

INIGATE

THE IN'S & OUT'S OF OUR COMPETITIVE COMMUNITY

Bring back the
barn rats

A special pony
partnership

Raising the bar.
The new OHJA.





Contents

04

Board of Directors
& Committee Members

06

President's
Message

08

Raising the bar on
membership value

12

OHJA 2023 Programs

18

Junior Ambassadors
Program

24

Bring back the barn rats

28

Getting my mojo back

30

A special pony partnership:
Caitlyn Tighe & Caught in
the Clouds

34

Nutrition tips for the
show horse



Follow and share with us on social media!

You can find us on Facebook & Instagram, and we want to put the spotlight on you – our OHJA members! Tag us in your photos and don't forget to use our hashtag "#OHJA" to be featured on our account.





Board & Committee

OHJA Board of Directors

President: Victoria McDonald
 Vice President: Elizabeth Rous
 Treasurer / Finance: Sharon Batista

Additional Members of the Board

Kristine Kubota
 Heather McCann-Cuddy
 Kelly Nicholls
 Pam Dorion
 Kathryn Kitchen
 Alana Aird

Hunter & Equitation Committee

Co-Chair: Elizabeth Rous
 Co-Chair: Diane Ratigan
 Sandi Ballard
 Cindy Bolen
 Elizabeth Campbell
 Pam Dorion
 Jenna Fines
 Alexa Law
 Kristine Kubota
 Heather McCann-Cuddy

Meghan McDonald
 Victoria McDonald
 Michael Montreuil
 Kelly Nicholls
 Jenna Rogerson
 Jackie Tattersall
 Deb Weir
 Paige West
 Emily Woon

Jumper Committee

Chair: Pam Dorion
 Sharon Batista
 Nanci Forefellow
 Sabrina Ivankovic
 Heather McCann-Cuddy
 Kelly Nicholls
 Diane Ratigan
 Elizabeth Rous
 Deb Weir
 Sherri Whitworth-Denouden
 Lily White Mitchell

Banquet/Finals Committee

Pam Dorion
 Kristine Kubota
 Victoria McDonald

Michael Montreuil
 Kelly Nicholls
 Diane Ratigan
 Jenna Rogerson
 Elizabeth Rous Myscha Stafford
 Jackie Tattersall
 Paige West Deb Weir

Communication Committee

Chair: Kathryn Kitchen
 Annika Cann
 Gabrielle Gallant
 Heather McCann-Cuddy
 Kelly Traver
 Kristen Schubert

Photo by: Laurel Jarvis

MESSAGE

From Our President

I hope this issue of InGate finds you and your loved ones safe and healthy and looking forward to welcoming a new season of competition and camaraderie.

The OHJA has been hard at work over the past months refreshing our strategy, building out our priorities and roadmap for the next 3 years and launching a new brand identity. For all of those who were able to join us for the launch on April 17th, we were thrilled to share our new vision and improved membership value, putting you at the centre of our priorities. If you were unable to join us on April 17th, please head to our landing page where you can catch a recording of the event along with highlights of our exciting programs for 2023. You won't be disappointed!

We have lots of great things in store this season. We surveyed our membership again in late 2022 and built our programming around what matters to you. Highlights include the introduction of a new OHJA 2'6" Junior/Amateur Hunter Division, High Point Bonuses for Professionals and Junior/Amateurs in the Canadian Hunter Derby Series and select Grand Prix's to help offset membership costs and entry fees and the continuation of our ever popular and growing Young Hunter Development Series. We have also expanded our reach on the Jumper side to include programming that supports the 0.6M, 0.8M and Pony Jumpers, in addition to bringing back the 1.20M Nations Cup Class in Ottawa with the addition of a bonus for the trainer of the winning team. Our OHJA equitation programs continue to be a staple on the prize list and we have expanded the number of

classes offered in the Emerging Rider Medal Program. There is something out there for everyone, so please take advantage!

As we build member engagement, we are excited to introduce our Junior Ambassador Program. We welcomed 12 juniors to this engaging program designed to give our junior members a voice around what matters to them and enabling them to get more involved. We are excited to see the interesting ideas they will bring forward this year. Please look out for our Junior Ambassadors at the shows and don't hesitate to connect with them to share any ideas. We love hearing from our young members!

Recognition continues to be a huge part of our ongoing strategy and focus and we are thrilled to share that the banquet will be back in full force this year. Please mark your calendars for Friday, November 24th and get ready for a night to remember. We will be hosting this year's festivities at The Symes at 105-150 Symes Road, Toronto. More details to follow later in the season.

As the show season gets underway, I am looking forward to getting out and connecting with our members. We want to hear from you so please reach out. I wish everyone a happy and successful 2023 show season.

Best,

Victoria McDonald
OHJA President



June 2023

Raising the bar on membership value

We have been very busy over the winter months refreshing our strategy and building the OHJA for the future. With the industry evolving, it was clear we needed to transform, reassess, and build a forward focused vision.

We embarked on a journey to redefine our purpose and ambition and evaluate what is important to you... our members. Enhancing the joy of competition and creating seamless experiences where members have access to trusted knowledge, valuable programs and accurate platforms, served as the foundation for our evolution.

