounded by country roads lined with three-board fencing and gracious stonewalls wrapping around beautiful horse farms and grand homes. The bluegrass area is the largest equine nursery in the world with over 450 farms devoted to breeding and training horses. Lexington also boasts Keeneland, one of the top Thoroughbred racetracks in the country, and a state park devoted to horses—the Kentucky Horse Park, home of the 2016 IEA National Finals.

The Kentucky Horse Park is a proud destination for the city and has been a premier international competition venue, hosting elite events such as the 2010 FEI Alltech World Equestrian Games. Since 1978, families have enjoyed the many attractions at the park: met famous Thoroughbreds like Da Hoss, Funny Cide and Go For Fin at the Hall of Champions; checked out the Breeds Barn Show—where the largest variety of horse breeds in the world are housed on a 1,200-acre working farm; examined horses throughout history with exhibits and equine artwork at the International Museum of the Horse, a Smithsonian Associate. Visitors can also observe memorials and statues of famous horses of the past, like the 1973 Triple Crown winner, Secretariat, or take a walking-barn tour throughout the park.



JENNIFER EATON

The 2016 IEA National Finals will be held in the Kentucky Horse Park's Alltech Arena, a championship-size ring with 222 VIP box seats, nine VIP suites, six concession areas and a large warm-up area. Exhibitors and visitors will be excited to visit the many vendors located on the 50,000 square foot concourse that overlooks the arena floor. All the action starts on Wednesday, April 20 with Hunt Seat Individual Finals. Thursday through Saturday, competition continues with Hunt Seat and Western Individual Finals and the Team competitions. In addition to five full days of showing, riders, their families and friends, vendors and spectators alike will be treated to daily demonstrations showcasing the diversity of our equine friends, social events and many educational opportunities.

An addition to this year's event is the speaker symposium presented Friday, Saturday and Sunday in the Arena's North Hall. From preparing for college to expanding your equestrian knowledge, there will be something for everyone. Still looking for more knowledge? Many of the speakers and a variety of other equestrian organizations will be available at their trade-show booths for follow-up questions.

With the show days divided between the disciplines, riders and their families will have time to enjoy the many sights both on Horse Park grounds and throughout the surrounding Bluegrass Region. Our entire IEA family will fall in love with the unbridled spirit of Kentucky! 🐾



JASON SALEHI

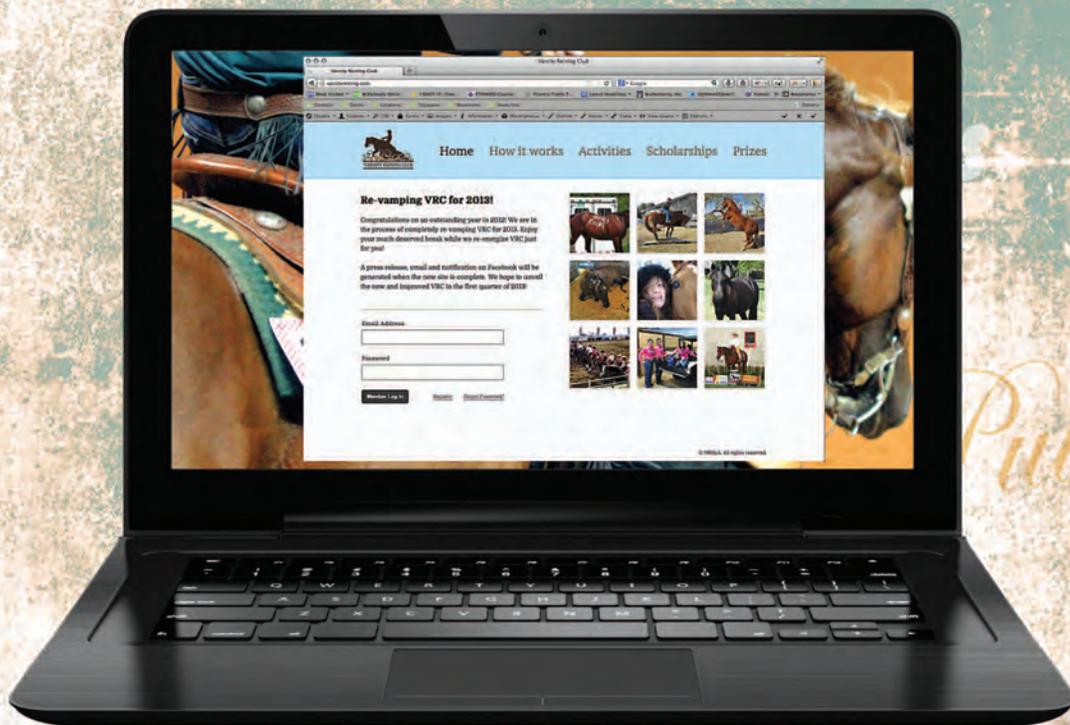
# WHO A!

