

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Lexington, VA, October 27, 2016 - The Virginia CCI/CIC and Horse Trials began today at the Virginia Horse Center in Lexington, Va when the CCI* and CCI2* competitors presented their horses to the ground jury during the First Horse Inspection. The event this week is hosting three FEI divisions, an Adult Team Challenge, Beginner Novice through Intermediate horse trials, and is also the site of the 2016 Area II Championships for the second consecutive year. With close to 550 horses on the grounds, it is one of the largest events in Area II.



Missy Miller and Limited Edition at the CCI1 First Horse Inspection at VHT. Photo by Leslie Threlkeld*

“We are thrilled with the turnout for this year’s fall event. We have about 50 more entries than we did this time last year and it’s great to see the event growing and a positive response to the new CCI2*,” said VHT organizer Andy Bowles. “A lot is going on between the FEI classes, the Adult Team Challenge and the Area II Championships, but we have a great staff here to help everything run smoothly and we are looking forward to a great event.”

Dressage begins Friday for the CCI*/CCI2* and Intermediate competitors, but the first nine horses in the CIC2* went down the centerline this afternoon. Boyd Martin had the honor of entering the ring first on Christine Turner’s 9-year-old mare Kyra. “(The entries) are impressive and it goes to show how strong the sport of eventing is in America at the moment. I’m excited to be a part of it,” he said.

Martin will compete a total of eight horses in the Intermediate and FEI divisions and said he was thankful the VHT organizing committee added another CCI2* to the calendar. “The venue is well suited to a CCI. It’s a big open space with undulating country and the jumping and dressage is always top notch here.”



Ariel Grald and Monbeg Nola at the CCI2 First Horse Inspection at VHT. Photo by Leslie Threlkeld*



Boyd Martin and Kyra competing in the CIC2. Photo by: Leslie Threlkeld*

Martin will ride all of his entries on the cross country course on the Oak Hill side of the road, a track which is designed by John Nicholson of New Zealand. VHT is the only event in the U.S. where Nicholson designs. “It’s good to have a bit of variety,” Martin said. “The course will have a different flavor than our usual American course designers. That’s good. We’ve got to get used to different types of questions.”

Adequan USEA Gold Cup Champion Ryan Wood has brought five horses to VHT as a wrap up to the fall season. Wood has one FEI ride, one in the Preliminary Championships and three horses competing at the Training level. “It’s a good event for the young horses to get experience,” he said. “It’s a good strong course for the one-star and a good test to set them up to go Intermediate and (aim for) a spring two-star.”

The Beginner Novice through Preliminary horse trials and Beginner Novice through Training Area II Championships cross country courses on the Horse Center side of the road have been designed by John Michael Durr. His work was featured first during the May Horse Trials as part of the VHT Course Designer Mentor Program. This weekend he unveils fresh tracks and a variety of newly built fences.

The Area II Adult Riders Program is once again hosting an Adult Team Challenge at VHT, a friendly team competition open to riders from any Area that are aged 21 and up. A total of 18 teams will compete together at the Beginner Novice through Preliminary levels, vying for lovely neck ribbons and medals for the top finishers and enjoying several scheduled social activities throughout the weekend.



Photo by Leslie Threlkeld

Follow Virginia Horse Trials on [Facebook](#) for photos and updates throughout the event. Live Scores can be found on [Event Entries](#).

About the Virginia Horse Trials

The Virginia Horse Trials takes place at the Virginia Horse Center in Lexington, Virginia, nestled in the rolling hills of Rockbridge County, where eventers from across the Eastern Seaboard come for a fun and challenging competition at the Beginner Novice through the FEI two-star levels. VHT has hosted two USEA Recognized Horse Trials each year since founders Brian and Penny Ross started the event in 1989. They organized the event through its 25th Anniversary in 2014. Andy Bowles took over the organization of VHT in 2015 and looks forward to maintaining it as a destination for East Coast eventers in the years to come. VHT hosted the inaugural USEA Intercollegiate Eventing Championships in May 2016 and will host an FEI CCI2* for the first time this October.

Media Contact:

Leslie Threlkeld

[678-378-0244](tel:678-378-0244)

leslie.a.threlkeld@gmail.com