We defined our business objectives, set a 3-year strategic plan to support those objectives, created our value proposition and introduced a new brand identity that demonstrated our new energy and commitment to progression.

“

We embarked on a journey to redefine our purpose and ambition and evaluate what is important to you... our members.”

A member-focused 3-year plan.

1. Aligning the brand and value proposition to our new Purpose & Ambition
2. Creating the foundation for membership sustainability and growth
3. Moving to a more engaged and active board with added resources
4. Expanding revenue streams that support our brand promise
5. Delivering more member value through new and relevant programming

How we will deliver:

- Launching our new brand identity & value proposition and creating a better member experience via our website where there are improved resources and knowledge building tools
- Identifying revenue opportunities that build for the future via engagement with the Trillium & Silver Series
- Creating volunteer opportunities that involve our members and elevate their voices around the OHJA table
- Introducing revenue opportunities that include merchandising, sponsorship engagement and event planning
- Delivering programming that recognizes all segments of our membership, meets development needs and recognizes and celebrates accomplishments

With the evolution of the strategy it became clear that we needed a new identity and call to action that would symbolically represent our new direction and focus. Something that was progressive, collaborative and a purpose with presence. We wanted to capture the dynamic energy of competition in a contemporary stylish form.

Our new brand was born. Visually it has a quiet strength, tapping into the emotions that competitors feel through the imagery. It is forward thinking, contemporary and simple.

In addition, we also landed on a tag line that we feel embodies our transformation and where we want to focus our energies for our members...**For the love of competition.**

Our brand is rich in history and we will continue to support that history with our burgundy and grey color scheme; however, we are introducing 3 new bold colors that embrace the rich colors of our sport and colors we see around our barns and in our equestrian environment. Rich forest green, sophisticated deep blue and warm tan. These lovely colors will form how we think about our sub-brands.

This is just the beginning of a wide range of offerings we are looking to bring to members over the next 3 years. Our members are at the centre of what we are building and looking to offer. Our goal is to ensure you see the value of your membership and see yourself reflected in our programs.

We would love to hear your feedback on these changes and we are open to ideas so please don't hesitate to reach out to any of our Board Members.

For the love  of competition.



OHJA 2023 Programs



Photo by: Laurel Jarvis

Hunter Programs

Pony Power Series & Final

The OHJA's Pony Power program consists of six classes throughout the season for the EC Small, Medium and Large Pony divisions at select venues. The class is one round, over a 'handy' styled course with open numerical scoring. There will be special ribbons and prizes awarded by the OHJA for these classes. At select shows there will also be one hunter round of the Children's Pony, Short Stirrup and Cross Rail divisions that will be run with open scoring and awarded special prizes.

The Pony Power Final will run at the Hunter Spectacular & Equitation Special at Caledon Equestrian Park Sept 6 - 10, 2023. Competitors in the EC Small, Medium and Large Pony Divisions that have won a 1st, 2nd, 3rd, or 4th place ribbon in one of the qualifying classes are eligible to qualify for the OHJA Pony Power Finals. The Final will be one handy round to be shown over a course of 10 jumps and will include at least three tests from the following list: rollback, trot fence, hand gallop fence, bending line, halt, option fence, gate, dismount, bounce and direct line to/from a jump to the in gate.

Beginner / Low Hunter Stake

At select shows, the third trip of the Beginner Children's, Beginner Adult, Low Children's and Low Adult Hunter divisions will be run as a Stake Class with open numerical scoring. Judging will be based on quality, movement, jumping style, manners and way of going. The Stake round may contain multiple single jumps, roll backs, bending lines or longer lines.

Beginner / Low Hunter Classics

At the Ontario Hunter Finals, the Beginner Children's, Beginner Adult, Low Children's and Low Adult Hunter divisions will each have a two round hunter classic using open numerical scoring. The first round will be judged over a course of 12 or more fences and the second round to be held over a shortened course. The top 12 horses will return for a second round in the reverse order of the placing achieved in the first round. Final placings will be on the accumulated points over two rounds.

DEVELOPMENT

Rider Education Programs

Hunter Derby High Point Rider Bonus

The OHJA is proud to partner with the existing Canadian Hunter Derby Series to offer high point rider bonuses for the top placing Junior/Amateur rider, and top placing professional rider in both the 3ft and 3'6" sections of the Canadian Hunter Derby classes. These bonuses are meant to reward top performance for both junior and amateur riders, as well as professionals entering in such a technical class. At select shows, the top placing Junior/Amateur rider and top placing professional rider from each section will each receive a \$125 cash bonus. The owner of the winning entry will also receive a prize generously provided by the OHJA. In addition, the OHJA will be awarding a \$2,000 cash bonus to the top placing Junior/Amateur rider and top placing professional rider in both the 3ft and 3'6" sections of the Canadian Hunter Derby at the Ontario Hunter Championships. The owner of the winning entries for each height section will also receive a prize generously provided by the OHJA.



Young Hunter Development Series & Final

The OHJA Young Hunter Development Series provides classes specifically for Young Hunters ages 3 to 5 years old. Entries must show proof of registration for proof of age. These classes will give Ontario breeders and Ontario owners an opportunity to network at Gold Competitions in order to develop and market their young horses and breeding programs. Three classes will be offered;

Model: shown in hand; to be judged on conformation, manners, way of moving and soundness. 50% on movement and 50% on conformation.

