



*LEFT: Camelot PJ and Andrea Baxter win the 2023 USEA YEH West Coast 5-Year-Old Championship.
RIGHT: Oxford K and Amber Birtcil win the 2023 USEA YEH West Coast 4-Year-Old Championship.
Photo credit: Tina Fitch Photography*

2024 Dutta Corp. USEA Young Event Horse West Coast Championships To Bring Together Fascinating Eventing Prospects

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By Jonathan Horowitz

Paso Robles, CA — From a warmblood bred by an animal science program at a junior college that usually breeds Quarter Horses to a sibling of a top-three finisher at Badminton in England to the oldest son out of a mare that died in a trailer accident that made international news, it will be a unique, talented, and special group of horses at the 2024 Dutta Corp. USEA Young Event Horse (YEH) West Coast Championships.

One week after That’s Me Z and Tommy Greengard, the 2022 winner of the 5-year-old championship, represented the United States in the FEI WBFSH Eventing World Breeding Championships at Le Lion D’Angers in France, Twin Rivers Ranch in Paso Robles, California, will once again host the West Coast’s championship classes for 4- and 5-year-olds that culminate the year’s YEH Program on October 25-26, along with a Last Chance Qualifier on October 24.

The YEH championships have become a significant step on the ladder that some of the top American eventing prospects are climbing on their way to the highest levels of the sport. With their victory in 2022, “Z” (Take A Chance On Me Z x Venetia) and Greengard secured the prestigious [Holekamp/Turner YEH Lion d’Angers Grant](#) as the highest-scoring 5-year-old out of both the East Coast and West Coast championships.

“Both personally as a rider and as a member of the YEH committee, I’ve seen the incredible value that being part of the YEH championships means for their development, and I’m talking about all horses in the standings, not just the ones that place high,” said Andrea Baxter, who has competed in YEH

competitions since 2007. “Getting the young horses on a stage that they don’t otherwise get to do and putting the limelight on them, they get such a good experience out of it. It gives everybody a focused goal. It’s teaching the horses to stay in a nice, forward rhythm and pick off the jumps in a confident, rhythmical style that will set them up for future success.”

The Baxter family that has owned and operated Twin Rivers since 2001 has made a significant commitment to growing eventing programs for young horses on the West Coast, including hosting the West Coast championships as a standalone event starting in 2020.

Andrea won the 5-year-old West Coast championship in 2023 with Camelot PJ (Colman x Hauptstutbuch Evita), and she is currently campaigning him, as well as another of her 2023 YEH horses in The Big Easy (Mr Lincoln B x PLS Hippo Q), to top-10 finishes at the two-star level.

Others from the 2023 5-year-old West Coast championship are also making their mark as 6-year-olds in 2024. Third-place finisher LS Crown Royal (by Comte) was a recent winner at the Preliminary level at Spokane in Washington with Jordan Linstedt. Fourth-place finisher Monbeg Salt Fever (Womanizer x Eden Breeze) won at Preliminary at Archer in Wyoming and competed in the USEF/USEA Developing Horse National Championship in the CCI2*YH-S division for 6-year-olds at Morven in Virginia. Seventh-place finisher HSH Cellesto (Cellestial x Lotte) won the CCI1*-S at Spokane.

Baxter will seek to repeat in the 2024 5-year-old West Coast championship with MBF Insta and will have MBF Dig Deep in the 4-year-old championship.

MBF Dig Deep (Golddigger x Amber) posted the best 4-year-old qualifying score in the country with 88.15 in winning the qualifier at the Twin Rivers Fall International, according to the USEA’s list of horses qualified for the Dutta Corp. USEA YEH Championships.

“I’ve never been so excited about a horse as I am for Dig Deep,” Baxter said afterward. “He’s a super athlete with all the qualities to be a top horse. I bought him as another ‘easy button’ accident, but this horse is the real deal. I’m so excited.”



MBF Dig Deep and Andrea Baxter. Ride On Photo.

MBF Insta (Upsilon x Adora Silvi Mia) is one of four 2024 5-year-old West Coast championship entrants that competed in the 2023 4-year-old championship, along with Cobain PJ (Carridam PJ x Evian) ridden by Sigourney Jellins, Cupido Van de Hoge Dijken Z (Campino Gold x Cendrillon de L'herse) ridden by Allyson Hartenburg, and Crockanboy Dancer (Echonix x Ardragh Dancing Queen) ridden by Michlynn Sterling.



