

A Look At The Farm Team:
**The 2009
Midwest Regional Academy Championships**

By Carol Clasby

There is a strong and growing academy program in the Midwest, which consistently fosters high quality entry-level competition. The academy program enables new riders and their families to stick a toe in the water and find out what this show horse business is all about. Essential to the industry, these “minor league” players gain ring experience while they practice their horsemanship and equitation skills. When they’re ready to join the “major leagues” they can hit the ground running. Last year, nearly 10 “recruits” graduated from the Midwest academy program and now show actively in performance and pleasure classes.

This year, academy riders — some returning and some brand new — from the Central States gathered in Columbia, Mo., on November 1 for the Midwest Regional Academy Championships. Missy Hughes, of Kansas City, Mo., was on hand to judge this year end finale. Janet Thompson, show organizer, stated, “I was overwhelmed with the quality of riders that all of the instructors put in the ring.”

After morning classes in both horsemanship and equitation, there was a break for lunch and for the championship riders to practice the required pattern. Several riders and instructors were out in the arena, walking the pattern and discussing the upcoming rides. A new level of intensity had definitely taken over the show grounds. That intensity hit a peak when Judge Hughes called for a second workout in the 11-13 WTC class to help her determine the winner between the top two riders. “I thought it was great that the academy judge put that much effort into the show and really challenged the kids and made them work for it — it was neat of her to do,” stated Valery Kron, whose rider, Brianne Goans, was named champion.

Congratulations to the following championship winners and their barns:

Richelle Perkins, Fairview Farms;



Isabel Gomper, Anna Clark, Melissa Richter, Columbia Equestrian Center



Kris Randall and Kennedy Payne.

Jessica Vaughn, LionHeart Riding Academy; Brianne Goans, Fairview Farms; Kennedy Payne, Columbia Equestrian Center; Linda Puyear, Abby Road Farm; Morgan Balentine, Abby Road Farm; Sydney Robbins, Timber

Hills Farm; Lora Becker, Greenwood Stables; Hannah Corbin, Columbia Equestrian Center; Isabel Gomper, Columbia Equestrian Center; Kelsey Bartlette, Saddlebrook Stables; Melissa Richter, Columbia Equestrian Center

The championship winners went home laden with goodies and special offers from Becker Brothers Equestrian Outfitters, Commotion! Consignment Riding Apparel, ModJods, *Saddle & Bridle* Magazine, Stephens College, Washburn Photography, and William Woods University.

Emulating the spirit of community so pervasive in this region, this year’s show commenced a new tradition in giving back. Spearheaded by Kate Coup Younker, who was capably assisted by her youth group, The Pride, three FUNraisers generated over \$400 in donations. The pig toss, won by Valery Kron, raised over \$200 for the University of Missouri – Columbia Veterinary Clinic. Valery was kind enough to donate back her cash prize and enjoyed the Mizzou-Baylor tickets she won. Lindy Ebling won the Junior pig toss. ModJods donated two pair of



The Pride from LionHeart Riding Academy.

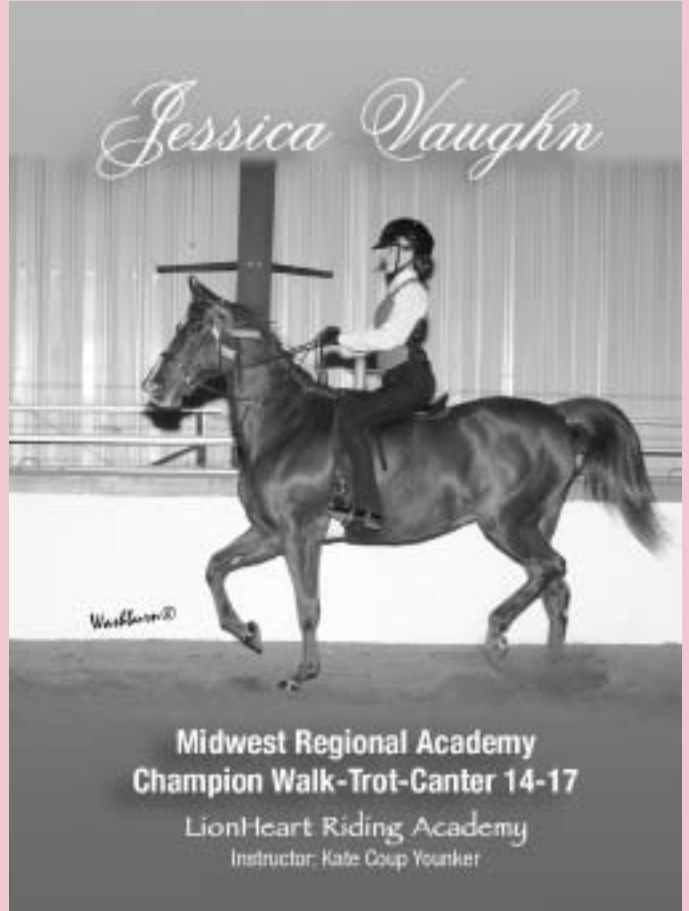


Valery Kron, Cheryl Perkins, Lindy Ebling, and Kate Younker.