Under Saddle: To be shown at a walk, trot and canter both ways of the ring; no hand-gallop; to be

judged on conformation, manners, way of moving and soundness. 60% on movement and 40% on confirmation.

Over Fences: The course will be set at 2'3" with no more than 8 jumps. To be judged on their jumping style, manners and way of going.



Horses are not required to compete in all three classes, however, Champion and Reserve will be determined based on most points accumulated across the classes being offered.

The Young Hunter Development Series Final will run at the Ontario Hunter Finals this fall and will follow the same format of the regular season. While competing during the regular season is not mandatory, the OHJA reserves the right to restrict the final to those horses who have participated in at least one class at the qualifying shows if entries warrant.

Emerging Rider Hunter Medal

The OHJA Emerging Rider Hunter Medal provides riders the opportunity to experience equitation classes and help spark an interest and passion for equitation. At select shows throughout the season, this medal class will be offered to riders in the Short Stirrup, Beginner Children's, Beginner Adult, and Children's Pony divisions. This class will be run concurrently with the regular division classes. Course will include one of the following tests: halt, trot fence, rollback, or a bending line. The top 20 riders from each division will be invited to the Finals during the Ontario Hunter Finals at Caledon Equestrian Park. The OHJA reserves the right to extend entries to more than 20 riders. The top three riders from each division will be given year-end awards.

2'6" Jr/Am Hunter Division

As a direct result of OHJA member feedback and collaboration with horse show venues we are pleased to present a pilot program for 2023 of a 2'6" Hunter division for Junior and Amateurs. This division is open to all Junior and Adult Amateur rider designations as per EC rules. Courses will be made up of hunter style jumps of at least eight fences, and set at a height

not to exceed 2ft6". Classes will be run per EC rules. Horse/Rider combinations may not cross enter any division requiring them to jump higher than 2'9". Showing in this division will affect a horse's eligibility. Ribbons will be provided to 8th and jogging will not be required.

Hunter Derby Course Walks

The OHJA is pleased to support the Canadian Hunter Derby Series and has arranged the opportunity to walk the Derby course at select shows with an OHJA Professional Rider/Trainer. They will provide educational commentary, explain the rules and scoring during the CHDS course walk and discuss the challenges and strategies of navigating the course.



Equitation Programs

OHJA Jumper Equitation Medal

This class is based on jumper equitation and is open to all Junior/Amateur riders with a current OHJA membership. To be shown over a jumper type course with fences 1.10m to 1.15m in height with a time allowed. Open scoring will determine the top four riders to return for a second round 'jump off'. Total scores from the first and second round will determine the winner.

The top 20 riders in the current OHJA standings will be invited to compete in the OHJA Medal Finals held at the Caledon Equestrian Park as part of the Ontario Jumper Championships. Class entry fees for riders will be covered by the OHJA. Ribbons and prizes will be awarded to 10th place with a cooler awarded to the class winner. Additionally, the winning Coach/Trainer and winning entry at the Final will each receive a \$500 bursary from the OHJA.

CET Mini Medal Presented by the OHJA

The CET Mini Medal is open to junior and amateur riders based on jumper equitation over a jumping phase, gymnastic phase and flat phase. Competitors must be OHJA members to be eligible for points to count towards the provincial final. This class will follow the same rules and regulations as the CET Medal (see Article G1110) with some eligibility exceptions:

- Riders competing in 1.20m or higher jumper divisions are not eligible.
- Riders may not cross enter between the Mini Medal and the CET Medal class at the same competition.

- Riders may qualify for both the CET Mini Medal and the CET Medal Final but may compete in only one Regional Final.
- Trainers may walk both the gymnastic course and the jumping course with riders. Exception: Provincial Finals. Trainers may only walk the gymnastic course.

The Top 20 riders will be invited to compete in the OHJA/CET Mini Medal Finals at the BFL Caledon Cup Final, September 20-24, 2023. The top four riders return to the ring for mandatory additional testing. In addition to ribbons to the top ten riders, a \$500 bursary will be awarded to the Year End overall winner, as well as \$500 to the winner of the Final and \$500 to the trainer of the winner at the Final.



OHJA High Point Equitation Award

The OHJA High Point Equitation Award will be awarded to the OHJA member at the year end awards celebration with the highest combined ranking in the OHJA Jumper Medal, Grand Prix Junior Medal and CET Medal.

A, B and C Equitation Flat Finals presented by the OHJA

The OHJA is proud to support our A, B and C equitation riders (as defined by EC rule G1006) in a Flat Final at the Ontario Hunter Championships. Riders who have qualified for this final throughout the season will be invited to participate. These classes may be run at all Ontario Gold EC sanctioned competitions at their discretion. Please check each horse show program for availability.

Jumper Programs

Major League Show Jumping Course Walks

Walk the course with an OHJA Professional Rider/Trainer! Organized by the OHJA at Major League Show Jumping events, participants will be able to walk the Grand Prix course with a host who will provide educational commentary, and explain the rules at Major League Showjumping Events.



