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REINER



2014 NRHA EUROPEAN DERBY
OPEN CHAMPIONS

**Cira Baeck &
Colonels Shining Gun**



{ OPEN DIVISION }

KL Performance Horses Open Derby

TOUGH COMPETITION HIGHLIGHTS EUROPE'S BEST RIDERS AND HORSES.

BY SIMONA DIALE, PHOTOGRAPHY BY ANDREA BONAGA

THE FOURTH EDITION OF THE NRHA EUROPEAN DERBY was once again held in Manerbio, Italy. Though only two weeks after the Alltech® FEI World Equestrian Games (Games) in Normandy, reiners made their way to the Palasturla to show in the event, which was open to 4-, 5-, 6-, and 7-year-old horses. Numbers were high with 50 entered in the Level (L) 4, 47 in the L3, 49 in the L2 and 26 in the L1 Open divisions, which is run in a qualifying go-round and finals. Though the NRHA European Nomination kicked in for the 5-year-old horses, the entries proved that the event is considered one not to be missed.

For the second year running, Sabine Lisec and Chuck Klipfel of KL Performance Horses (Austria) were the main sponsors of the Derby's Open division. "We just love this show," said Klipfel. "It gets better every year and it is a pleasure for us to be part of this growth."

"For us the fact that this show implements the NRHA European Medications Policy is important, and that is one of the main reasons that we are always happy to be sponsors," added Lisec. "Next year we will also be sponsoring the Austrian Maturity, which will offer \$150,000."

Level 4 Open Championship

The fact that NRHA Professional Cira Baeck riding Katarzyna Roleska's Colonels Shining Gun were on the Silver Medal winning Team Belgium in the 2014 edition of the World Equestrian Games (WEG) did not stop them from travelling to Italy, nor did it stop them in conquering the KL Performance Horses European Derby L4 Open championship!

They earned a spot in the finals after posting a 218.5 in the go-round and once Saturday night came around, Baeck was set on showing off the talent and the athletic ability of the 2007 stallion by Gunner and out of Shining Little Peach (by Shining Spark), bred by KC Performance Horses, LLC. With many a prestigious title to his name, the stallion a.k.a. 'Jojo' boasts \$80,270 NRHA Lifetime Earnings. When he entered the show pen, the score to beat was a 219.5: Baeck guided him through her trademark circles, his stops were right on and his spins set the house on fire. They closed their run with a 221 and con-

quered the Derby L4 Open division championship.

"This is a great show and the atmosphere is fantastic," said Baeck following her win. "The crowd loves this horse and he truly is one in a million! Less than a year ago we were in Oklahoma City showing in the \$75,000-added World Championship Shootout, less than two weeks ago we were at the Games and here he is taking home yet another title. I let him rest a lot in between shows; he goes out in the pasture since he can go out of his 'house' when he wants to and because he knows his job, I don't have to ride him much."

Baeck was quick to thank owner Katarzyna Roleska, her sister Susy, her family and her boyfriend but there was one special 'legend' that has been part of her "reining life" since day one: Bill Horn. "I almost fell off my left turn and it was a really embarrassing moment. I thought 'oh my God, BH please help me, I don't want to fall off.' Well, I didn't fall and I am pretty darn sure he helped me out here tonight. Thanks, again, BH," added a teary-eyed Baeck.

Three horse-rider combinations, with a score of 219.5, tied



Cowboy's Magazine Award

A special prize was offered to the owner(s) of the L4 Open Champion, Katarzyna Roleska. Artist and non pro competitor Max Solinas of Italy donated the 'Cowboy's Magazine Award' sculpture, a hand-carved horse made out of one single piece of wood. "According to me, it takes a trio to make a champion: a horse, a rider and an owner," said Solinas. "The horses and riders are always in the limelight, the owners a little less, yet without them, none of this would happen. It was a pleasure and an honor, along with *Cowboy's Magazine*, to donate this carving to Katarzyna Roleska!"

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Andrea Boudry

Level 4 Open Champions: Cira Baek
and Colonels Shining Gun

L4 Reserve Co-Champion:
Grischa Ludwig and
Custom Del Cielo



L4 Reserve Co-Champion:
Morey Fisk and Chic Dreamn
Whizard

L4 Reserve Co-Champion:
Grischa Ludwig and
Lil Smokeing Gun



for the L4 Open Reserve championship: NRHA Professional Grischa Ludwig riding two horses—Custom Del Cielo (Custom Crome x Lena Del Cielo x Gallo Del Cielo) for owner Fabian Strebel and Lil Smokeing Gun (Smart Chic Olena x Playguns Smoking x Playgun), bred by Jim Babcock and owned by De Bruin Reining Horses; and NRHA Professional Morey Fisk aboard Chic Dreamn Whizard (Magnum Chic Dream x The Roan Whizard x Whizard Jac), bred by Saratoga Alfalfa Ranch/Cattle Co. and owned by Larissa Rizzi.

Level 3 Open Championship

Dunnit Like A Master (Master Snapper x Justanother Dun It x Hollywood Dun It) was born in the U.S. and was purchased by Impresa Agricola Cuoghi (Roberto Cuoghi), who also owns his sire, as a yearling. He was shown in the NRHA Futurity in 2012 by Bobby Barko and was shipped to Italy as a



L4 Open 5th
place tie: Cody
Sapergia and
Gotta Gold Chain



L4 Open 5th Place
tie and L3 Open
Champion: Kelly
Zweifel and Dunnit
Like A Master

4 year old. Kelly Zweifel and her husband, Pietro Artinghelli, have been showing him since. The 5-year-old stallion was bred by Lewisville Development LP. Zweifel went on to win the L3 qualifying go-round as well as the title and also tied for fifth place in the L4 Open after posting a 219. "I had a real nice run with my horse tonight, he's very quiet and wants to be good—we get along well and I knew that I had enough horse to win here. He's got plenty of talent," said Zweifel who has been away from the show pen in the past two years, moving back to the L3. "I had a baby boy, Nico, last year, who is now 20 months old, and Luca this year, who is now 6 months old so I've been in and out of the show pen for a while. It's good to be back!" Zweifel placed all three of her mounts in the open finals.