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# Jeff Geiger

Coach from Team JGPH. First awarded Coach Sportsmanship Award in the Western Discipline

*Jeff's sportsman-like coaching ability has inspired several of his riders, parents and colleagues. To honor Jeff after receiving the 2015 IEA Coach Sportsmanship Award, they shared a few words on how Jeff has helped them.*

## ALLISON KOLB

### PAST MEMBER OF TEAM JGPH

Imagine a man who is compassionate, driven and determined yet down to earth and grounded. I have had the pleasure and privilege of knowing this man. His name is Jeff Geiger. He has changed my life in a way I never thought would be possible. He took me from showing at local 4-H shows, to barely placing, to becoming a multiple Top 10 World Champion and to earning multiple AQHA achievements.

If I am having a bad day, Jeff is able to turn it around because he looks at his clients as family. Due to me living 2 ½ hours away from him, he opens his home up to me so I am able to train all day with him, spend the night and train all day again. During his training sessions, he is able to teach in multiple ways until I am able to understand both the hows and whys of what I am doing. This makes me become a better rider and show woman. In showmanship I was having trouble walking straight lines to the judge; we spent a couple hours trying to figure out where my points were, so I was able to place my horse's nose directly in front of the judge. He has spent countless days working with me on loping up to a cone and stopping for horsemanship. When I finally figured it out, we celebrated as if I had just won the super bowl.

His determination to always make the best even better plays a huge role in his training and coaching. After coming out of the show pen with a win, he will reinforce the good parts but will always include ways of improving. One of my goals was to achieve an amateur ROM (Register of Merit) award on my horse. We trained for countless hours and went to multiple shows. When I

finally achieved it, I came out of the ring smiling, and Jeff was there clapping and jumping up and down and, of course, gave me a huge hug.

He has not only taught me how to grow in the horse industry, but grow as a person as well. He has shown me that horses are secondary to work and school. "If you want to have horses all your life, then you need to study to get a good job to be able to pay for them." I have now completed school and am working as a nurse. I don't know where I would be in life without this father figure to push and be my biggest fan.

## IRENE DIPAOLO

### CLIENT OF JGPH

One of the first things Jeff Geiger said to me was, "I believe things happen for a reason."

Without my knowledge, my 10-month-old filly, Nova, was dropped off at Jeff's barn by her trainer. When I finally found out where she was, I went to see Jeff and he showed me a frightened horse that didn't have the training she was supposed to have had. She had never even worn a halter. My first thought was to get her the basic training she so desperately needed and then sell her. I honestly didn't think she could ever be fully trained.

Jeff had to start from the very beginning with her. He could see something special in Nova and he also saw that I was becoming very attached to her. As the weeks and months went on, Jeff showed a great deal of patience in working with Nova. I watched the accomplishments and the setbacks, and all the while Jeff never gave up as he took on the challenge of training a nearly wild horse. Jeff's method of training by using positive re-enforcement is exactly what Nova needed. She has learned to trust humans and do what she is asked without being frightened. His method of coaching riders is equally positive and encouraging. He brings out the best in everyone and makes riding fun. I am very lucky that Nova ended up at his barn.

Nova is now a 3 year old. This summer I rode her for the first time. As an older adult, new to riding, I have to admit I was very frightened. After all, I had seen Nova do some pretty crazy things! But, I trusted Jeff's training skills and now I can't wait for my lesson every week. I truly appreciate the effort and care he has put into training my horse.

Things do happen for a reason. Thanks to Jeff, I have an amazing horse that I never expected to have, and we are growing together as a team.



TEAM JGPH from 2015 Western National Finals. Jeff won the Coach Sportsmanship Award and insisted that his whole team join him for the winning photo.

---

**RYAN AND RACHEL BOYER**  
**PARENTS OF JANE BOYER, CURRENT MEMBER OF**  
**TEAM JGPH**

Jeff Geiger is the only coach we've ever had. He is dedicated, inspiring and hard working. The first time we approached him about lessons for our daughter he jumped right in with both feet, and we could see immediately his passion for horses and willingness to share his knowledge and experience. It felt like he was welcoming our family into his. He is an amazing teacher knowing when to push our daughter out of her comfort zone and knowing when to pull back a bit to support. We are new to the "horsin' around" scene and Jeff has been very patient and accommodating. We really appreciate his flexibility ... that is why he is the only coach we've ever had.

---

**LAUREN EMMERT**  
**CLIENT OF JGPH**

Jeff is an extraordinary trainer, he is very knowledgeable with the horses and I always enjoy riding with him. He's a great person to learn from because he is a kind soul and always helps by giving advice to people to become better riders. I enjoy working with him any chance I get!

---

**KRISTEN RUDLAF**  
**CURRENT MEMBER OF TEAM JGPH**

Jeff has been more than an equestrian coach to me; he has been a life coach. Everything he has ever taught me has surpassed just teaching me to ride. He has taught me to be a better person. His "life lessons" taught me to be patient, to think things through, to be consistent, to not give up, to be confident, and that if something goes wrong to learn from it. I would be a completely different person without his guidance.

---

**RANDA CAMERON**  
**CLIENT OF JGPH**

Jeff Geiger has been my trainer for six years now. I am a 58-year-old woman with a chronic illness of 20 years. I was looking for physical and mental help in this journey. I have no prior experience with horses, nor any inclination through my life till destiny took me to his facility right down the street. I found Jeff to be very inviting to the idea of taking me on as a student. He is an incredible teacher of great knowledge and experience. He has trained me to an unbelievable level in my six short years. He has given me such hope, joy and fulfillment that hasn't been present in my life until now due to my illness. He takes great care to ensure his students safety with his well-trained horses. The horses he has

trained are kind, well behaved, and very adaptable to all levels of students. I have acquired my own horse and eventually plan to show as well as continue lessons with this generous and incredible man for years to come.

