



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Tryon International Equestrian Center Hosts Endurance Test Event in Preparation for the FEI World Equestrian Games Tryon 2018

By US Equestrian Communications Department

Last weekend, the Tryon International Equestrian Center (TIEC), host of the FEI World Equestrian Games (WEG) Tryon 2018, welcomed top endurance riders from around the world as they hosted the WEG Test Event CEI2*, TIEC's first-ever endurance ride. Nearly 75 horse-and-rider combinations contested the 120 kilometer distance, with 24 combinations completing the race.

Of the combinations that completed, four were Americans, including Heather Reynolds (Dunnellon, Fla.) and Dublin Hart's 11-year-old Arabian mare RTR Rimfires Etta; Ellen Olson (La Motte, Iowa) and her seven-year-old Arabian gelding Noslos Tuff Enuff; Kelsey Russell (Williston, Fla.) and Wendy MacCoubrey and Valerie Kanavy's eight-year-old Arabian gelding Fireman Gold; and Melody Blittersdorf (Morriston, Fla.) and her 18-year-old Arabian gelding Synthetic. Full results can be found [here](#).



Becky Pearman Photography

"The venue is wonderful and a lot of forethought has gone into the planning for our discipline," said U.S. Endurance Team Chef d'Equipe Mark Dial. "We know aspects of the endurance portion [of WEG] will change between now and September, but we look forward to seeing those improvements. For being a new course, it is extremely doable, but the degree of difficulty will be affected by the weather and the footing."



Kelsey Russell and Fireman Gold (Becky Pearman Photography)

The sport of endurance, including the WEG Test Event CEI2*, focuses on ensuring that the equine athletes are sound, healthy, and able to compete following each of the four loops contested in the race. A vet check at the end of each loop ensures that the horse trots sound, his metabolic functions are responding properly to offered food and water, and close attention is paid to how quickly the horse's heartbeat returns to normal. The U.S. Endurance Team [applicants](#) for WEG are conditioning and preparing their horses for the Games's 160 kilometer race.

"Our horses are used to terrain that is similar to what we rode here at the test event," said Dial. "We have been working with the WEG applicants to identify areas near them to train. The applicants will continue to train on similar terrain in an effort to prepare and condition their horses for WEG. We

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want to make sure that these horses are sound and properly prepared to compete come September – our goal is to finish as a team, with the welfare of these horses as a top priority.

“We are looking forward to the Games and being able to compete at home,” continues Dial. “Thank you to the organizing committee, the officials, Jan Stevens, Sue Phillips, and their team, as well as all of the volunteers for putting on a great test event!”

The final observation event for the U.S. Endurance Team applicants will take place during the Biltmore Challenge, May 3-6. Combinations will have the opportunity to attend Ft. Howes in Montana, June 8-11, through a waiver process, if additional qualification is needed. View the complete list of [selection requirements](#) for the U.S. Endurance Team.

The U.S. Endurance Team will be named no later than July 13, 2018.

Stay up to date on the U.S. Endurance Team by following USA Endurance on [Facebook](#) and US Equestrian on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#). Use #USAEndurance and #Tryon2018.

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