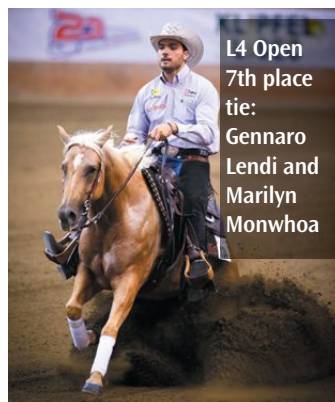
Taking the reserve championship with a score of 217 in this division was Guglielmo Fontana, riding Wimpys Smoking Gun (Gunner x Wimpys Little Scoot x Wimpys Little Step) for owners Golden Paint Ranch.

Level 2 Open Championship

Aboard Smart Whiz Delmaso, a 2008 stallion by Easy Otie Whiz and out of Playin Dress Up (by Smart Chic Olena), bred by Renata Vanzo of Italy and owned by Stefano Scardina, Giovanni Masi won the L2 Open championship and took third place honors in the L3. The duo had already left their mark in the show pen after winning the L2 Open division as well as placing second in the L3 Open division at the IRHA/NRHA Derby this year. "My horse always gives me his heart," said the young trainer who turned to open competition last year. "I started showing him at the beginning of 2013 and we immediately got along. After a few months we were L2 Open Reserve Champions at the Italian Derby. Every time I show him he is amazing. Coming here I knew I had a good horse. Of course, I felt the pressure but I knew that if I stayed focused we could do it. When you are lucky enough to ride horses as this one, all you need to do is go in and trust them completely. I am truly grateful to the owners for trusting me with him and of course to my father, Filippo (Masi) who is always there to help me and cheer for me."

Aboard the 5-year-old gelding bred by Catherine Castel, Jac Whiz, France's Fabien Boiron took home both the L2 Open Reserve championship and the L1 Open. "I made a big mistake in the first stop in the qualifying round but I tried to do my best in the finals tonight and it went well even though I had a bobble in my spins," said Boiron. "This is my first time at the European Derby and it has been a great experience. I am really happy to have won with a horse 'made in France!'"

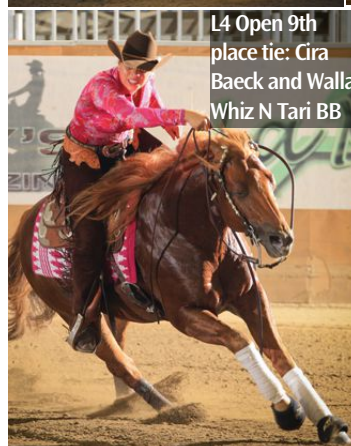
Boiron also took the reserve championship in the L2 Open division with the gelding by NRHA



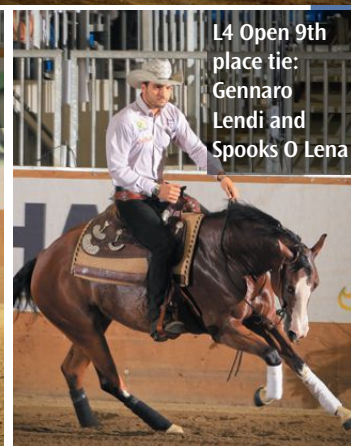
L4 Open
7th place
tie:
Gennaro
Lendi and
Marilyn
Monwhoa



L4 Open
7th tie:
Francesco
Martinotti
and
Rambo
Bo Sun



L4 Open 9th
place tie: Gira
Baek and Walla
Whiz N Tari BB



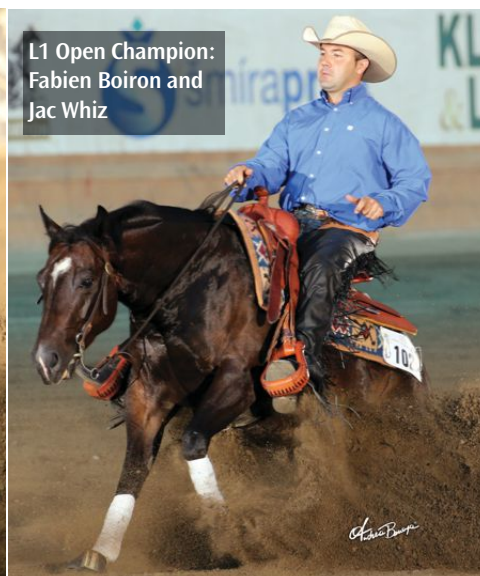
L4 Open 9th
place tie:
Gennaro
Lendi and
Spooks O Lena

Million Dollar Sire Conquistador Whiz and out of Honeys Melody Jac (by Mr Melody Jac), owned by Philippe Castel. Earlier in the year, Boiron won the Markel French Derby L4 and L2 Open divisions and the NRHA European Affiliate Limited Open and Intermediate Open championships.

Tying for the reserve championship, three points behind the winner were Silvia Venezia riding Topgun Showtime owned by Julianna Szoke and Marco De Piccoli riding Antaris-martin for owner Katharina King. ♦



L2 Open Champion:
Giovanni Masi and
Smart Whiz Delmaso



L1 Open Champion:
Fabien Boiron and
Jac Whiz