

Tryon Riding & Hunt Club Launches 42nd Annual Horse Trials Oct 21-22 at FENCE

The Tryon Riding & Hunt Club launches its 42nd consecutive Horse Trials on Saturday, October 21st and 22nd at FENCE with over 125 riders hailing from 11 surrounding states.

Divisions for Preliminary, Training, Novice, Beginner Novice, and Starter will be offered.

New for this year's event is the creation of the College Team Challenge Cup with a new permanent trophy. For 2017, TRHC has placed special emphasis on inviting college teams to compete and be the first to put their school's name on the permanent trophy. The winning team will also receive a large decorative ceramic plate as well as four smaller individual plates all donated by The Farm House in Tryon. Teams from University of Georgia, USC Aiken, NC State, Florida State, Randolph-Macon College, and CSH have entered.

A Horse Trial requires every rider to demonstrate their and their horse's ability in dressage, cross country galloping and jumping, and stadium jumping.

The event will kick off with Dressage at 8am on Saturday in three rings on the equestrian side of the complex. Judges will be Amanda Miller (Clayton, NC), Nanci Lindroth (Jackson Springs, NC), and our own local Margaret Freeman.

Cross country will start at 10am with the Preliminary riders taking on a course stretching 3120 meters across 19 jumps designed by local Landrum expert Gregg Schlappi. The other four divisions will follow with progressively shorter courses and fewer jumps. The intro level Starters will traverse just 1400 meters over 14 jumps. All divisions will have to navigate jump combinations at the newly designed water obstacle. The course will be decorated in a holiday theme by Amy Barrington.

Stadium Jumping will begin at 8am on Sunday morning beginning with the higher divisions and riders jumping in reverse order of standings. The riders scoring highest in dressage and cross country will jump last. This ensures some tense rides by the leaders in each division as they go for the "double clear", a clean ride with no rails knocked over and quick enough to stay within the time allotment, to hold their positions. The stadium jumping course is designed by Chris Barnard from NY.

Top prizes are donated by The Farm House. The Trials are also supported from a safety standpoint by Tryon Equine Hospital, PEER, Polk County EMS, Polk County Sheriff Department, and Mick Doyle, Farrier.

A course walk scheduled for 4pm on Friday, October 20th is open to the public and will be led by our local 4* rider Eric Dierks and international 4* rider Doug Payne. Eric is a local competitor, trainer, and teacher based in Tryon, NC. He is heavily involved in Pony Club and rejuvenating retired Thoroughbreds for jumping competitions. Doug is one of the top 10 riders on the USEA's current annual leaderboard, recently placed 2nd at the American Eventing Championships at TIEC, and just returned from England after competing in one of the top CCI*** at Blenheim.