



THE UNITED STATES PONY CLUBS, INC. PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – PHOTOS AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST

Press Contact: Shelley Mann, Shelley@PonyClub.org

Pony Club: www.ponyclub.org, 859-254-7669

Pony Club Championships East A Success

August 7, 2018 (Lexington, KY) – Pony Club members returned to Tryon International Equestrian Center for the USPC Charles Owen 2018 Championships East, presented by Flair, LLC and Airowear July 25 – 29, 2018. Members competed on the same grounds that where the FEI World Equestrian Games will be held in September.

The event brought more than 500 competitors together representing twenty-six regions to compete in Dressage, Eventing, Games, Polocrosse, Show Jumping, Tetrathlon, and Quiz. A large group of Pony Club leaders, volunteers, parents and friends helped to organize and staff the days of competition.

“I had so much fun competing in this year’s USPC Championships East. Tryon International Equestrian Center is an impressive venue that has so many opportunities for spectating and competing. One of my favorite things this year was that polocrosse was playing right outside the event barns. I have never seen a polocrosse match and it was so much fun watching in the mornings while I got ready for my rides. That is what I love about TIEC, all the disciplines are competing so closely so the competitors have to opportunity to watch other disciplines that we may not always have the chance to see regularly.” Said Eventing competitor Micaela Forsyth (H-HM/H-Traditional, Eastern Pennsylvania Region & National Youth Board Member).

In addition to the traditional competition, twenty-eight Pony Club members brought their Off-The-Track Thoroughbreds to participate in the New Vocations Pony Club Challenge competition in four different disciplines. Seven members competed in Eventing, twelve in Show Jumping, nine in Dressage of which, two rode Western Dressage. Members used their horsemanship skills to retrain their adopted mounts; over the weekend they were judged on performances in the ring as well as their Pony Club Horse Management skills in the barns. Caitlin Deisler (C-1 Traditional/HM, Red River Region) navigated Mach Seven to win the Eventing Division. Keely Bechtol (H-B/C-2 Traditional/C-3 Show Jumping, Midsouth Region) piloted Why Not Whiskey to top honors in the Show Jumping Division. Savannah Raney (H-B/C-1 Flat/C-1 Dressage,

Southern California Region) rode Jackson Square to take home the blue in the Dressage and Rhian Cline (C-1 HM/C-1 Western, Heartland Region) rode Conquest Neighplam to win the Western Dressage Division.

For a full list of results by discipline, please visit www.ponyclub.org. There was great competition in dressage, evening, quiz, show jumping and tetrathlon but the President's Cup competition sponsored by Hero Kids Foundation was the highlight event during the *Saturday Nights Lights* evening at Tryon International Equestrian Center. Switchblade team hoisted the trophy Saturday night. Team Members include: Captain Cora Raniowski (C-1, Old Dominion Region), Jess Bradley-Johnson (C-2, Eastern Pennsylvania Region), MacKenzie Raniowski (D-3, Old Dominion Region), and Azaria Smallwood (D-3, Eastern Pennsylvania Region).

Teams in each discipline were judged on their horsemanship skills at various points during the competition. Turnout Inspection ensured that the horse or pony was well-groomed and reflected regular care and that tack fitted properly. After each ride, Turn Back Inspections ensured that the young riders properly groomed their horses and cleaned their tack and equipment. In addition, each team worked together to properly equip their team tack room, which included a utility kit, first aid and veterinary care kit, extra tack and safety equipment.

About Pony Club—The United States Pony Clubs, Inc. was founded in 1954 as a nonprofit national youth organization to teach riding and horsemanship through a formal educational program. There are approximately 10,000 Pony Club members in over 600 clubs and riding centers throughout the country. Many of the nation's top equestrians, including several of our Olympic team members, business professionals, government leaders and career military officers, have roots in Pony Club. Youth members range in age from as young as 4 through age 25. Pony Club also offers educational opportunities to a growing number of adults through Horsemasters membership. www.ponyclub.org.