

2019 Massachusetts Horsemen's Council Days of Champions Medal Finals

The 38th annual celebration of the Massachusetts Horsemen's Councils "Days of Champions"



Huntseat Medal Finals was held September 27th - 29th at the Three County Fairground in Northampton, MA. Competition for over 150 Juniors and 100 plus Adult Amateurs was tight with a few new, young stars rising to the top over the three days. Show Manager Tom Hern and Show Chair Felicia Knowles, along with a wonderful support crew produced another smoothly run, well attended finals.

Thursday offered warmups over the afternoon plus an informative **USHJA Zone 1** hosted

Educational Forum: Equitation Strategies clinic with renown judges Robin Rost-Brown and Otis Brown. As part of this year's panel of judges, including Irving Evans and Scott Alder, the course designer, Mr. and Ms. Brown delivered timely tips from the judges view for the large turnout followed by an informative Q and A session. View the Productions East Media filmed session available on the MHC Facebook page.



*USHJA Clinic with Judges
Robin R. and Otis Brown*

The Exhibitors Welcome party, one of two dinners catered by Spoleto's Restaurant of Northampton, was held in the arena in conjunction with the clinic. The great food and beverages were a welcome treat for everyone at the end of a busy day and provided for a great meet and greet.

Friday dawned with morning mist as over 100 Adult amateurs prepared for their big day. The



*2019 MHC DOC Adult Over 30
Medal Champion, Kelsey E. Leerkes*

courses were interesting and technical, using side, diagonal, and center line jumps to test the rider's eye with multiple stride options. The 42 Over 30 Adults kicked off the morning with **Kelsey E. Leerkes** who rides with Nora Hanlon, placing third in her Open Eq and first round of the Medal, moving up to first after the second round and staying there to win the test and the Woodbridge Farm sponsored **2019 MHC DOC Adult Over 30 Medal Champion**. Riding strongly all morning, **Melissa G. Hubbard** placed in Reserve Champion.

Between rounds **Kenna LaBeau** was announced as the 2019 **Sportsmanship Award** winner, and the 2019 **Horse of the Year** went to "**Saint Sylvester**". Next up came the 61 younger 18-30 Adults, finishing with a test of the top seven requiring what turned out to be a killer counter canter after a diagonal fence.



*Figure 12019 MHC DOC
Adult 18-30 Champion, Casey Zuraitis*

Riding consistently all day and moving up from third in the call back to win the Back Bay Farm sponsored **2019 Adult 18-30 Medal**, **Casey Zuraitis** trained by Mary Drueding, rode to the top. **Rori Z. Fiebert** moved up the standings to win Reserve.

Junior Day began with beautiful, sunny (for a change) weather for the 93 junior competitors preparing in the warmup rings. Competition between the top five was close all the way with **Miles Holman**, who trains with David Oliynyk, riding to the top of the first round and staying there to win the **2019 MHC Days of Champions Junior Medal** sponsored by Corinthian Insurance of Medway, MA. Consistent riding moved **Jessica Ward**, who won her Open Eq, up from fifth in round one to second in the call back and win **Reserve Champion**.



*2019 MHC DOC Junior Medal
Champion, Miles Holman*

Between rounds, the well-earned 2019 MHC DOC **Person of the Year** award was given to **Kristen Bumpus**



*2019MHC DOC Mini Medal
Champion, Gwendolyn Romiza*

and receiving this year's MHC Days of Champions **Sportsmanship Award** is **Kenna La Beau**.

Sunday brought out 50 Mini Medal exhibitors on horses and ponies starting with Open Eq 11 and under. **Gwendolyn Romiza**, a student of Kathy Fletcher placed in the top ten of her Open Eq under 11, was called back fourth in round one, on top in round two and stayed there to win the **2019 MHC Days of Champion Mini Medal** sponsored by Stonymead Farm. Called back second in round two, **Lainey Rockacy** won the

Mini Medal Reserve.

Please visit the Massachusetts Horsemen's Council on Facebook and the web at www.MaHorseCouncil.com and professional photographer JessWindhurst.com