OHJA Jumper Spectacular

The OHJA is proud to offer a Grand Prix type competition to Junior and Amateur riders at the 0.6m, 0.8m, 0.9m, 1.0m, 1.10m, 1.20m and 1.30m heights and Pony Jumper division. Each class will have one jump-off, to take place after all competitors have completed the first round (not an immediate jump off). Ribbons and prize money offered to 10th with a cooler presented to the winner of each class. This will be run at the Ontario Jumper Finals at Caledon Equestrian Park.

OHJA Nation's Cup

The OHJA is proud to partner with the Ottawa Equestrian Tournaments to host a Nations Cup. Open to junior and amateur riders, this class will provide a unique opportunity to compete in a Nation's Cup format jumper class. Fences will be set at a minimum height of 1.15m and a maximum height of 1.20m. At least three teams with four riders must participate. New for 2023, the winning team Coach/Trainer will receive a \$1,000 cash bonus. This class will be run in accordance with FEI Article 264.

Grand Prix Rider High Point Awards

The OHJA is proud to offer high point rider bonuses for the top placing Junior/Amateur rider, and top placing professional rider in 10 Grand Prix classes throughout the season. At select shows, the top placing Junior/Amateur rider and top placing professional rider in the Grand Prix will each receive a \$125 cash bonus. The OHJA will also be awarding a \$2,000 cash bonus to the top placing Junior/Amateur rider and top placing professional rider in the Grand Prix class at the Ontario Jumper Championships.

Junior Ambassadors Program

Lauren Kirton, Chair

The OHJA recognizes the important voice that junior riders have in shaping the gold level horse show experience, and we want these voices heard. New for 2023, a team of talented young leaders has been assembled who will liaise between junior riders and the OHJA's Board of Directors to help guide decision making and ensure the OHJA's programs are reflective of all facets of membership. You will see these ambassadors at Gold shows throughout the year assisting with ribbon presentations for OHJA classes, helping at special member events, and being leaders in sportsmanship and horsemanship.

Meet the 2023 Junior Ambassadors

18-year-old Lauren Kirton resides in Caledon, Ontario. Before she could even walk, she sat on her first horse, and by the time she was two, she was competing in the lead line. She has competed successfully in short stirrups, jumpers, and hunters, on several different horses and ponies. She hopes to have another strong season in 2023 with the potential to move up. We will see what the season has in store for her. Lauren was destined to be in the equestrian world with her long list of family members who supported the industry, from her great-grandparents to her parents, her aunt Kim, and many others. With all these equestrians in her family, it was inevitable that she would follow in their footsteps and show some support for the horse industry.

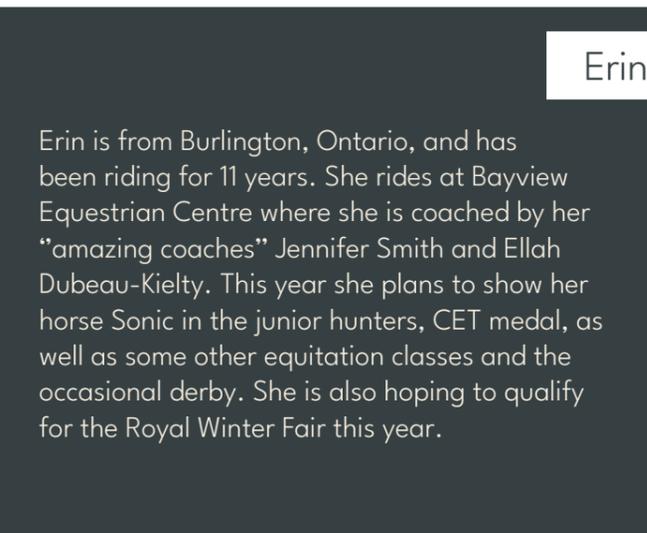



Holly Heikkila

Proudly from Northern Ontario, Holly rides with Cathy Inch of Foothills Farm. This year, Holly is making the move from Pony Hunters to Jumpers. With two great mares in her string, iCandy and Venganza, Holly's 2023 plan is to focus on developing as a rider and gaining more experience over bigger jumps. She is thrilled to be an OHJA Junior Ambassador and can't wait to see everybody at her first show in May.


Avery Wilson

Avery is described by her coaches as a natural leader, with a positive attitude and a strong commitment to learning, both in and out of the show ring. Riding out of The Meadows Equine, Avery and her horse Freddie aka TME Bohemian Rhapsody will be showing in the low junior amateur hunters this season.


Erin Paszt

Erin is from Burlington, Ontario, and has been riding for 11 years. She rides at Bayview Equestrian Centre where she is coached by her "amazing coaches" Jennifer Smith and Ellah Dubeau-Kielty. This year she plans to show her horse Sonic in the junior hunters, CET medal, as well as some other equitation classes and the occasional derby. She is also hoping to qualify for the Royal Winter Fair this year.


Ava Campin

Our next Junior Ambassador is Ava Campin. This year, Ava will be showing Sneak Peek, owned by Ellah Dubeau-Kielty. She rides with Bayview Equestrian and will be showing in the 0.60m Jumpers for her first year competing.


Capri Czekaj

Capri and her horse, Just Synergy, ride and train with Chris Delia Stables. This will be her second season showing 'Link' and will be competing in the Junior Hunters, CET Medal, OHJA Medal, and Jump Canada Medal. Capri loves meeting new people and is happy to talk to everyone at the horse shows. She is very excited to be an OHJA Junior ambassador this year!


