



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
September 22, 2016  
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## Arabian Breed Crowns U.S. Open Champions to Start 2016 Rolex Central Park Horse Show

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**From Jennifer Wood Media, Inc.**

**(September 21, 2016) - New York, NY** - The third annual Rolex Central Park Horse Show (RCPHS) began on Wednesday evening, September 21, in New York City's Wollman Rink with featured competition celebrating the Arabian breed. The [Arabian Horse Association](#) (AHA) and Aljassimya Farm proudly presented the second annual Arabian U.S. Open at RCPHS, showcasing the beauty, athleticism, and diversity of the Arabian breed through a variety of classes.

The Rolex Central Park Horse Show runs through Sunday, September 25, with five days of multi-discipline equestrian sport for Arabians, jumpers, dressage, and hunters. The \$216,000 FEI Grand Prix CSI 3\*, presented by Rolex, and Friday night ceremonies will be broadcast on NBC Sports Network on Sunday, September 25, from 9-10:30 p.m. EST.

A mix of in-hand/halter and performance classes graced Wollman Rink Wednesday evening, as the Arabian horses kicked off opening night in Central Park in the 2nd Annual [Arabian U.S. Open](#). To start, the Arabian Mounted Native Costume class portrayed the magic and romance of the Arabian horse as ancestors of modern day light breeds.

The performance division also included classes in Hunter Pleasure Pro/Am, Western Pleasure Pro/Am, and Country English Pleasure Pro/AM. Junior Mares, Junior Stallions, Senior Mares, and Senior Stallions were then presented in-hand to highlight the horses as desirable breeding stock based on their conformation and shape. Gold, Silver, and Bronze Champions were awarded for each of the classes offered.

The gold medal winner of the Mounted Native Costume class for the second year in a row was HL Sanction, owned by Hawk Haven Farms and exhibited by Cathy Vecsey. At an incredible 27 years of age, the beautiful Arabian, bred by Jayne Solberg, displayed the bloodlines of sire The Chief Justice and dam Overlook Seratifa. The silver medal was awarded to Captain Courageous PA, owned by Madison Fernandes and Krystal Duarte, and exhibited by Kayleigh Meyer.

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This year, performance classes were ridden Pro/Am style, with the exception of the Mounted Native Costume class. Pro/Am allows professional horsemen and women to ride the horses the first direction of the class, while seasoned amateurs rode the second way - proving that teamwork is successful in the show ring and representing the bond and relationship between horse, professional and amateur.

In the Country English Pleasure Pro/Am class, Sally Wheeler Maier returned to the RCPHS for the second year in a row, and also rode Captain Courageous PA. Maier is a hometown New York City resident, living just blocks away from Central Park, and was excited to return for the second annual Arabian U.S. Open.

"It is thrilling to be back. It was so much fun last year and just as beautiful this year," Maier stated. "It is a perfect setting, and we really have an exciting, showy breed. They are a loving, beautiful horse. They have such beautiful features. I think that starting out with the costume class was great with them really in their element. It was a great evening and a great showcase for the Arabian breed."

Katie Russell flew in from California with her horse Ariya Encore to compete in the Hunter Pleasure Pro/Am class at RCPHS for the first time and had a fantastic experience.

"This is my first time here, and I feel blessed to be here," Russell stated. "I think it is pretty amazing to be over 55 and be here competing. Most people have things that they say are their glory days, and I feel like I made a glory day today. This is something pretty amazing to do. We have such a great horse, and a great breed, that I can be out there doing something that I will remember and cherish for the rest of my life. This is a dream come true. I went in the arena, and I looked around and thought, 'Wow!' We have the best breed of horses that can do so many disciplines. It was an amazing experience."

Judge Steve Lieblang also commented on the evening's competition. He remarked, "Being added into the RCPHS with the Arabians is absolutely amazing. It is an incredible opportunity to get some wonderful exposure. It is great for people who are not normally exposed to Arabian horses to actually see them compete. I think the horses that we had tonight were extremely high-quality, and everyone did an absolutely incredible job."

Among the night's wins, competition included three gold medals for handler Michael Byatt. Byatt held Quintessa Partners LLC's Aria Quintessa in-hand to win the Junior Mare Halter class. He also led Quintessa Partners LLC's Aria Qatars Angel to a win in the Senior Mare Halter class. Byatt then concluded the evening with a win holding Aria Impresario Holdings LLC's Aria Impresario in the Senior Stallion halter class.

