



**GALWAY DOWNS**

*For Immediate Release*

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Photos Available Upon Request

### ***The Classic Format Thrives At Galway Downs International Three-Day Event***

Temecula, Calif., Sept. 28, 2009— From 1912 to 2000, the Olympic eventing medals were decided with the classic format: dressage on day 1, a four-phase speed-and-endurance test on day 2 (two phases of roads and tracks, a steeplechase phase and then the cross-country course), and show jumping on day 3. Three-day events all around the world used this format until after the 2000 Olympics, when European eventing moved to the short format for all three-day events.

But the Galway Downs International Three-Day Event has always been at the center of a distinctly American movement.

The 2009 competition will mark the 11th consecutive year that Galway Downs has hosted the classic-format CCI1\*. In 2008, organizer Robert Kellerhouse offered West Coast riders a training-level three-day event for the first time, and both

of the popular divisions will return on Oct. 30-Nov. 1, helping to preserve the sport of eventing as it's been contested for nearly a century.

More than 60 horses are expected to compete in these two divisions during the Galway Downs International Horse Trials, at the Southern California Equestrian Center in Temecula. Kellerhouse is so confident about the future of the classic format at Galway Downs that he built new steeplechase jumps this summer.

The CCI1\* will feature \$3,000 in prize money and the USEF Western National Junior/Young Rider Team Championship. The training level three-day event will include a series of educational seminars and clinics for all competitors, including schooling on the steeplechase course with cross-country course designer Ian Stark (a three-time Olympic medalist from Great Britain) on Friday.

Before they reach Stark's cross-country course on Saturday, the horses in the classic-format CCI1\* will have proven their endurance by trotting over the two phases of roads and tracks (totaling 5.5 miles) and proven their speed over a 1.25-mile steeplechase course. The training level three-day event will cover about 1.75 fewer miles on roads and tracks and have a three-quarter-mile steeplechase phase.

"I've been eventing for over 45 years, and my fondest memories of eventing were at classic-format three-day events," said Marilyn Payne, the president of the ground jury for this Galway Downs International Three-Day Event. "The thrill of steeplechase, the serenity of roads and tracks with just you and your horse, and

the unbelievable rush you get coming off the cross-country course. You feel like you and your horse have conquered the world!”

Galway Downs, a member event of the U.S. Eventing Association’s Classic Three-Day Event Series, is one of four U.S. events offering the classic-format CCI1\* in 2009 and one of 12 U.S. events offering the training-level three-day event. Galway Downs is the only event on the West Coast to offer both levels. The Hagyard Midsouth Three-Day Event in Lexington, Ky., is the only other event in the United States to offer both divisions.

Said USEA President Kevin Baumgardner, “That’s a real testament to the vision and commitment of Robert Kellerhouse and his staff. Galway Downs is the ideal setting for a fall West Coast classic-format event. The facility—including the beautifully groomed racetrack where steeplechase takes place—is simply magnificent, and Ian Stark’s cross-country courses have been rightly praised for their emphasis on a galloping, rhythmic ‘feel’ that goes hand-in-hand with the philosophy behind the classic format.”

The Galway Downs staff also works closely with the leaders of the Long Format Club, an organization formed by a group of dedicated eventers just this spring to foster the continuation of events like Galway Downs. Marilyn Payne believes strongly in the goals and mission shared by the two groups.

“I think that it’s absolutely mandatory for any rider aspiring to the upper levels take part in a classic-format three-day event. Riders learn about conditioning, training and good basic horsemanship,” said Payne.

“You develop a real partnership with your horse and come away from the competition with a deep feeling of accomplishment and appreciation for such an amazing animal. Even if you don't complete the event, you learn how to deal with setbacks and disappointments and you still have a great feeling of accomplishment about the journey itself.”

The classic-format three-day events won't be the only exciting competitions during the Galway Downs International Three-Day Event. The CCI2\*—featuring competitors from the United States, Canada, Mexico and other countries—and the short-format CCI1\* will give fans a chance to glimpse international stars of the future.

For all four of these competitions, dressage will be held on Friday (Oct. 30), cross-country on Saturday (Oct. 31), and the decisive show jumping on Sunday (Nov. 1).

General admission for the Galway Downs International Three-Day Event is \$5 in advance, \$8 at the gate. VIP tickets—which include seating in the ringside tent, lunch and a full selection of beverages—are also available for \$55 per day in advance. For advance reservations, go to [www.galwaydowns.com](http://www.galwaydowns.com).

More than a dozen generous sponsors provide prize money, prizes and other support to the Galway Downs International Three-Day Event. Those sponsors include: American Wood Fibers, Auburn Laboratories Inc., Custom Saddlery, CWD Saddlery, Doug Hannum Equine Therapy, Equine Insurance of California, Moxie Equestrian,

Mushroom-Matrix, Riding's Publications Inc., SmartPak Equine, Sonoma Saddle Shop, and Succeed Digestive Conditioning Program.

For more information on the Galway Downs International Three-Day Event, visit [www.galwaydowns.com](http://www.galwaydowns.com) or call 951-303-0405. To learn more about eventing, visit the U.S. Eventing Association's website ([www.useventing.com](http://www.useventing.com)).

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