



For Immediate Release

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Galway Downs International Event Kicks Off USEA Gold Cup Series For West Coast Riders

Temecula, Calif., Feb. 1 —Riders from as many as seven nations will be contesting the international divisions of the Galway Downs International Horse Trials on March 28-30. And the three-star and the two-star divisions will be the first Pacific League events in the U.S. Eventing Association's year-long Gold Cup Series.

Modeled after NASCAR and other thriving sports series, the Gold Cup Series is based on a cumulative points system, with horse-and-rider pairs earning points, prize money and prizes at each of the 13 designated events in the three leagues across the country. □□The Gold Cup Series runs at the intermediate (two-star) and advanced (three-star) levels, with the winners of the two Gold Cup divisions being the pairs that earn the most points at the end of the year.

In 2007 the champions earned a grand prize Gold Cup trophy, prize money, and World Equestrian Brands prize packages. The Gold Cup champion at the advanced received a check from the USEA for

\$6,000, and the intermediate champion received a check for \$4,000. The reserve champions received gift certificates from Bit of Britain saddlery worth \$3,500 in the advanced division and \$2,000 in the intermediate division.

Galway Downs Organizer Robert Kellerhouse expects approximately 75 horses to start in the three-star and two-star divisions and in the third international division, the one-star. The riders competing in these divisions will be representing the United States, Canada, Mexico, France, Great Britain, Germany and South Africa.

In previous years, the Galway Downs three-star division has been a qualifier for the FEI World Cup Final. It's not a qualifier this year because there is no World Cup Final in 2008.

"The Gold Cup Series absolutely puts us in the national spotlight," said Kellerhouse. "It's the only current series that gives our West Coast riders the chance to truly compete against their East Coast counterparts, and we're honored to be a part of it for the fourth year in a row."

But the Gold Cup Series won't be the only attraction at Galway Downs this March. On Friday, fans who'd like to take a two-mile hike and see the cross-country jumps up close with the man who created them can walk the course with course designer Ian Stark, 53. The four-time Olympic silver medalist from Great Britain will explain why and how he's built the elements of the cross-country test that will determine the winners of the international divisions.

Besides watching the horses gallop and jump around the Southern California Equestrian Center on Los Corralitos Road, fans will also get to see a special exhibition by about a dozen farriers from the Greater San Diego Farriers Association. These modern-day blacksmiths will be creating much more than just horseshoes. They'll also be crafting a wide variety of spectacular, one-of-a-kind ornamental metal work, much of which will be for sale at the event.

And on Sunday, as part of the opening ceremonies for the climactic show jumping phase, the masters and huntsman of the nearby Santa Fe Hunt will parade their hounds in a thrilling demonstration of the working relationship between riders, horses and foxhounds.

General admission for the Galway Downs International Horse Trials is \$8 in advance, \$10 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.

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

[Reminder to all media representatives: Requests for media credentials must be received no later than March 21. Contact the press officers.]