Sara Struk

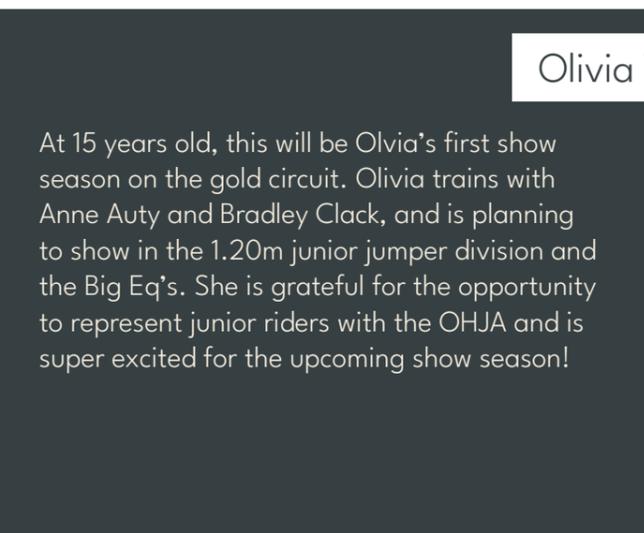
Sara is looking forward to this summer and getting to be an OHJA Junior Ambassador! She is 15 years old and trains with Jennifer Smith and Ellah Dubeau-Kielty at Bayview Equestrian Centre in Burlington, Ontario. She has been riding for almost 5 years, having shown successfully in the equitation, hunter, and jumper rings. This year, she plans on showing her horse Cartier d'Amour Z in the Children Hunters, and some equitation classes. Sara is very excited for the 2023 season!


Mirella Carnovale

Mirella and her new partner Stakko train with Looking Back Farm and will be competing in the 1.20m with the goal of qualifying for the Royal. She is continuously looking for opportunities to learn and develop as a horseperson and is grateful for the role models she has to look to as an example. Mirella is looking forward to spreading positivity and good sportsmanship at the shows, and getting to represent her fellow junior riders.


Jayde Ward

Jayde is excited to be one of the OHJA's Junior Ambassadors. She started riding when she was 4 years old and has been hooked ever since. This year she will be competing with her horse Phocus HGF in the children's hunters as well as doing some equitation, medals and derbies. Jayde is looking forward to a great year ahead representing the OHJA!


Olivia Willison

At 15 years old, this will be Olivia's first show season on the gold circuit. Olivia trains with Anne Auty and Bradley Clack, and is planning to show in the 1.20m junior jumper division and the Big Eq's. She is grateful for the opportunity to represent junior riders with the OHJA and is super excited for the upcoming show season!


Jessie Elford-Coote

Jessie is 18 years old and grew up on a family farm where her grandfather and mother raced in the Standardbred industry. The family farm is now a dual purpose facility. Her love for competitive showing started when she showed her large pony, Temper of Tony and competed for several years in the Pony Jumper division and got to show at The Royal Winter Fair! She plans to compete with her horses, Irish Jig and El Royale. This year Jessie's goal is to bring her young horse up throughout the heights and have consistent rounds. She also hopes to do some catch riding in the 1.20m ring. She will be competing on the Gold circuit in jumpers, as well as the Silver Series with her horse El Royale in the hunters.


Lucy Zhang

Lucy shows in the jumpers with her horses Cookie and Cream and King Falco Van Orshof. She strongly believes in the value of community building among young and upcoming equestrians, which is why she applied to be an OHJA Junior Ambassador. As the 2023 show season approaches, Lucy is looking forward to all the incredible updates OHJA has made as well as meeting everyone at shows throughout the year.

Bring back the barn rats

By Jenna Rogerson



Left: Clare Coleshill
Right: Izzy Thurlow
Photo by: Jenna R.

It's 6:30am on a Saturday, the Alarm goes off.

You leap out of bed like it's Christmas morning, get dressed and dart for the kitchen to grab your lunch. Hopping down the hallway on one foot trying to get your socks on faster- your Parent's bedroom door opens slowly; you see an outline of a slumped over exhausted human and whisper "hurry! I don't want to be late !!" The parent answers begrudgingly "you aren't late." followed by a "ugh" grunt as they head into the bathroom to get ready.

Shortly after we are in the car and the sun is starting to come up, the pinks, purples and yellows are so pretty, it reminds you of that old saying "pink sky at morning sailors take warning, pink sky at night sailors delight!" You wonder if it's going to rain today or not, but it doesn't matter. You're going to the BARN. You feel the car start to slow, the old grey oak fencing appears, and you try and look beyond to find your favourite horse in the front paddock as they all munch on the grass covered morning dew.



Left: Charlotte Ballantyne
Right: Charlotte Ballantyne & Izzy Thurlow
Photo by: Jenna R.