---

**ALLISON SCOTT**  
**CLIENT OF JGPH**

I am so thankful that I am able to fulfill my childhood dream with Jeff Geiger Performance Horses! Jeff is an honest, caring, understanding, and patient man. His passion and experience shows with how he works with the horses and riders. Being able to understand horses and bring out the best in them according to their individual needs is a special quality to possess. Add that to also being able to work with the rider in the same way. He truly gets to know the individual riders and the way they learn in order to bring out the best in them. When you see the horse and rider come together as a team because of his coaching ability, it is truly amazing!

---

**RYAN GEIGER**  
**SON OF JEFF GEIGER**

Jeff Geiger is many things to many people, Coach, Trainer, and Friend. Only my sister and I get to call him Dad. This gives me a unique vantage point. Jeff has more passion for his work than anyone I know. He has told me several times, if it were possible, he would help everyone for free. People often have a hard time believing that Jeff doesn't work based upon profit, when I tell them that. Those who know him will tell you it is true. He consistently bends over backwards, going out of his way, to help all of his clients accomplish their dreams. He truly enjoys watching people accomplish their dreams when they have the desire to achieve them. Jeff prides himself on being a teacher. He consistently denies being a "horse trainer" or just a "coach," and he tells everyone he teaches. He teaches the horses and he teaches the riders. I have consistently watched my dad for as long as I can remember, and he always insisted upon ensuring every person has a full understanding of just not what to do, but why they do it. I have seen him help kids after shows when he was done judging free of charge, watched him help other people who were not clients during shows, do free 4H clinics, and so much more, all for the sake of helping those who have the desire to learn. He does all this despite having more Congress and National level show top 10s than I can count. We had several finalists at the 2015 Quarter Horse Congress just this year. Despite the continued successes, Jeff never changes. He continues to insist on being a teacher, and helping those who wish to accomplish their dreams. 🐾

# TRIVIA!

## WORD SEARCH "Show Time!"

The IEA holds a TRIVIA CONTEST with prizes every month on Facebook. Follow the IEA on Facebook (IEA - Interscholastic Equestrian Association) to learn more.

1. A new born foal is born with legs that are \_\_\_\_\_% as long as an adult horse of the same breed.
2. When measuring a horse, how many inches are in a "hand"?
3. The average horse spends \_\_\_\_\_ hours per day sleeping?
4. What are the 4 places you can find the pulse on a horse?
5. What is the first known ancestor of the horse called?



O R S T B T R M E T G Y T P M  
 Q V E N A G A O A G T B R Y P  
 S A E L O N N E U I M I O R I  
 N T F R A I S I L T Z B P A H  
 A T E G F T T I L E I O H T S  
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 O E H P G R S C T E L H S C M  
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 P R O G R A M S E G D U J O H  
 S N O I T A C I F I L A U Q Z  
 G N I N I E R I B B O N S M Z

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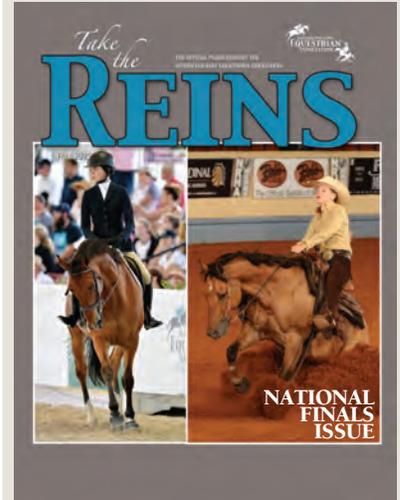
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**SETTING THE RECORD STRAIGHT**

**2015 Fall issue Cover**

In the 2015 Fall issue of *Take The Reins* we failed to identify the Western rider who was featured with Ransome Rombauer on the cover. She is NRHA Varsity Open Reining Individual Champion Caroline Gute. We apologize for the omission. Photo by Waltenberry.



**GAME PAGE KEY**

**Word Search Key**

Q R S T B T R M E T G Y T P M  
 Q V E N A G A G T B R Y P  
 S A E L O M N E U I M I O R I  
 N T F R A T S I L T Z B P A H  
 A T E G F T T I L E I O H T S  
 T I E W N E B I L O I N I E N  
 I K Q B A I N I T N W S R A  
 O E H P G R S C T E L H S C M  
 N J G I U T B S E W F I C E E  
 A Z L T E A M S B S S M E S  
 L E D I S C I P L I N E O N R  
 S L A N O I G E R J K A N C O  
 P R O G R A M S E G D U J O H  
 S N O I T A C I F I L A U O Z  
 G N I N I E R I B B O N S M Z

**Trivia Question Answers**

- 1.** Foals are born with legs that are 90% as long as they will be when they are fully grown.
- 2.** 4
- 3.** 2½ hours/day
- 4.** On the chin, fetlock, inside of knee, and with a stethoscope behind it's elbow.
- 5.** Eohippus.

