



*For Immediate Release*

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### *Galway Downs Is Home To California's Biggest Events*

Temecula, Calif., March 12, 2010 – The Galway Downs International Horse Trials, on March 26-28, is the largest and most important eventing competition on the West Coast every spring. The Galway Downs International Three-Day Event, on Nov. 4-7, has long been the largest and most prestigious eventing competition on the West Coast every autumn, and this year it will become even bigger and more prestigious.

Since 2003 the Galway Downs International Horse Trials have been designated a three-star event (CIC3\*) by the Federation Equestre Internationale, and now the Galway Downs International Three-Day Event has also earned the three-star designation (CCI3\*) for the first time. Organizer Robert Kellerhouse and course designer Ian Stark, the U.S. Eventing Association's 2009 Course Designer of the Year, will introduce their plans to upgrade the course to riders, sponsors and fans during this month's competition.

No other U.S. competition west of the Mississippi River has ever previously held a CCI3\*. Only three other CCI3\* events are held in all of North America.

"We're very excited to bring this level of competition to Galway Downs, especially for our riders based here in the West. It might even prove to be a unique experience for some of the East Coast's elite riders looking for an event with a West Coast flavor," said Kellerhouse. "I believe our staff, course designer and volunteers are ready for the increased challenges the CCI3\* will bring, and we're all looking forward

to hosting this very special event for our riders, sponsors, supporters and the horse owners.”

Since its inception in 1999, the Galway Downs International Three-Day Event has offered competition at the CCI2\* (intermediate) and CCI1\* (preliminary) levels. In 2008, Kellerhouse added the extremely popular training-level three-day event. Adding the CCI3\* means that the Galway Downs November event will now offer three-day event competition at all levels except the CCI4\*, making it the only competition in the world to offer such a broad range of three-day event competition.

Marilyn Payne, one of America’s most respected international eventing judges, has officiated at Galway Downs in the past and will be officiating here this month. She was a judge at the 2008 Olympics and will be the president of the eventing ground jury at the Alltech 2010 FEI world Equestrian Games in Kentucky in September. She says that Galway Downs compares most favorably to event sites around the world.

“Galway Downs has excellent stabling, warm-up and competition arenas, superior to many other sites. It is also an excellent venue for the public to easily observe all three phases,” said Payne. “Due to the climate, the terrain and footing are different than other three-star and four-star sites, but I’m sure they’ll produce a course comparable to other three-star competitions, both here and abroad.”

Still, Kellerhouse and his staff have work to do to get ready for this new, higher level of competition. “We’re in the process of designing and developing the new areas of the property where the CCI3\* course will travel,” said Kellerhouse. “Ian Stark, who’s designed our cross-country course since 2007, and course builder Bert Wood and his crew are thinking of all kinds of ways to spend serious money to make this our best effort yet.”

The riders who make Galway Downs the West Coast’s No. 1 destination event every March and November are confident that the CCI3\* will fulfill their expectations. Olympic silver medalist Gina Miles, of Atascadero, Calif., predicts that the new CCI3\* will be a boon to West Coast riders.

“I see the addition of the CCI3\* in California as similar to when Rolex Kentucky upgraded from a CCI3\* to a CCI4\* in 1998. Prior to that, riders had to make the huge commitment to travel to England to compete in a CCI4\*. Now that Kentucky is a CCI4\*, we have so many more four-star horses and riders,” said Miles.

“I think the same will happen in California. Riders who didn't have the means to travel to the East Coast to contest a CCI3\* will now have that opportunity, and we’ll see many more three-star riders on the West Coast,” Miles added.

Payne agrees that the addition of the CCI3\* at Galway Downs will positively affect eventing on the West Coast and throughout the United States.

“It will be a great asset to American eventing, particularly in the West. It will be an opportunity to showcase our sport to a wider public, and it will also help to educate and expand the current list of upper-level riders,” she said.

The Galway Downs International Horse Trials begins on Friday, March 26, with the dressage phase. Horses and riders will tackle the cross-country course on Saturday afternoon and will return on Sunday, March 28, for the climactic show jumping phase.

General admission for the Galway Downs International Horse Trials is \$5 for Friday and Sunday, and \$8 Saturday in advance and \$10 at the gate. Patrons’ tickets—which include seating in the ringside tent, lunch and a full selection of beverages—are 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 Horse Trials. Those sponsors include: Point Two Air Jackets, Equine Insurance, CWD, Adequan USEA Gold Cup Series, Auburn Labs, Advanced Protection Formula, Revere Saddlery, Big Horse Feed, Embassy Suites Hotel Temecula, Doug Hannum Equine Therapy, Riding’s Publications Inc., SmartPak Equine, and Sonoma Saddle Shop.

For more information on the Galway Downs International Horse Trials, 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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