

Region 9 FEI Junior/Young Rider Report July, 2015

Region 9's FEI Junior and Young Rider program had another successful year with numerous accomplishments.

The North American Junior and Young Rider Championship (NAJYRC) is the premier competition for riders under the age of 21 in North America and brings together the most talented riders from Canada, Mexico and the United States. All the riders attending the event earned the privilege of competing after meeting rigorous qualifying criteria. Region 9 fielded 2 complete teams this year, sending a total of 8 riders. The young rider team consisted of Cassie Schmidt, Mattie Zepernick, Anna Campbell, and Kalie Beckers. Junior riders included Allison Hopkins, Maddie Lacy, Bronwyn Cordiak, and Chloe Taylor. Our junior riders earned a bronze medal in the team competition, and the young riders finished sixth. In the junior individual competition, Chloe Taylor placed third, and earned a bronze medal. The region's top individual finish in the young rider division was ninth place. The highest finishes in the freestyle were a fourth place finish by junior Chloe Taylor and a fifth place finish by young rider Mattie Zepernick. Notably, in 2015, the region lead the nation in the number of riders declaring their intent to qualify for the NAJYRC, with a total of 22 horse and rider pairs. In 2016, the competition will be held in Parker, Colorado.

The USEF National Dressage Championships (FEI Pony, Junior and Young Rider divisions) will be held in August, 2015. This competition extends invitations to only twelve riders throughout the US in each division. This year Region 9 has one rider in the pony division, two in the junior division, and three in the young rider division who will likely be invited to compete at the competition.

For the second year in a row, USDF's national candidate for the USEF Youth Sportsman Award was from Region 9. Jessica Fan was recognized for her participation in the Houston Dressage Society Youth Board, USEF National Dressage Championships (Pony) and Pony Club.

The region hosted a USDF FEI Junior/Young Rider clinic with USEF Youth Coach George Williams in January at North Texas Equestrian Center in Wylie, Texas. We would like to extend our thanks to owner, Kai Handt, for donating the use of the facility for the weekend. The event was well received and well attended.

Income from sponsors and from fundraising efforts this year was approximately \$27,000. These funds covered stabling fees for the team, saddle pads, rider shirts, and expenses for the chef d'équipe (\$1200) and team members (\$1000 each). After expenses are paid from the NAJYRC, the balance on the regional account will be approximately \$6300.

Again in 2015, we are indebted to the Region 9 dressage community - its members, its board and director, the GMOs, show organizers and vendors. They have shown unwavering support as our program has grown and developed.

After serving for five years as the FEI Jr/YR coordinator and chef d'équipe for the NAJYRC teams, I will be stepping down this year. I wish the new coordinator continued success in the future.

Respectfully submitted,
Ed Lavallee
Region 9 FEI Jr/YR Coordinator