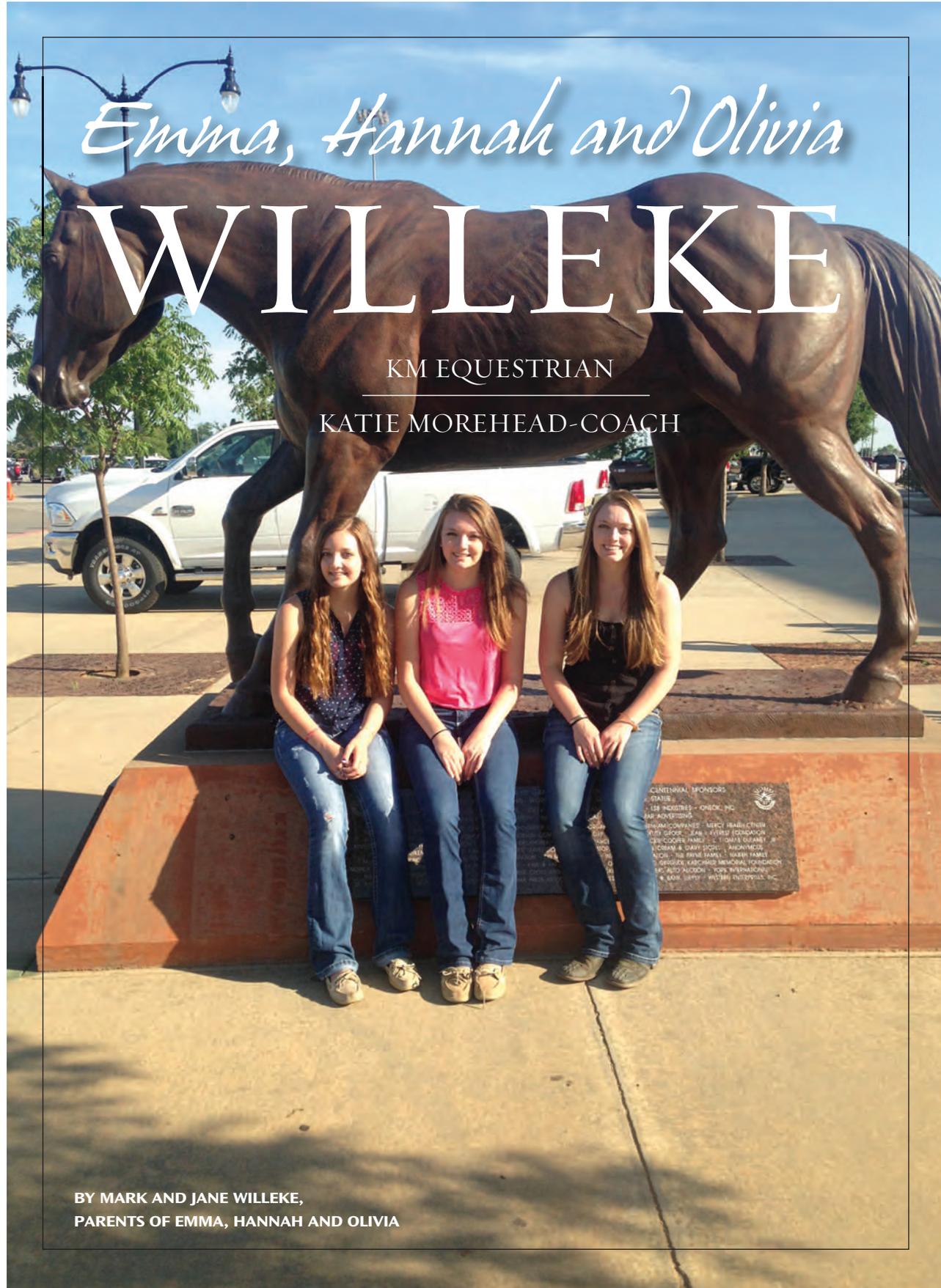
*Emma, Hannah and Olivia*

# WILLEKE

KM EQUESTRIAN

KATIE MOREHEAD-COACH

BY MARK AND JANE WILLEKE,  
PARENTS OF EMMA, HANNAH AND OLIVIA



**A**T AN EARLY AGE, ALL THREE GIRLS DEVELOPED A FASCINATION with horses. Movies like, “Dreamer,” “Spirit” and “Flicka” helped spark their interest and love for these amazing animals. In the fall of 2004, after visiting the horse barn at the local fair, Jane (mom) signed all three girls up as Cloverbuds with a local 4-H club. Emma was 8, Hannah 6 and Olivia was only 4. That first experience being around horses and participating in the local fair started them on the journey that would lead to their participation at the National IEA Finals the past three years.

In 2006, Hannah asked if we could take a family trail ride for her eighth birthday. About an hour from our house was Marmon Valley Farm, a Christian trail riding and summer camp in Bellefontaine, Ohio. Our family made the drive and immediately the girls fell in love with the farm, its staff and most importantly, the horses! From our first trail ride and for the next six plus years, we made the hour trip to Marmon Valley Farm on a regular basis. All three girls began their first riding lessons at Marmon Valley, often taking them in the winter no matter how cold it was! Our family (mom and dad learned to ride too) joined the volunteer staff at the farm, helping with trail rides, working in the stables and other farm activities. All three girls attended week-long summer camp sessions at the farm and eventually they joined a 4-H group in that county. Through the generous help of Marmon Valley, they were able to use farm horses for the local county fair.