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Andrew Sellman was the handler for Mulawa Arabian Stud's Vangelis MI to win the Junior Stallion Halter class. Natalie Jones and Anna Redmond rode Wolf Springs Ranches Inc.'s C Hondo to the gold medal in the Hunter Pleasure Pro/Am class. Rob Bick and Janie Wasilewski guided J Frank and Sara R. Chisholm's PA Kid Khan to victory in the Western Pleasure Pro/Am class, and Joel Kiesner and Alexa Cohn rode I Ask LLC's Afires Style to a win in the Country English Pleasure Pro/Am class.

Wednesday's competition was a beautiful display of the Arabian breed and just the start of the 2016 Rolex Central Park Horse Show. Competition continues through Sunday, September 25, with more multi-discipline equestrian sport for jumpers, dressage, and hunters. For more information, visit [www.centralparkhorshow.com](http://www.centralparkhorshow.com).

### **Final Results: Arabian U.S. Open**

#### **Arabian Mounted Native Costume**

Place Entry # Horse Exhibitor Owner

Gold- 103 HL Sanction, Cathy Vecsey, Hawk Haven Farms

Silver- 104 Captain Courageous PA, Kayleigh Meyer, Madison Fernandes and Krystal Duarte

Bronze- 101 Squeezebox, Mary Elizabeth, Kelly Mary Elizabeth Kelly

#### **Arabian Junior Mare Halter**

Place Entry # Horse Exhibitor Owner

Gold- 105 Aria Quintessa, Michael Byatt, Quintessa Partners LLC

Silver- 106 Fascination J, Jeff Schall, Daria L. Stransky and Lawrence Jerome

#### **Arabian Hunter Pleasure Pro/Am**

Place Entry # Horse Exhibitor Owner

Gold- 110 C Hondo, Natalie Jones and Anna Redmond, Wolf Springs Ranches Inc.

Silver- 111 Royal T Phorte, Justin Cowden and Tom Hansen, Theresa Lungwitz

Bronze- 108 Ariya Encore, Cynthia Burkman and Katie Russell, The Russell Family Trust

#### **Arabian Junior Stallion Halter**

Place Entry # Horse Exhibitor Owner

Gold- 113 Vangelis MI, Andrew Sellman, Mulawa Arabian Stud

Silver- 112 Wortex Kalliste, Ted Carson, S.A.R.L. Kalliste Arabians

Bronze- 114 CTJ Kuduro, Austin Boggs, Colton Jacobs

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### **Arabian Western Pleasure Pro/Am**

Place Entry # Horse Exhibitor Owner

Gold- 116 PA Kid Khan, Rob Bick and Janie Wasilewski, J Frank and Sara R. Chisholm

Silver- 135 Possession PGA, Carolyn Schroeder and Nan Harley, Nan Harley

Bronze- 115 Holdin Aces, Tommy Garland and Joelle Wright, Joelle and Robert Wright

### **Arabian Senior Mare Halter**

Place Entry # Horse Exhibitor Owner

Gold- 119 Aria Qatars Angel, Michael Byatt, Quintessa Partners LLC

Silver- 121 Anna Marie BHF, Andrew Sellman, Anthony Marino Sr. and Anthony Marino Jr.

Bronze- 120 Casttaspell, David Botha, Angela Sellman

### **Arabian Country English Pleasure Pro/Am**

Place Entry # Horse Exhibitor Owner

Gold- 125 Afires Style, Joel Kiesner and Alexa Cohn, I Ask LLC

Silver- 126 Ames Inspiration, Leah Golladay and Lara Ames, Cedar Ridge Arabians

Bronze- 122 Afireandbrimstone SCA, Christine Ryan and Ashley Commissiong, Kenneth and Susan Knipe

### **Arabian Senior Stallion Halter**

Place Entry # Horse Exhibitor Owner

Gold- 129 Aria Impresario, Michael Byatt, Aria Impresario Holdings LLC

Silver- 130 Kavalle MI, Andrew Sellman, Joanne Gunabalan

Full results from the Arabian U.S. Open are available at [www.arabianhorseresults.com](http://www.arabianhorseresults.com) .

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AHA is a major equine association serving 84,000 Arabian, Half-Arabian and Anglo-Arabian horse owners across North America. AHA registers and maintains a database of more than one million Arabian, Half-Arabian and Anglo-Arabian horses. AHA produces championship events, recognizes over 400 Arabian horse shows and distance rides and provides activities, education, and programs that promote breeding and ownership.

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