Karissa Long, Kara German, Gwyneth Hamrah — Brenda Benner Stables.

their fashion-forward jodhpurs and a raffle was held, raising \$200 for the Pink Ribbon efforts of the Kansas City Royal. Christy Wilson and Elizabeth Bartlette were the winners. In addition,



a candy jar guessing game raised additional funds for the veterinary clinic. Lauren McDonald had the winning guess and took

home the jar full of treats.

Overall, the entire show was a winner — providing an opportunity for our area academy riders to showcase their talent and compete with other riders in this annual season-ending event and to join the community-conscious efforts of this industry. For a glimpse of the show horse industry's future, scout an academy class or two — you'll be impressed.

ACADEMY LEADLINE WALK/TROT/JOG

1. Nelia Todelbush 2. Lindy Ebling 3. Sophie Grace Miller 4. Brianna Basye

ACADEMY ADULT EXHIBITOR REINSMANSHIP

1. Allyson Ninemeyer

ACADEMY REINSMANSHIP CHAMPIONSHIP

1. Allyson Ninemeyer

ACADEMY SADDLE SEAT EQUITATION WTC ADULT

1. Richelle Perkins 2. Beth Holcomb 3. Daniell Paquette 4. Ricquel Eddy 5. Tonya Hamrah

ACADEMY SADDLE SEAT WTC ADULT HORSEMANSHIP

1. Beth Holcomb 2. Daniell Paquette 3. Ricquel Eddy 4. Tonya Hamrah

ACADEMY SADDLE SEAT EQUITATION 14-17 WTC

1. Karissa Long 2. Lindsay Berkowitz 3. Jessica Vaughn

ACADEMY SADDLE SEAT HORSEMANSHIP WTC 14-17

1. Jessica Vaughn 2. Lindsay Berkowitz 3. Karissa Long

ACADEMY SADDLE SEAT EQUITATION WTC 11-13

1. Brianne Goans 2. Sabrina Gruenendyk 3. Breeanne Wright 4. Morgan Ballentine 5. Kari Thompson

ACADEMY SADDLE SEAT HORSEMANSHIP WTC 11-13

1. Breeanne Wright 2. Morgan Ballentine 3. Sabrina Gruenendyk 4. Kari Thompson

ACADEMY WTC SADDLE SEAT EQUITATION 10 & UNDER

1. Kennedy Payne

ACADEMY HORSEMANSHIP WTC 10 & UNDER

1. Kennedy Payne

ACADEMY SADDLE SEAT EQUITATION WALK/TROT ADULT

1. Stephanie Davidson 2. Linda Puryear

ACADEMY SADDLE SEAT ADULT WALK/TROT HORSEMANSHIP

1. Linda Puryear 2. Stephanie Davidson

ACADEMY SADDLE SEAT WALK/TROT EQUITATION 10 & UNDER SEC A

1. Sydney Robbins 2. Cassie Downey 3. Gabby Snyder

ACADEMY SADDLE SEAT WALK/TROT EQUITATION 10 & UNDER SEC B

1. Lora Becker 2. Kristy Wilson 3. Ellie Wright

ACADEMY SADDLE SEAT WTC HORSEMANSHIP 11-13 SEC A

1. Sydney Robbins 2. Cassie Downey 3. Gabby Snyder

ACADEMY SADDLE SEAT WTC HORSEMANSHIP 11-13 SEC B

1. Lora Becker 2. Kristy Wilson 3. Ellie Wright

ACADEMY SADDLE SEAT WTC ADULT CHAMPIONSHIP

1. Richelle Perkins 2. Ricquel Eddy 3. Beth Holcomb

ACADEMY SADDLE SEAT WTC 14-17 CHAMPIONSHIP

1. Jessica Vaughn 2. Karissa Long

ACADEMY SADDLE SEAT WTC 11-13 CHAMPIONSHIP

1. Brianne Goans 2. Sabrina Gruenendyk 3. Morgan Ballentine 4. Breeanne Wright

ACADEMY SADDLE SEAT WTC 10 & UNDER CHAMPIONSHIP

1. Kennedy Payne

ACADEMY SADDLE SEAT WALK/TROT ADULT CHAMPIONSHIP

1. Linda Puryear 2. Stephanie Davidson

ACADEMY SADDLE SEAT WALK/TROT 11-13 CHAMPIONSHIP

1. Morgan Ballentine

ACADEMY SADDLE SEAT WALK/TROT 10 & UNDER CHAMPIONSHIP SEC A

1. Sydney Robbins 2. Cassie Downey 3. Gabby Snyder

ACADEMY SADDLE SEAT WALK/TROT 10 & UNDER CHAMPIONSHIP SEC B

1. Lora Becker 2. Kristy Wilson 3. Ellie Wright

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