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Mars Essex Horse Trials Enjoys Triumphant Return
Buck Davidson Sweeps Top Four Places in Open Preliminary Division

Far Hills, New Jersey - June 24, 2017 - The long wait was worth it! The highly anticipated return of the famed Mars Essex Horse Trials was everything everyone hoped. The huge crowd enjoyed perfect weather and top-notch competition in a beautiful setting at historic Moorland Farm in Far Hills, N.J.

With a large turnout including former New Jersey governors Thomas Kean and Christine Todd Whitman, Saturday's competition lineup included Novice and Preliminary events. USEF veteran Buck Davidson of Unionville, Pa., captured the top four places in the Open Preliminary Division, taking top honors on Victor BZ, owned by Carl and Cassie Segal.



Buck Davidson and Victor BZ
Photo credit: Joan Davis / Flatlandsfoto

"It was fantastic," said Davidson. "It turned out even better than I expected. Last year they showed me their dreams and for it to come off like this is unbelievable. It was so exciting to see all these people. These events don't happen without the support of the community and the community sure showed up. They've done a great job here. I hope they are happy with the result. I sure am and I'll definitely be back next year!"



*Alice Roosevelt and Fernhill Zoro
Photo credit: Joan Davis / Flatlandsfoto*

New York rider Alice Roosevelt took top honors on Fernhill Zoro in the Preliminary Rider Division. Roosevelt was not even born when the last Essex Horse Trials took place as the young rider is only 16 years old and entering her junior year of high school.

"I was not expecting to win, it meant a lot to see that all our hard work paid off," said Roosevelt. "It was a really great course, it rode really well. My goal here was just to put in my best effort. It's so exciting to win and I am definitely happy that I came!"

Earlier in the day the novice divisions were held and the first rider on the cross country course ended in first place. Elizabeth Goodwin rode Pik C to the winner's circle in the Novice Rider "A" division and Jessie Hayes rode Rivendell to victory in Novice Rider "B". USEF veteran Jennie Brannigan took the top two spots in the Open Novice division winning with Lamondale Florinia.



*Jennie Brannigan and Lamondale Florinia.
Photo credit: Joan Davis / Flatlandsfoto*

Competition was just one part of this iconic event. Activities for family took place throughout the day including the Essex Market with a wide range of shopping from saddles and riding boots to jewelry and artwork; a Children's Activity Center, sponsored by The Willow

School, and a Farmstand offering local produce. On Sunday, a classic car show will be added to the host of activities.



Buck Davidson, Holly Payne Caravella and Kate Chadderton with Somerset Hills Pony Clubbers who won a chance for a meet & greet photo op session with the eventing stars.

The Mars Essex Horse Trials culminates on Sunday with competition beginning at 8:00 a.m. General Admission is just \$20. Tickets are available at the gate. Proceeds from the event benefit the Greater Newark LifeCamp, which provides an enriching day camp experience for approximately 300 Newark-area youths per day for six weeks during July and August.

For complete results click [here](#). For more information about the Mars Essex Horse Trials, please visit: www.essexhorsetrials.org or 908-234-9115

#EssexHorseTrials

The History

For three decades, the Essex Horse Trials was one of the highlights of the equestrian calendar, attracting top American and international competitors as well as thousands of fans who enjoyed its social aspects as well. The trials were originally conceived in 1968 as a competition for less experienced riders and horses.

Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, the event continued to grow. It expanded to a three-day format and eventually moved to the United States Equestrian Team headquarters at Hamilton Farm in Gladstone, where riders competed for positions at both the Olympic Games and World Championships. The event ended on its 30th anniversary in 1998 when some of the USET land was developed.

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