

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**17 Schools Represented at Second Annual USEA Intercollegiate Eventing Championship**  
*Collegiate participation doubles, record number of entries at Virginia CCI/CIC and Horse Trials.*



Lexington, VA — The 2017 United States Eventing Association (USEA) Intercollegiate Eventing Championship kicked off today at the Virginia Horse Trials (VHT) in Lexington, Va. The organizers are pleased to welcome 81 enthusiastic students representing 17 colleges and universities.

The inaugural Intercollegiate Championship in 2016 hosted ten teams from ten different schools. In the second year, participation has more than doubled with a total of 21 teams competing for top honors this weekend.

“It is impossible not to be inspired by how quickly Intercollegiate Eventing is growing,” said USEA CEO Rob Burk. “Eventing is in good hands with these future leaders of the sport. When the USEA Board of Governors established the Intercollegiate Eventing Program we had high hopes for its success. I don’t think anyone thought it would be this successful so quickly!”

“Congratulations to the Virginia Horse Trials for serving as excellent hosts, and congratulations to the horses and riders for working so hard to get here.”

The students themselves are largely responsible for initiating teams and clubs at their school, getting faculty involved, and organizing activities and fundraising. At this time there are a total of 32 schools [registered as University Affiliates](#) with the USEA and 15 [collegiate team challenges](#) scheduled around the country in 2017.

“It’s fantastic to see such an increase in participation this year and schools coming from as far away as Texas,” said VHT organizer Andy Bowles. “The competition is only just getting started, but as a first impression there is definitely a lot of spirit and enthusiasm for the Intercollegiate Championships.”

Thanks to generous sponsors, teams will be competing for ribbons through sixth place and incredible prizes through fourth place. Each member of the Champion team will receive prizes

such as beautiful embroidered show coolers, silver plate trophies, embroidered saddle pads, USEA apparel and much more.

The Spirit Award, sponsored by VHT, is up for grabs again this year. It is given to the team that not only shows the most school pride but also displays impressive teamwork and camaraderie throughout the competition. Each member of the winning team is awarded with a refund on their entries to the competition. Already students have been seen wearing their school colors, heard chanting mottos, and singing fight songs. They've also gotten creative decorating their stalls in the "College Town" stabling complex.

### **Record Entries for May Event**

VHT is hosting a record number of entries this week, with over 500 horses competing from Beginner Novice through CIC2\* as well as a Young Event Horse competition for 4 and 5 year olds.

CCI\*, CIC2\* and Preliminary divisions posted their initial scores on the board today. The remaining divisions will get underway on Saturday, with dressage in multiple arenas, show jumping, and cross country running on two separate courses.

VHT made significant changes to the cross country this year, with Captain Mark Phillips coming on board as the new FEI course designer. He is assisted by John Michael Durr in the CCI\* and Andy Bowles in the CIC2\*. Grass maintenance has been a focal point of the spring to ensure immaculate footing on course, and two new water complexes will be debuted as part of the continuing development of the property.

### **About the USEA Intercollegiate Program**

In 2014, the USEA Board of Governors approved the creation of the Intercollegiate Eventing Program as an official program of the USEA. Originally proposed with input from the Intercollegiate Eventing League, the program was established to provide a framework on which Eventing teams and individual competition could flourish at universities and colleges across the country.

To account for differences in level difficulty, each rider's score is multiplied by a coefficient appropriate for their level, and then the individual scores are added together to determine the team score. Only the best three individual scores will count towards the team score, so teams of four will have one "drop" score.

The coefficient system that will be applied at the Championship is as follows:

Beginner Novice: 1.1

Novice: 1

Training: 0.9

Preliminary: 0.85

Intermediate: 0.75

CCI\*: 0.75

CIC2\*: .70

For riders in the FEI divisions the 1.5x FEI dressage coefficient will be removed before calculating the team score. The team with the lowest score at the end of three phases will be named the 2017 Intercollegiate Champion. Team ribbons will be awarded through sixth place, and team prizes will be awarded through fourth place!

### **About the Virginia Horse Trials**

The Virginia Horse Trials has been a premier Eventing destination for over 25 years. Situated on 600 acres, the Virginia Horse Center is a first-class venue. Brian and Penny Ross founded the Virginia Horse Trials in 1989, and organized the Event through its 25th Anniversary in 2014. Andy Bowles took over the organization of the Virginia Horse Trials in 2015 and looks forward to maintaining it as a destination for east coast eventers in the years to come.

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