These memories are just a few of the ones I can recall being a horse crazy child. I was one of those kids affectionately referred to as a "Barn Rat". I would be at the barn when then sun came up, and just as happily still there when the sun went down. It wasn't just about riding, it was about everything related to horses, especially the smell! I loved turnout, mucking, grooming, sweeping, setting up and taking down jumps, cleaning tack, I even happily cut grass out front of the barn if it meant I got an extra ride that day. We didn't care if we were sun burnt or frost bitten- being in the barn was life at its finest. "Barn Rats" were fixtures in every barn I ever rode at as a child, it didn't matter whether it was a riding school or a fancier show barn, we found each other.

"We didn't care if we were sun burnt or frost bitten- being in the barn was life at its finest."

Your "Barn Rat" crew was a pack. Of course, some kids were lucky and had friends at school as well. But your best friends were "Rats" and still are to this day. You spent winter break, March break, weekends

and the entire summer together doing any horse crazy shenanigans you could come up with and at the barn as much as possible. When I moved on from a riding school and started to part board, I was lucky enough to attend shows and help as a groom. I bathed horses, made sure they had water and hay on the trailer, held them to be tacked up, stood ring side with

the reins grinded in both hands while the rider walked their course. I was sure this job was on the same level of importance as an FBI agent. It may not have been a glorious job - but to me it was everything. I was not

the kid whose parents could afford to have a horse and attend all the shows, although in my teens I was lucky enough to have my own because I could work and contribute. But in my younger years, I still got to be apart of it all and it fueled my love for horses and a lifelong passion that led me to my career today.

As a professional, it's easy to get overwhelmed with everything we have to do. We all want staff that are trained and efficient so that nothing gets missed and the barn operates like clockwork. BUT what about the "Barn Rats"? In the last six months or so I've started encouraging my young riders between the ages of 12-16 to come on Saturday mornings and help. My own daughter who is 12 now has a "job". She sends herself to bed Friday nights early because she knows she must get up in the morning. She sets her alarm and makes herself breakfast and then heads down to

the barn to meet her fellow "Rats". They do different chores together from about 7:30-11:30am and help my staff with feeding, filling hay nets, cleaning water buckets, mucking, getting shavings, hand walking - anything that needs to get done - and then they all ride together. I've also started including them more often in prepping the trailer before we go schooling or unpacking and putting their own horses away when we get home. If they are involved in every aspect of riding, they not only learn more about horses but about responsibility, hard work, commitment, and sacrifice. They learn that life is about tough choices and when it involves horses that's even more true. They learn if they want the privilege of having these animals you must show up even when you're sick, even on holidays, even when there's something else you want to do.

Fostering opportunities to teach these kids actual horsemanship is important.

We can't create great riders of the future without creating great horsewomen and horsemen today. Recognize the kids who may not have a horse but have a strong work ethic. Teach them everything you know, give them every opportunity you can to advance, show them this industry does reward hard work and that if they have a dream of being a professional one day they can. One of my students who is an original "Rat" at my barn, is now 25 and

has been with me for 13 years. She just became a Professional and I can honestly say it's one of my proudest moments. The fact that sharing my knowledge and love of horses and this sport has helped foster that passion in someone else is a feeling like no other.

I implore all trainers at every level to bring back the "Barn Rats"! You will be surprised at just how much it reminds you of yourself when you were young and how much you must teach the next generation in our industry. It has nothing to do with riding a horse but is every bit as important.



“If they are involved in every aspect of riding, they not only learn more about horses but about responsibility, hard work, commitment, and sacrifice.”

Izzy Thurlow, Addison Ton, Charlotte Ballantyne
Photo by: Jenna R.

