

Rinehart Mines Gold At Brownland

Anne Lang

As the jump-off for the \$15,000 Brownland Farm Summer Mini Prix shaped up, it developed into a duel between Richard Rinehart and David Jennings.

They each qualified two mounts for the finale of the Brownland Farm Summer show, July 4-8 in Franklin, Tenn. But as the two traded performances, Rinehart emerged victorious on Rolling Hill Farm's Yukon Cornelius with the only double clear.

He also took third aboard Treesdale Farm's Swift. Jennings took home second on Miss Daisy and fourth on Eso. In the end, Rinehart also claimed fifth and eighth places, respectively, on Allison Ross' Obsession and Rolling Hill Farm's Diamond In The Rough.

A long, challenging first-round course caused rails for most horses at a wide variety of jumps, whittling down the jump-off field. Rinehart came back first on Swift but brought down two rails, including one at the water jump, in a time of 41.90 seconds.

Jennings responded with just one rail aboard Miss Daisy in 44.90 seconds. Then it was Rinehart again, posting a fast time (43.30 seconds) in an organized clean round on Yukon Cornelius. Jennings had all the pressure on his shoulders as he entered the ring on Eso, but the two rails that fell for him meant victory was Rinehart's.

"Okkie's a really nice, consistent horse," said Rinehart, 41, of Yukon Cornelius. "That was probably the main thing in my favor today. He's easy to ride, scopey and predictable. Also, having gone around the jump-off course once already [on Swift] didn't hurt."

Rinehart has been riding Okkie, a 10-year-old Dutch Warmblood, since the horse came over from Europe in May 2006. Rinehart and Jim Bueneman of Wright, Mo., who owns Okkie with wife Donna, found the horse in the Netherlands.

"We liked him right from the beginning," Rinehart said. "Of course, like any horse that's imported, it takes a little bit to get used to them. A lot of times, you have such high expectations, so it's easy to get ahead of yourself. But he's turned out to be a super horse."

Richard Rinehart struck gold at Brownland Farm Summer, riding Yukon Cornelius to the top of the \$15,000 mini prix.

He's gentle, kind, honest and careful, and he's got wonderful owners. Jim and Donna really enjoy this sport. For them, it's not always about winning. It's about taking good care of the horses, biding your time, having fun and doing your best."

Rinehart, who with wife Catherine owns and operates a full-service

hunter/jumper barn in his home town of Indianapolis, Ind., is aiming Okkie for the local grand prix circuit this summer.

"Okkie's been very competitive at the Midwest-type level of grand prix," Rinehart said. "We're still working on getting to the bigger ones."

► Summertime Fun

Meredith Darst, 10, has been steadily working her way up the ranks too, and she's definitely arrived in the pony divisions this year. At Brownland, Darst took home two championships, riding First Blue to the medium pony title and



(Left: Web Photo)

Lovin Life to the large pony tricolor.

First Blue is a 15-year-old Welsh cross mare owned by Lochmoor Stables, the Darst family-owned boarding and training facility based in Lebanon, Ohio. Darst's mother, Mindy, is Lochmoor's head trainer. Darst's twin brother, John, also rides and shows.

"Blue" and Darst have been consistent winners all year and earned a blue ribbon in an over-fences class at the Devon Horse Show (Pa.) this spring.

"She's an amazing pony," Darst said of Blue. "When we get on it, we stay on it."

Darst's large pony hunter champion, Lovin Life, or "Louie," is owned by Nashville-area resident Stephanie Ingram, who rides in the adult amateur hunter ranks. Darst started showing the 9-year-old, palomino, Welsh-warmblood cross gelding in the children's pony division last year and moved up to the large pony classes in May. Having mastered getting the lead changes on Louie, Darst said she couldn't be happier with the pony.

"He moves great, and he jumps great," she said.

Darst's trainer and mother, Mindy, appreciates Louie's talent. "Louie is incredibly rangy and scopey. But more than that, he's been a great teacher—to the point where Maddy could practically step right off of him into the junior hunters. It's such a privilege that Stephanie has given Maddy the opportunity to ride him."

Meredith Darst's multiple wins at Brownland Farm Summer included the large pony hunter tricolor aboard Lovin Life.

► **Wild Rose Blooms**

Riding is a family affair for Callie Schott as well, and she piloted her Wild Rose to the amateur-owner hunter, 18-35, championship at Brownland.

Schott's mother, Elaine, trains her at home, and she also rides with David Wright of Murfreesboro, Tenn., at the horse shows. At River Mountain—the Schott family farm in Versailles, Ky.—the main business is acquiring young horses to train and sell. Schott's father, Trey, a former polo player, is a veterinarian who often contributes his skills to River Mountain.

The Schotts imported Wild Rose in March 2006 after buying the 5-year-old Hanoverian mare from an auction in Germany. Schott began riding "Rose" in the adult amateur division last year.

"She was very green, but she's an amazing horse," Schott said. "She started out being a little weak in her back end, and she was pretty opinionated at first, but all that has gone away. Rose likes to work; she's always ready to go, and she gets better every time out."

Schott, 21, hopes to show Rose through the summer season and possibly at the indoor shows, but she'll also be making a big change this fall. She'll be a senior at the University of Kentucky, and she knows her eventual degree in business management will be an asset to her future, which will reach a turning point when she turns professional in December.

► **Brain Food Pays Off**

Elizabeth Morrow went off to college and leased out her Matador to Victoria Lee. The arrangement paid off in spades as Lee rode the 13-year-old Dutch Warmblood to the large junior hunter, 16-17, tricolor at Brownland.

Both Lee and Morrow train with Phoebe Sheets of Germantown, Tenn. Lee, 17, said she started leasing "Matt" this season when a long-time search for a horse to buy didn't pan out.

"Matt's an all-around good guy," Lee said. "He'll just truck you around, yet he's competitive, too." She also shows him in the equi-



(Lili Wick Photo)

tation classes and has qualified for the ASPCA Maclay Regionals and the Pessoa/USEF Medal Finals.

Lee is surrounded by horses whether at home or at the barn. Her family lives on 23 acres near Memphis, where they train miniature horses to show in halter and cart classes. Some regular-sized hunters live on the farm as well.

Lee's mother, Sally Beaumont, is a small-animal veterinarian. Lee credits both her parents for their encouragement and support through all her years of showing and appreciates Sheets for the family atmosphere the trainer creates at her barn.

"Phoebe is not only a great trainer," Lee said. "But she also really cares about each one of us as a whole person, not just as a rider. We're really close-knit at this barn, and we all root for each other. Last night, we all went out to dinner and ate piles of shrimp, because Phoebe said it was good brain food. She must have been right, because we all did really well today!"

Lee, who will be a high school senior in the fall, is juggling filling out college applications with horse shows this summer, with the hope of attending a school that offers an NCAA varsity equestrian team. As for a post-college career, Lee said she's not sure whether she'll turn pro or remain an amateur.

FRANKLIN, TN—JULY 4-8.

GREEN HUNTER CH: Mein Schatz, Alexandra Wood.

RES: Sunset Strip, DHS Farms LLC.

REGULAR WORKING HUNTER CH: Magic Darco, Anne Koch.

RES: Bantry Bay, Susan Bradley.

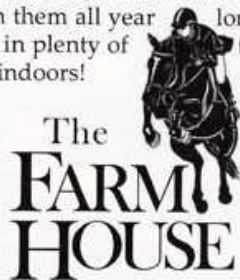
AMATEUR-OWNER HUNTER, 18-35 CH: Wild Rose, Callie Schott.

RES: Back For More, Jamie Auletto.

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