



For Immediate Release

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Stark's Course Ready for Galway Downs International Three-Day Event

Temecula, Calif., Oct. 23 – Ian Stark, the three-time Olympic silver medalist from Great Britain who designs the cross-country course for the Galway Downs International Three-Day Event on Oct. 30-Nov. 2, predicts that his 2008 course will “have a new look, and I'm quite sure that it's going to decide who wins.”

Stark, 54, made his U.S. course-designing debut at the 2007 Galway Downs International Three-Day Event, and last March he also designed the course for the Galway Downs International Horse Trials. At both events, Stark's cross-country challenges drew rave reviews from the riders who competed over them.

Gina Miles, who rode to the individual silver medal at the Hong Kong Olympics after winning at Galway Downs in March, declared, “I loved Ian's new course. He really gave us some new tests.”

And Jennifer Wooten, who finished second to Miles in March to become a reserve rider for the Olympic team, said, “The course was great, a lot of fun. I felt myself and my horses becoming more and more confident as we went around.”

Stark, known as “The Flying Scotsman” when he was competing, believes that “forward” and “flow” are the two most important words when it comes to building or riding cross-country courses, especially for the two-star and one-star levels held at the Galway Downs International Three-Day Event.

“Ian put his stamp on it. It was a big, forward course,” said Canadian Olympian Hawley Bennett, who’s ridden at Galway Downs for many years. “I was nervous about everything because the fences were so different. But afterward I wondered, ‘Why did I get nervous?’ I think the course rode far better than people thought it would.”

Last winter, Stark and course builder Bert Wood undertook some major earthmoving to create new challenges on the flat terrain of the Southern California Equestrian Center in Temecula. Stark said they haven’t engaged in any major groundwork since then, but that he expects to do so once again this winter, when rains and cooler weather make the work considerably easier. Eventually, Stark said, “I’d quite like to turn the whole thing around and run the course backward from the way it goes now.”

A total of 19 horses will start over Stark’s two-star course on Saturday, while 51 horses will start over the one-star course, and another 35 will start in the training-level three-day event being run for the first time at Galway Downs. All told, 320 horses are entered to start at the Galway Downs International Three-Day Event and Horse Trials.

In honor of the 10th anniversary of the Galway Downs International Three-Day Event, a special commemorative poster will be available at the event and on the Galway Downs website, for \$4. Galway Downs is the longest-running CCI** (international two-star three-day event) currently held in North America

General admission for the Galway Downs International Three-Day Event is \$8 in advance, \$10 at the gate. Patron tickets – which include seating in the ringside tent, lunch and a full selection of beverages – are also available for \$55 per day or \$150 for the weekend, in advance. For advance reservations, go to www.galwaydowns.com.

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