Getting my mojo

back



By **Caroline Toth**

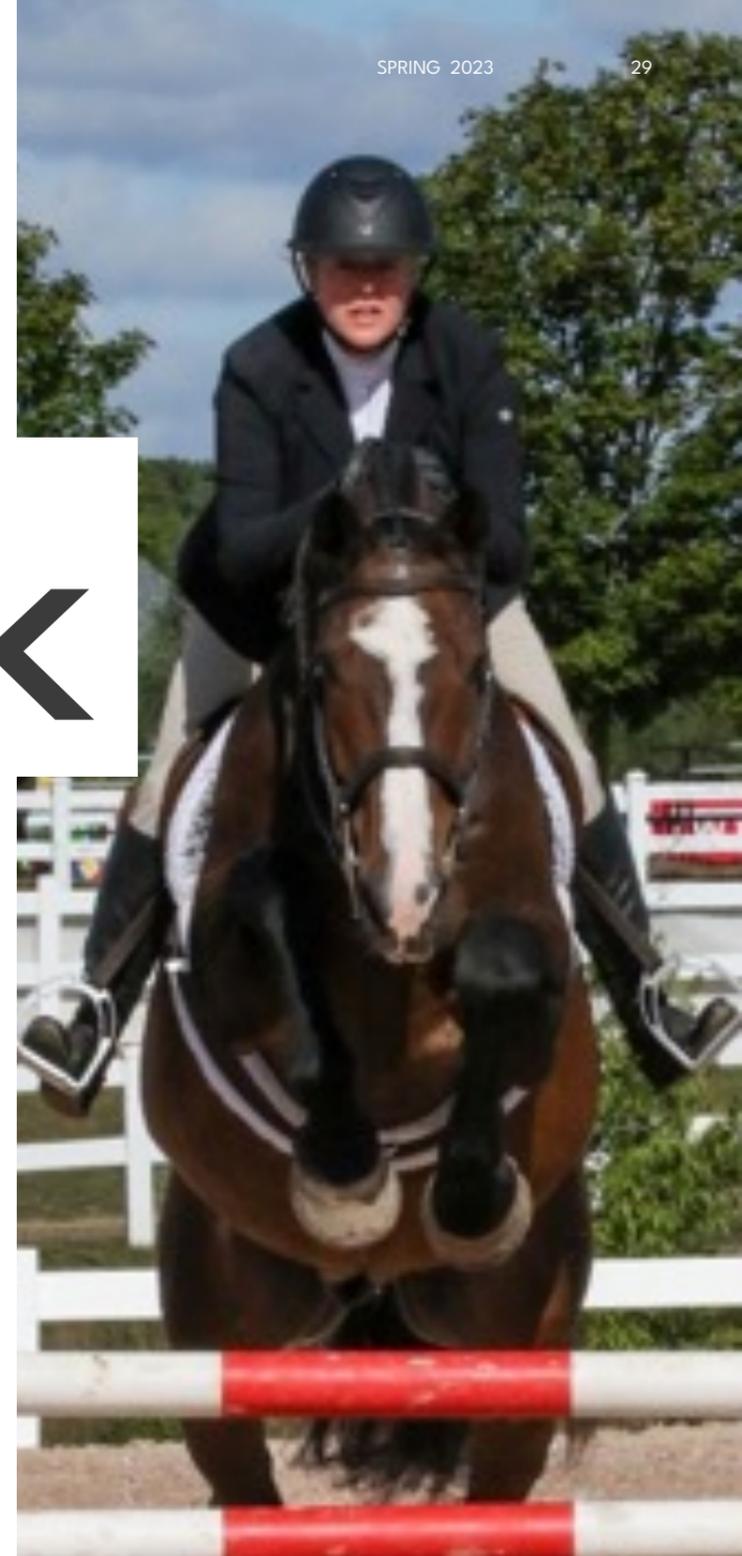
The approach of horse show season means something different every year. This season, I am blessed to have Grace and Nicole Gobbi's lovely Leopold as my partner. Just an absolute gem, I couldn't love Leo more. As an older rider, I've had some struggles with confidence over the last few years, and being able to ride a horse like Leo has been a gift. Riding, like so many sports, is all about confidence! And once you lose it, it takes a special horse to help you regain it. Leo is that horse. He is quiet, has a canter like a metronome, is super honest, and will always get you to the other side. Just what I needed!

But, he's an older horse, and as such, I try to jump him as little as possible. It's certainly not him that needs the practice! Because of this, we took six weeks off jumping this winter, focused on pole work, and are just now back to jumping once a week.

Emma Wieland and Chicago & Caroline Toth and Leopold
Photo by: Caroline T.

I also promised his owners that I wouldn't "campaign" him, and that I would only do three or four shows this season. In an odd way, that has taken all the pressure off. Since I can't possibly qualify for the Royal in four shows, I am free to just enjoy. I've only had one season as an adult where I hoped to qualify for the Royal but was so swept up in the fever, I found myself checking stats like a maniac. I had to keep reminding myself to enjoy the journey and take what comes.

And what comes will be some of the things I look forward to most. Being in the ring and feeling prepared; that feeling when it's been a good trip and your friends hoot and holler; an early morning ring ride, while the sun rises on a beautiful day, and finally, standing beside your horse while he munches hay, taking out his braids, wrapping his legs and giving him a final, well earned, snuggle and a treat.



Caroline & Leopold
Photo by: Emma Wieland



CAITLYN TIGHE & CAUGHT in the CLOUDS

By Kelly Travers and Caitlyn Tighe

A special pony partnership.

Caught In The Clouds, known around the barn as Kitty, is a 10 year old Connemara pony mare who competed in the Medium Pony Hunter Division finishing 4th overall in Ontario. Kitty, and her owner/rider Caitlyn Tighe also qualified and competed at Pony Finals in Lexington, Kentucky this summer.

Caitlyn and her family purchased Kitty in October, 2017. They first began showing together in 2019 in the Eastern Zone of the Trillium Circuit in the Modified Pony Division.

Tell us a little bit about your pony, Caught in the Clouds.

My pony Caught In The Clouds, barn name Kitty is a 10 year old Connemara who loves carrots, turnout and showing.

Your pony is sired by the very talented Maplehurst Michael MacDaire. How do you like having a Connemara pony and do you think her breeding is part of what makes her such a great show pony?

I love the Connemara breed because they are smart and talented. Her breeding makes her a wonderful show pony because they are easy going with beautiful gaits that stand out in the show ring.

Was this the first Royal and first Pony Finals for you and your pony?

It was both our first times at Pony Finals and it was Kitty's first Royal – I showed in the Small ponies in 2018 and 2019.

What was the most challenging part of showing at Pony Finals and at the Royal?

The most challenging part of both shows was calming my nerves caused by the atmosphere of the competitions.

Did you do anything special to prepare for these major shows?

For Pony Finals, we set a similar course to the previous year and for the Royal we schooled at other indoor venues.

How did your pony react/handle such impressive rings and shows at both Pony Finals and the Royal?