Through all these years, Emma, Hannah and Olivia learned to ride all kinds of horses. Although some were quite trail broke, others were very spirited and proved to be quite a challenge! Riding horses bareback to the river, long trail rides, jumping over fences, and even riding in parades, helped develop their skills and confidence as riders. Many, many hours were spent in the van driving back and forth from Findlay to Marmon Valley and through it all, their love of riding and working with horses never diminished. On the long ride back to Findlay, we would often be treated to a running commentary from all three about the plus and minus attributes of just about every horse in the stable, all 150 of them.

It became apparent though that if we wanted the girls to have opportunities with horses beyond Marmon Valley and 4-H, we would need to purchase our own horses. In 2010, when Emma was 13, we bought our first horse, Lexi, a 3-year-old Appendix Quarter Horse. A year later, we purchased Sweetie, a Quarter Horse for Hannah. Olivia has had to be content with leased horses, at one point, she even had a barrel-horse. Although they continued in 4-H during these years, now showing their own horses, we began to go to other shows such as the All-American Youth Show in Columbus and some open shows. Emma was determined to train Lexi herself, and over the last five years, she has worked with her, sought guidance from numerous trainers and continues to train and work with Lexi today.

## Enter IEA

In 2010, Emma was the first to show an interest in IEA and joined an English IEA team about the same time she started working with Lexi. Emma loved the experience and competition of that first year. As Hannah and Olivia watched their sister compete in IEA events, they too wanted to join an IEA team. The following year, Hannah joined a new team just beginning in our area, KM Equestrian, with Katie Morehead as her coach. In 2012, Emma and Olivia joined their sister on Katie Morehead’s KM Equestrian Team. With all three sisters now on the team, much of the family’s time was devoted to competitions, individual and team practices. All three girls believe a great deal of the success they have achieved over the last four years was due to Katie Morehead. Katie is always pushing her riders to do their best and offers constant support through her coaching. Katie always holds her riders to a high standard in not only their riding, but their sportsmanship as well. Almost as important as the riding has been are the wonderful friendships all three have developed with their team members.

With Katie’s support, all three girls have achieved considerable success at the National Finals. At the 2012 National Finals, Hannah was Reserve National Champion in Future Novice Horsemanship Individual took first place in the Future Novice Horsemanship Team Class.

In 2013, the first time all three competed together at the National Finals, Emma was third in Team Varsity Intermediate Reining. Hannah was National Champion in Individual and Team Future Intermediate Horsemanship. Hannah was also fourth in Individual and sixth in Team Future Intermediate Reining. Olivia was National Champion in Individual Future Novice Horsemanship and Reserve National Champion in Team Future Novice Horsemanship.

In 2014, Emma was Reserve National Champion in Team Varsity Intermediate Reining and Olivia was National Champion in Individual Future Intermediate Horsemanship. Hannah could not go this year because of a conflict with a summer gym class.

This year, at the 2015 National Finals, all three girls would make their final appearance together. As a senior, this was Emma’s final year in IEA. In 2015, Olivia was Reserve National Champion in Individual Future Intermediate Reining. Hannah was National Champion in Team JV Novice Horsemanship. Emma finished her career with KM Equestrian as National Champion in Team Varsity Open Horsemanship. She also was fourth in Individual Varsity Open Reining and eighth in Team Varsity Open Reining. Emma also was the Reserve Champion in the NRHA Derby’s High School Reining Championship.

Between 2012 and 2015, together the girls would win five National Championships and six Reserve National Championships in both Team and Individual events. All three have been a part of National Champion teams as well.

As 2015–16 season approaches Hannah and Olivia are looking forward to the new season and the challenges and opportunities it will present. Emma is attending The University of Findlay studying Western Equestrian with a minor in business. She is also riding for Findlay’s Western IHSA Team. 

# NINE Things

## >>> All Successful Equestrian Athletes <<< Do in College

BY JANA BASLER  
& COURTESY OF GOHORSESHOW.COM

As a former National Collegiate Equestrian Association (NCEA) athlete with a super strong type-A personality, it is no surprise that I have dozens of notes in my iPhone analyzing the winning rides and qualities of riders who are consistently in the top ten. I've sought knowledge through reading and watching videos ever since I was a little kid, and after all these years, I haven't changed a bit. Maybe, I tow the line between obsessive and dedicated. But the way I see it, in the uncertain world of equestrian sports, a girl's got to be prepared and make her own luck.

Recently, I interviewed Oklahoma State University's Larry Sanchez for more insight into what separates the good from the great in collegiate riding. Sanchez has the credentials and he's seen it all. As head coach, Sanchez has led the Cowgirls to five National Championships and four Big-12 Championships, and has been coaching college riders for over 20 years. So take notes, all my type-A sisters. I won't judge.



Coach Larry Sanchez

"The best college athletes are not only champions individually, but champions for their team," Sanchez states.

"WE TRY TO TEACH THEM  
HOW TO ADAPT TO  
DIFFERENT HORSES AND  
UNEXPECTED SITUATIONS  
AS QUICKLY AS  
POSSIBLE."

