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The 12th Annual Alumni Tournament of Champions Show Wraps Up for 2023

June 22, 2023



ManeJane Alumni Cup Winner Devora McCoy, Photograph by Skylands Photography

The 12th annual Alumni Tournament of Champions show, presented by Alliant Private Client, kicked off May 20-21 at USET Headquarters in Gladstone, NJ. This year's competition saw the 10th year of the Western discipline at the ATOC show as well as the addition of IHSA Nationals Alumni classes for both Hunt Seat and Western. In order to make the days run more smoothly, the schedule was flipped this year with Hunt Seat on Saturday and Western on Sunday.

Saturday started with the Hunt Seat IHSA Nationals classes. First in the ring was Alumni Equitation on the Flat. Alisha Mays, University of Central Florida, came out on top after some difficult testing to win the National Championship. Gabby Danz, SUNY Cobleskill, was the Reserve National Champion. Alumni Equitation Over Fences was next in the ring. Erica Green, Washington and Jefferson College, had a very successful round on Sage and was named National Champion with no further testing. Juliana Mancinto, SUNY Binghamton, was Reserve Champion.

At the conclusion of the Nationals classes, the Tournament of Champions over fences classes were next into the ring. Many trips were laid down in front of the watchful eyes of judge Suzanne Hehn. Hunt Seat riders competed in the AdultAmmyStrong 2'3 Fences, Ridge Top North 2'6 Fences, and the Campus Equestrian Reunion Fences. The rain began to fall during the 2'3" division but the spirits and the rails did not. Many riders joked about how fun their pictures from Skylands Photography would turn out. The rain did not last long and the outdoor ring was cleared for the flat classes. The footing was perfect and the competition remained strong for the Sandra Sayre Alumni flat, Dreamers & Schemers Adv flat, and the Equijet Reunion flat.

In the ManeJane Alumni Cup, the top two riders from each of the IHSA Alumni regions were invited to compete in the two-phase cup class. The scores were incredibly close and Judge Hehn brought back the top eight riders for further testing. Devora McCoy, University of Maryland, came out on top after the testing and Joe Fellingham, Stony Brook University, came away with Reserve Champion. The IHSAA sponsored the Future Alumni Cup class, which is open to graduating seniors looking to dip their toes into the Alumni competition. Shannon Washburn, East Stroudsburg University, held on to win the Future Cup over Elizabeth Margiotes, American University, who was named Reserve Champion.

Saturday concluded with the Exhibitor Party sponsored by IHSAA. The End of the Year High Score Alumni awards were presented during the party for both Hunt Seat and Western. Hunt Seat prizes were sponsored by Jessie's Specialty Saddle Pads and Western prizes were sponsored by Crystal Cowen in memory of Jeff Dye. Serena Dittenber walked away with the perpetual Overall High Score trophy for the year.

Photograph by Skylands Photography

The Alumni Tournament of Champions is an IHSA style horse show for IHSA alumni from around the country. Riders draw horses before competing and are not able to practice on the horse before walking into the show ring. The purpose of the show is to expand opportunities for IHSA Alumni to ride in a finals type atmosphere, as many only show a few times a year with busy careers and limited funds.

More information can be found on our website www.alumnitoc.com, Full results can be found on www.horseshowing.com, and photos can be found on www.SkylandsPhotography.com.

Keep an eye out for the 2024 Alumni Tournament of Champions, the date and location should be set by early fall.