At Pony Finals, she walked into the ring like she had been there many times before but at the Royal, she was more intimidated by the atmosphere of the indoor arena as we don't ride in an indoor very often. But each round got better.

What was your favourite moment of the 2022 show season?

Winning champion at all four Ottawa Gold Shows.

We'd love to hear more about her journey and challenges (wins and losses) to become 4th overall in the OHJA medium pony standings.

Kitty and I started our partnership in 2018. There were ups and downs as it was the start of Kitty's show career. We started off at development shows, quickly moving up to the Silver Modified ponies in 2019. In 2020 we had some challenges in the ring with more 'baby' moments. In 2021, even though we were still learning, we ended the season first overall in the Medium ponies at the Silver level and first overall at Ottawa Tournament series, completing the year by winning a class at the OHJA Indoor finals. 2022 was a very successful year including champion at all Ottawa Gold Shows, qualifying and competing at The Royal and Pony Finals.

How did you qualify for Pony Finals in the US?

Kitty and I started off our 2022 show season competing indoors at Syracuse, New York where we were Reserve Champion which qualified us to compete at Pony Finals.

How do you set goals and achieve them?

When I set my goals I think what a reachable goal will be while still pushing my ponies/horses and I. I also think how I want to end the show season on a positive note. To achieve my goals I focus on what I need to improve on from the previous horse show.

Are there any important skills you've gained from riding her?

Over the past few years Kitty has taught me patience and softness.

What are your feelings about ending your partnership with your special pony?

I am sad that I won't showing Kitty anymore but grateful that I continue to own and ride Kitty. It will be fun watching her show with some up and coming young riders.



Nutrition tips for the show horse

By **Isabelle D'Costa**, MSc Equine Nutrition

Your horse's nutrition is an important factor affecting performance and recovery during show season, so ensuring your feeding plan is suitable is key! Did you know some of your horse's nutrient requirements can double when they're being exercised heavily? Strategically meeting these increased requirements can help support their performance and health right into the ring!

Check out some top tips to maximize your horse's performance this spring & summer season.

Drive energy with fiber & fat to maintain gut health and natural behaviour.

Fiber: A performance horse should consume at 1.5-2% of their body weight in quality forage per day. High-forage diets have been shown to be able to meet energy and protein requirements, and positively impact gut health, hydration status and welfare. Soluble fibers such as beet pulp are energy dense, easily digestible feedstuffs which can boost energy content in the diet. Soluble fiber inclusion can also improve gut health, reduce susceptibility to pathogen infection, and act as a prebiotic to prevent GI upset. These characteristics make soluble fibers incredibly valuable for the show horse who is traveling frequently.

Fat: As it is energy-dense, promotes calm behaviour and can support joint health, fat inclusion in the diet can be a great strategy for the show horse! Fat can provide more than 2x the energy for the same amount of grain, which can help reduce the risk of digestive upset and ulcers associated with high grain meals, while also contributing to a calmer, less reactive horse. Omega-3 fatty acids EPA & DHA also have anti-inflammatory effects that can help support joint health!



Sequoia & Heather McCann-Cuddy
Photo by: Meg O'Shea Photo + Design

Feed forage, not grain, before exercise to avoid early fatigue.

Avoid feeding grains 4 hours before exercise, as the resulting insulin peak will prevent the horse from using fat-based energy stores during exercise. Instead, the horse will have to use their glycogen energy stores, which are usually recruited when exercise intensity or duration persists. This early switch to glycogen stores will deplete the fuel

available for high intensity exercise, leading to earlier onset of fatigue and exhaustion.

While a forage meal 2-6 hours before exercise has been found to be more beneficial for jumping horses than a grain feeding, studies have found that many show horses do not have access to hay prior to exercise. Incorporating this tip can help your horse avoid early fatigue and perform their best!

Electrolyte supplementation to support performance and optimize recovery.

Sweating is the main thermoregulatory mechanism for horses, and their sweat is hypertonic – meaning they lose a lot of electrolytes in it! Sodium, chloride, and potassium are the main minerals lost (in a ratio of 2:4:1), but calcium and magnesium are also found in sweat. These electrolytes control water movement in body compartments – a dehydrated horse who is not ingesting sufficient electrolytes will remain dehydrated regardless of water intake as their body will not be able to utilize the water effectively.

Horses cannot store electrolytes, and ingested electrolytes only remain in the body for 4-6 hours, so replacement is essential in maintaining hydration status. Electrolyte deficiency can present as undesirable behaviour, exhaustion, and muscle cramps, while electrolyte supplementation has been found to improve post-exercise recovery and support performance.

Summary

Using quality-fiber and energy-dense fats can reduce the number of grains fed and reduce the risk of colic, tying up and ulcers. When quality forage is available, studies have found that as no differences in performance have been found between forage-only and high-grain diets, forage-only diets are an alternative to high-grain diets. Feeding forage before exercise instead of grain can help maximize athletic performance duration, and electrolyte provision is key to supporting a horse both during and after exercise!

As show horses need to be able to perform at their best in several exercise bouts in a row, nutrition strategies which maintain gut health and hydration, while still providing them the energy and nutrients they need are essential!

Follow us on:

Facebook at OntarioHunterJumperAssociation

Instagram at onhunterjumper

OHJA.CA



For the love
of competition.