### **1. They have serious work ethic.**

I'm talking the 'I'm doing no stirrups until I'm blue in the face' work ethic. They get up early and they stay late, even in the winter when the wind hurts their face and they've got to put on 10 layers just to get to the barn. But putting in the long hours pays off, and an athlete's behind-the-scenes effort does not go unnoticed by recruiting coaches. "When I'm recruiting, I talk to their trainers, the friends of their trainers, and even their barn mates," Sanchez says. "I want to find out who they are as a person and know their work ethic. Are they the last one at the barn at the end of the day? Or do they just show up and leave as soon as their lesson is over without thinking twice about it? I need to know how dedicated they are."

### **2. They're team players.**

The best college athletes are not only Champions individually, but Champions for their team. College sports give equestrians the rare opportunity to compete together and win or lose as a team. "You have to realize that it takes more than just you to be successful in this sport," says Sanchez. "When I'm recruiting, it is definitely a positive if a rider has competed in team sports through their high school years."

### **3. They're great riders.**

Of course they are! But seriously, while this one may be a little obvious, you really do need to have a strong foundation to build on before you can compete at a high level in college. Sanchez says more time in the saddle, more time in the show pen, and more time on unfamiliar horses will get you there. Of course, the best riders can do more than sit pretty and execute in the show pen. "I learn a lot about who a rider is from the warm-up ring," says Sanchez. "It tells me if they have feel and if they have timing. I'm looking for girls that are feeling it and thinking on their own and being able to adapt quickly without necessarily being told first."

### **4. They're ready to learn something new.**

Catch riding is a different ballgame and the best riders learn the game by being a sponge for knowledge. "They have got to be very open to try new things, hear new things, and accept coaching," says Sanchez. "We try to teach them how to adapt to different horses and unexpected situations as quickly as possible." And if you ever start feeling too big for your britches, just ask any collegiate equestrian about 'switch day' and prepare for a laugh.

### **5. They hit the books.**

If you're even considering riding in college, then get ready to study. Collegiate equestrian athletes are expected to maintain a high GPA, and both the NCEA and Intercollegiate Horse Show Association (IHSA) recognize and award individual academic achievements. The best college athletes perfect the art of time management so that traveling to competitions doesn't affect their grades negatively. They use their dedication to their sport as motivation to reach higher in the classroom, and they look to student athlete resources when they need additional help. "Student athletes who utilize the academic resources and are fully committed will be successful academically," says Sanchez.

### **6. They're confident in their skills.**

Even if they're not flawless, they're skilled riders and they know it. They expect to win. They believe in themselves and their abilities. "Confidence is important in any sport and it can help you with whatever sport you're doing, but I believe it is particularly so in equestrian," says Sanchez. "When you are working with a 1,000 plus pound animal, they can sense the confidence that you have too. When a rider is confident about the pattern they are about to perform, it draws your eye more as a judge and the horse can also pick up on that."

### **7. They learn from their teammates, not just their coaches.**

Remember that sponge for knowledge thing? Here it is again. Every rider has their own unique skills and talents and every rider has something they can improve upon. The best competitors utilize the diversity on their team to learn new tricks and broaden their skill set. "When you are riding in practice and someone else happens to be on a horse that you struggle with, be able to open your mind and say to yourself, 'what are they doing so that they get along with that horse and are functioning at a higher level than when I ride,'" says Sanchez. "Our riders come from all across the country and have ridden with many different and very respectable trainers. Why not try and gather all that information for the benefit of the team, rather than everyone keeping their individual secrets?"

### **8. They work out to feel good about themselves.**

This has nothing to do with the amount of people it takes to zip up your chaps, I promise. This is about self-confidence (again – are you starting to see a pattern here?), recognizing yourself as an athlete and improving your flexibility. Stretching has numerous benefits for riding and can help prevent many riding-related injuries. "To me, the most important part of working out is that you feel better about yourself," says Sanchez. "When you are on a workout program, you carry yourself better and your mind is clearer." Plus, when was the last time being in shape hurt your riding? Never, that's when.

### **9. They use failure as motivation.**

The best competitors have spun five times too. They've forgotten to drop their stirrups and they've picked up the wrong lead. But instead of focusing on their failures, they have tunnel vision for success. They focus on what they're going to do right. "You shouldn't go into the next pattern thinking 'don't spin five times.' Because then that's what you are focusing on," says Sanchez. "You should focus on, 'I'm going to spin four times.' It seems so simple, but it's focusing on the positive and what you want to do rather than focusing on the negative." 🐾

### **Jana Basler**

Jana Basler is a graduate student studying mass communications and living in Kansas City, Missouri. Jana grew up showing American Quarter Horses in western pleasure and all-around events. She is an alumna of the South Dakota State University Equestrian Team where she competed for the Jackrabbits in Reining. When she's not riding, Jana's favorite activities include working out, cooking, binge watching Netflix, and hiking with her two dogs.

