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**North American League West Coast Finals Welcomed With Open Arms
*Inaugural Event at Las Vegas National Horse Show is Huge Success***

Annville, PA—November 8, 2011—Competitors hit the jackpot at the inaugural North American League (NAL) West Coast Finals and none of the nearly one hundred exhibitors went home empty-handed. Every NAL member who competed in one of the five classics on “NAL Day” at the Las Vegas National Horse Show on November 6 received a gift bag and an NAL embroidered saddle pad. Those who earned a trip to the victory circle were also rewarded with an array of awards.

“We really wanted to celebrate the first NAL West Coast Finals and the riders were thrilled with our inaugural event,” said Lloyd Longenecker, President of Ryegate Show Services which administers the North American League. “These Finals are the start of a new series for West Coast riders, who will enjoy the pursuit of next year’s finale in Las Vegas.”

Longenecker personally handed out gift bags to the NAL riders as they exited the ring and was pleased with the response. He heard one girl say, “Dude, there’s a saddle pad in this bag...I am so excited!”

In addition to a ribbon and prize money, winners of each NAL class took home a silver trophy, NAL coolerette, NAL pendant, a NAL backpack filled with other goodies including a necklace designed exclusively for the NAL by Herschel Bonchek, a prize package for horse and human from Equine Matrix, and a certificate for an NAL scrim from the Clothes Horse.

“We were honored to be selected by the NAL as the site for the inaugural West Coast Finals, and pleased to add them to our competition schedule,” said Robert Ridland, President of Blenheim Equisports, producer of the Las Vegas National. “The competitors in the Children’s Hunter, Adult Hunter, Children’s Jumper, Adult Jumper and Low Junior/Amateur Owner Jumper NAL classes are all the newest West Coast members of the North American League and word is already spreading that the Finals are something really worth striving for.”

North American League Children and Adult Amateur Hunter Action in Las Vegas

“I love doing big classes indoors and thought it would be fun to enter the NAL Finals here at the Las Vegas National. It was also a good prep for the upcoming Onondarka Medal Final because it has the same height and presence--it is a special place,” said 13-year-old Melanie Selleck after winning the **NAL Children’s Hunter Classic** aboard her Foreign Escape.

“I can ride him in both the hunters and equitation classes. The course today was very straight-forward. I always have to manage my pace because I get anxious. I just take a deep breath and tell myself to calm down,” said Selleck of Los Angeles, CA. That strategy worked as she received a first round score of 82, and went into the second round in the lead. She scored a second 82 to earn the victory in the 10-horse class.

Chelsea Samuels, 21, of La Canada, CA won the **NAL Adult Amateur Classic** aboard Brooklyn, a 12-year-old chestnut warmblood, with scores of 81 in the first round and 85 in the second. She also finished second aboard her horse, Crocodile, earning an 82 and 80.

“It is always an advantage to ride two horses, but it is also hard to keep the focus while changing horses and trying to remember details about each one because they are complete opposites. If I dreamed a horse into life, it would be Brooklyn. He is like a wind-up toy and stays even and you kick him to the jumps...Brooklyn always rises to the occasion and was jumping out of his skin here. Crocodile, whom I’ve had since 2007, was really on his game, but he is slow going and has lots of stride to keep track of,” she explained.

A student at U.C. Santa Barbara, Chelsea rides with Archie Cox and Teddi Melencamp. “It is difficult to balance school with riding and I haven’t jumped or shown since September. It is really nice to have a big Finals for amateurs and not have to go East to compete. I qualified for the NAL East Adult Hunter but didn’t do that show. It was more reasonable to show here.”

North American League Features Competitive Jumper Classics

Although Barthez started his career as a children’s hunter, he won the **NAL Low Junior-Amateur Jumper Classic**, topping a 20-horse field and a seven-horse jump-off in 30.428 seconds. “He is a 9-year-old Belgium warmblood and I got him when he was 5 as a children’s hunter. We soon realized that wasn’t for him though as he had trouble leaving out strides. We kept moving him up and he did equitation classes and now jumpers,” said owner Jaelyn Jarrell, 19, a student at Calgary University, who had to return to mid-terms after the Las Vegas National. “We have done lots of shows in Calgary, but decided to come to Las Vegas to skip the snow—it is below zero there now and this is my first time here. I love this venue! I wanted to enter the NAL Final because we don’t have big classes at home other than mini prix that don’t give a lot of loot (for prizes) and hype, like this class.”

“Barthez is easy going and not spooky—this was a good height for him and the courses were all good and challenging. I was worried about the first line because he has focusing issues...we both have focusing issues and the first jump comes up quick. But in the jump-off that is his comfort zone when we can go flat out he’s on it. He is super neat and tidy and turns are not a problem; he has a big step.”

Caroline Underwood of Bonsall, CA, and her 12-year-old Holsteiner mare, Reina, are on a winning streak. Prior to the **NAL Adult Amateur Jumper Classic**, they won the \$25,000 PCHA Adult Amateur Jumper Championship at Del Mar, and the week before that they won a \$5,000 Classic in Del Mar. So she wasn’t surprised when her clean jump-off in 34.446 was a second and a half faster than anyone in the 10-horse jump-off.

She surprised her fellow competitors, however, when she executed her jump-off strategy perfectly, jumping in deep to a vertical that allowed her to cut inside on a sharp turn to the in-and-out, shaving off time. “Actually we schooled really badly before the jump-off, but she’s very careful and knows when it’s a jump-off. She hasn’t touched a rail all week here and won all three classes,” said Underwood.

Dinnia Digennaro, 16, didn't know what the North American League was before winning the **NAL Children's Jumper Classic**. But after collecting a wealth of prizes, it is a victory she won't forget. Digennaro rode her 11-year-old Polish warmblood, Volturi, to the win in a 23-horse field with only four clean rounds. She went first in the jump-off clocking a clean 36.294 round that couldn't be beat. "He's my three-ring horse. We bought him as a hunter and he also does equitation as well as the jumpers. This is my first year in the children's jumpers." For more information regarding the NAL series, including series specifications, membership information and a list of upcoming events, please call (717) 867-5643, email NAL@Ryegate.com or visit www.ryegate.com.