Cobain PJ and Sigourney Jellins. Ride On Photo.

In addition to MBF Dig Deep coming into the USEA YEH West Coast Championships with the highest 4-year-old qualifying score, FE Kyoto (Karajan x Zara XXVI) achieved the highest 5-year-old qualifying score of 89.75 in 2024 ridden by Elsa Warble at Shepherd Ranch in California.

Helen and James Alliston will be competing in the West Coast championships at Twin Rivers for the first time.

“We haven’t had a lot of time to show these 5-year-olds, to be honest, and it’s a nice way to expose them to a big show environment, but it’s in a friendly place that they’ve all schooled at and been to,” Helen said.

Helen will ride Fary Prince (The After Party x Farytale Cooley), who is coming off a win at the Training level at Woodside in California.

“He’s the easiest, most lovely young horse that James or I have ever worked with,” Helen said.

“Everything you ask him to do he says yes with a smile on his face. He’s good at everything. We’re all kind of waiting to see a dark side because he’s too perfect right now. We’re really, really excited about him.”

For Fary Prince to be competing in California with Helen is both sentimental and full-circle because he is the oldest son of the his Farytale Cooley (Ustinov Van Elsenham x Bulana) that was ridden in England by Sophie Hulme. Hulme is originally from California and trained with the Allistons before moving to England. Hulme lost “Feyre” and two of her other horses in a tragic trailer accident on the way to their first FEI event together in Scotland in 2021.



Fary Prince and Helen Alliston. Tina Fitch Photography.

“I am so thankful we took embryos off her and I hope that her babies and myself can make her proud and show the world what they missed,” Hulme wrote in a blog post for Glaze & Gordon.

Hulme started Fary Prince before the bay British Sport Horse gelding came from England to the United States as a 4-year-old.

“This is her oldest son, so it’s really cool that this horse is so amazing because it can carry on what could have been his mom’s legacy,” Helen Alliston said.

James’ three entries, the most in the 5-year-old championship, are Balief MBF, Berry, and Konditori. All three have different backgrounds.

Balief MBF (HHS Cornet x Lazio) was the fifth-highest-priced of 64 3-year-olds at the 2023 Goresbridge Go For Gold auction in Ireland, and James acquired the bay Irish Sport Horse mare from her previous owner after she came to the United States.

James acquired Berry (Crelido x Quazimodo VD) via an Internet post by Modesto Junior College, located about an hour’s drive from the Allistons. Modesto Junior College’s animal science program has a breeding program for students. James said that Berry’s dam was a Grand Prix show jumper that was donated to the college as a broodmare after an injury ended her competitive career.

“They breed a few foals for the students to learn about reproduction in horses and looking after the foals, and then they sell the foals on,” James said. “So, that’s how I came about him, and it’s kind of a cool story. They normally breed Quarter Horses and just do one a year, I think, or something like that, but they got donated this really amazing broodmare. They got donated some semen to a 1.60-meter stallion as well, so it’s really nicely bred for show jumping.”

Berry’s name was bestowed on him by the college because his dam was called “Kiwi.”

Konditori (Womanizer x Ruby Roller) shares the same dam as the 2024 third-place finisher at Badminton, Quindiva (by Quintender) ridden by Alexander Bragg. Konditori's sire is the sire of five-star eventers Cooley Quicksilver ridden by Liz Halliday and CHF Cooliser ridden by Tom McEwen.

Returning to judge the YEH West Coast Championships as he did in 2023 is Christian Schact from Germany, a world-renowned expert on conformation and pedigree. He will be joined in 2024 by Sally Ike from the United States, a member of the 1968 U.S. Olympic team and a licensed judge and course designer for more than 30 years.

On Thursday will be the Last Chance Qualifier judged by Wendy Wergeles. Dressage and conformation evaluations for the championships will take place on Friday, with the jumping tests on the course designed by Adri Doyal on Saturday. On Sunday, Twin Rivers will host the popular and spirited Halloween One Day H.T. and C.T. to culminate the year of eventing at Twin Rivers Ranch.

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