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# THE LegUp

JENNIFER EATON

# SPORTSMANSHIP IS IMPORTANT AT IEA

BY MYRON LEFF  
IEA CO-FOUNDER/CHIEF OPERATING  
AND MARKETING OFFICER

COURTESY OF EQUINE JOURNAL

An age-old quote, “Winning is everything” is not part of the Interscholastic Equestrian Association (IEA) community DNA. Of course, competition brings a need-to-succeed spirit and being pinned with a blue ribbon is special. However, IEA participants need to compete in an honorable manner AND support those who compete against them as riders in their class and, as important, their teammates. Because the IEA 11–19 year olds are learning while riding, coaches and parents are important role models in exhibiting proper sportsmanship too. The IEA presents a Rider Sportsmanship award at every show and a Sportsmanship award at the National Finals. This past season, the IEA presented the first-ever Coaches Sportsmanship awards. Their comments follow:

## JEFF GEIGER

### TEAM JGPH FROM DELAWARE, OH

There is often a huge misconception surrounding the subject of sportsmanship. So many people feel that one has to choose between sportsmanship and competitiveness. We teach all our riders and clients alike that these two ideas go hand-in-hand—rather than having to choose. We teach everyone that they are at a show to do their best and there is always an opportunity to help others. Even though they compete against one another in the ring, success is based upon personal achievement. We teach that each individual is not competing against others, but instead they are trying to achieve their own goal. In turn, this encourages everyone in our barn and on our team, to not only achieve great heights for themselves, but to encourage others to do so also. This is how we incorporate sportsmanship into our program.



Team JGPH

WALTENBERRY

## KATIE SCHAAF

### NORTH GATE IEA TEAM FROM SUDBURY, MA

I love IEA because it introduces human teammates who need support and friendship. It isn't necessary to be among the best riders on the team to contribute tremendously to team success. Being a leader on an IEA team means considering the fears and goals of teammates with a wide range of skills and experience. On the North Gate IEA Team, riders support each other with notes before shows, practice going over the course, boot polishing and sharing show clothes. When our team qualifies for Nationals, the whole team wants to be there, though only a handful of riders will compete.

North Gate's two Victor Hugo-Vidal Sportsmanship recipients, Skylar Laakso and Kate Coffey, both embody the ideal that team comes before the individual, regardless of whether their teammates are human or equine. Their most shining moments are after tough rides, not good ones, because both girls maturely face disappointment, with their attention focused on the goal of team success. Kate and Skylar have earned multiple national ribbons, but I'm just as proud of the ribbon-less rides, because they pat their horses and immediately turn their attention to their teammates' upcoming classes. The ability and desire to prioritize the team is the essence of sportsmanship. We all love to win, but adoring our horses and supporting our teammates is most important. 🐾



North Gate IEA Team

RON SCHWANER PHOTOGRAPHY



# IEA & *Foxhunting*



## Transferring IEA skills into the sport of Foxhunting.

BY SUSAN FOGARTY, PROFESSOR OF SOCIOLOGY AT LAKELAND COMMUNITY COLLEGE (PROFESSIONALLY) AND A WHIPPER-IN WITH CHAGRIN VALLEY HUNT (HONORARY)

PHOTOGRAPHY BY MONICA SCHROEFER-COX

**T**he skills young equestrians gain as a member of an IEA team are undeniably valuable. Members learn to work as a cooperative team, quickly access the situation of an unfamiliar mount and adjust their riding accordingly. Competitors must respond rapidly to last minute changes, uncertain outcomes and hopefully, do all this with sportsmanship, competence and humor. As it turns out, these skills are easily transferable to the sport of foxhunting. Best of all, the abilities nurtured in the hunt field are essential for any life pursuit. A lifelong hunter explains “Hunting helped me learn to make quick decisions, without the pressure of being judged in a ring. I had to learn to be on time, keep clean, and follow proper manners and etiquette. I think it truly made me a brave rider.” (Cary Myer, Professional Whipper-In Arapahoe Hunt, Co.) Solange Ellis (owner, Horsehaven Stables, Ohio), another lifelong foxhunter and trainer promotes the value of foxhunting as a “... non-peer sport, where riders of all ages and backgrounds come together to help one another and socialize. It gives the younger riders a huge sense of accomplishment and is a tremendous boost of self-confidence, both on the horse and off.”

### A Brief History

Foxhunting is a centuries old sport, steeped in tradition, but hardly unchanging. Foxhunting originally was born out of necessity. In agrarian England and Ireland, fox were considered pests, commonly feeding on farmer's chickens, sheep, other livestock, and generally a nuisance. Hunting foxes was a practical solution to keep the numbers in check. Today in the United States, foxhunting is more appropriately termed fox chasing, as fox are rarely killed. In fact, a fox may not be the quarry. In addition to red or grey fox, coyotes are commonly chased as well. Depending on the local conditions, the scent of any of these may be found by the hounds. Some clubs hunt live quarry, others are “drag” hunts. These clubs lay a scent just before the meet, and the hounds are trained to find and follow the dragged scent. Why?



Foxhunters relish rising early, traipsing throughout the woods and fields, watching the hounds work a scent line, just for a glimpse of a fox or coyote. Why? The answers likely mimic your reasons for enjoying riding on an IEA team! Rising early and spending time with a horse is special. You are one of the lucky few watching the day unfold. As the sun and fog rise, wild life begins to stir, or settle down for the day, you will witness the intricate dance between the hounds, the quarry, and the huntsman.

Aptly described by one young rider, “I have seen some of the most beautiful scenes on hunt mornings; it is magnificent to view such scenes from atop a horse. I would not trade the time I’ve had fox hunting for the world” (Lauren Switala, 22 CVHC). If you are a serious competitor and are thinking, “but what about winning?” True, there are no ribbons to win, and no placings. But the rewards are present. An avid junior foxhunter from Chagrin Valley Hunt explains “It’s very interesting to see the huntsman working with the hounds and staff members. I really like the fact that the people who hunt are like a family. They are very open, friendly and accepting towards new people. It also feels good to be participating in something that has been around for such a long time and we are keeping the tradition alive.” (Sari Topits, 17)

Many riders would like to try foxhunting but are concerned about their riding ability in unfamiliar terrain, their horse’s ability to remain quiet in a large, fast group, or jumping solid fences. These are valid concerns, but all can be overcome. If you don’t own a horse, the local Pony Club DC or Hunt Master may be able to put you in contact with a member that has a reliable mount you could borrow. Also, many clubs have members who are professional trainers and lease horses for hunting. If this is your first experience hunting, your mount has the ability to make the day fun or miserable. The experienced horse will ensure you will have fun!

If you have a horse, ask yourself, “how does your horse do cantering in a group in the open? Is he safe with traffic? Hounds? Cows, deer and turkeys? If you aren’t sure, proceed by participating in group trail rides first. Many hunt clubs have

sponsored trail rides during the summer. This is the perfect time to meet people, and introduce your horse to a new activity, without the stress and excitement of hunting. Horses introduced properly and calmly will typically adapt well to hunting. It is worth your time to remember all the lessons you have had with your trainer about not over-facing your horse.

Riding in the open is vastly different than in the ring. Most hunts will consist of a First Flight, Second Flight, and a Hill-toppers group. Generally, new hunters will start with the “hill-toppers” or second flight. These are slower moving, and non-jumping fields that provide a good introduction to inexperienced riders or horses. Riding in one of these for your first season is a good choice. Each of these flights will be led by a field master whose goal is to ensure you see as much of the action as possible, you just take a different route to get there. After you and your mount are confident in your abilities, moving to first flight is an option. This flight follows closer to the Huntsman, may take trails that are more treacherous, have necessary coops, and moves faster. Ultimately, the flight you are in doesn’t matter. You will have an opportunity to watch the hounds hunt in each flight. Megan, a young adult explains that she and her trainer, Solange Ellis “worked toward the goal of hunting in every lesson and trail ride until I was prepared. Riding and hunting was essential to my development and later successes socially, physically, and emotionally, (Megan Huth, 20 CVHC).

### How Can I Get Involved?

The first step to explore the fun of foxhunting is to find your local club. If you have a local Pony Club, contact the Club’s District Commissioner (D.C.). They may have ties to the local Hunt Club and can assist you. Another route is to find your local club through the Masters of Foxhounds Association (MFHA.org). You can find a detailed history of hunting, and everything you need to know from attire, etiquette, and the responsibilities of all the hunt positions on the MFHA website (MFHA.org). In addition, there are videos of hunts available to watch. This is an invaluable resource for both new and experienced hunters. 

# STUDENTS IN GRADES 6-12: TAKE THE REINS AND JOIN THE IEA

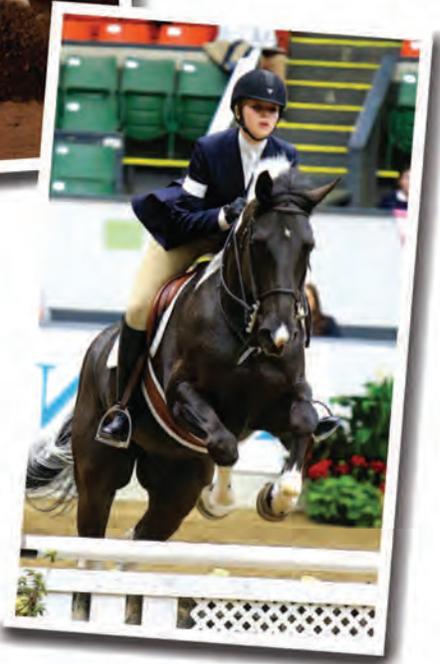
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- Coach, Chatham, VA

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- Parent, Westborough, MA

Riders in grades 6-12 can compete with teams in the Interscholastic Equestrian Association (IEA). School-age children, with various levels of experience, compete in Hunt Seat and Western disciplines throughout the school year. Riders not only compete for individual points, but for their team as well.

It's fun and challenging – and there is *no need to own a horse!* The IEA is available to public or private schools and barn teams.

Horses are provided to each rider at every event. All mounts are selected by a draw. Parents like that the IEA provides an affordable format for their child as he/she builds riding skills.

Many of our riders receive scholarships based on their performance throughout their IEA years.

Founded in 2002, the IEA has more than 12,000 members on over 1,300 teams competing in hundreds of shows across the United States each year.

For more information, please contact Jennifer Eaton, IEA Membership Coordinator, at 877-RIDE-IEA (877-743-3432) or [Jenn@rideiea.org](mailto:Jenn@rideiea.org).





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