



Twin Rivers News  
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**Twin Rivers Spring International  
Baxter & Burnell are Short Format stars: Levine, Patterson & Nielsen Maintain Long Format  
leads**



*Andrea Baxter & Laguna Seca. PC: Sherry Stewart.*

**Saturday April 10, 2021: Paso Robles, California.** Twin Rivers Spring International organizing committee member Andrea Baxter and her 11-year-old homebred Holsteiner, Laguna Seca, maintained their lead for the CCI4\*-S win on home turf. But home turf can't be treated as familiar turf, Baxter explained.

"Just because you know where things are doesn't mean you know how things are going to go." To boot, Laguna Seca "was cocky out there, and he's hard to ride when he's like that.

Very strong and shaking his head, causing us to get under a few things out there. But he came out of all the combination exits well."

It's a major move up for the horse who first went Advanced in March. Because he's green, Baxter had not planned to go pedal to metal, and they added 10.8 to their dressage score to complete with a 53.2. Lauren LoPiccolo and Diego also had only time penalties, to complete the first CCI4\*-S for horse and rider on a 60.1.

Baxter's barn mate at Twin Rivers Ranch, Lauren Burnell, and her 14-year-old Holsteiner Counterpoint were featured on the Spring International program's cover. They lived up to front page status by taking the lead with double clear show jumping and only some accidental time penalties on cross-country. "I had the Preliminary time in my head and was thinking about that," said Burnell, whose final score was a 38.

The imposing Ditch Wall at 10 and bending track to a corner rode more easily than Burnell expected and Counterpoint's "saint-like" composure saved her coming through the Palm Tree Water Cabins. Burnell is thrilled to fulfill her goal of returning to this level successfully after her 3-and-a-half-year old son arrived. "It feels faster after having a baby," she laughed. "The wind hits your face differently!"

Young rider Kelsey Holmes was already thrilled with double clear show jumping and finishing cross-country with only 1.6 time penalties. Jumping into second place as a result with her partner of eight years, NZB The Chosen One, was a nice surprise. She appreciated the significant changes to the course since they'd competed here in March, when the track was tightly packed with combinations and sharp turns. With several jumps used for both the Long and Short format tracks, today's course "felt very open" and presented nice variety to test their skills.

On a gap year before law school, Holmes has had "Squid," a 17.3 hand 15-year-old Hanoverian, since she was in middle school. "I'm not a very emotional person, but today when I was untacking Squid I kind of teared up thinking about how amazing he's been to me all these years. I'm so lucky to have him still sound, happy and eager." She blamed herself for a subpar dressage score of 39.3, which started them in 8th place before ending on a 40.9.

As the only pair to finish within the time on cross-country, Kayla Bierman and Addyson moved into third. They'd tied for 10th after dressage on a 46.7.

### **Levine Holds 4\*-L Lead**

At the second-to-last of 40 efforts, "I thought, 'This is actually happening,'" said Amber Levine of a faultless finish with Cellar Farm's Cinzano today to stay on their 31.5 lead going into show jumping tomorrow morning. The Jeffs Hot Tub Waves complex at 19 a/b was the awkward exception to a Hugh Lochore-designed course that otherwise "rode great" for the 10-year-old Holsteiner in his long-delayed debut at the level. An entirely new portion of the course around the racetrack featured a series of bright-white painted obstacles, but nothing distracted Cinzano's "tunnel vision for those flags." Levine expects a similarly game attitude tomorrow and has a rail to spare.

Marc Grandia and Campari FFF were clear in jumping efforts and time to move into second after Madison Temkin and Dr. Hart dropped down with a run-out at the tricky left turn to a log in the Palm Tree Water at 6a. "I'm just mad at myself," said Temkin. Dr. Hart popped over it easily on the second try and whizzed around to pick up only 3.6 time penalties. Going

onto the racetrack in the first third of the course was easy, Temkin says of the Off-The-Track Thoroughbred's game attitude. "He went right over to the rail, but it was a little hard getting him to turn off it."

The young professional from Full Circle Farm and Dr. Hart have risen up the levels together and this is their first 4\*-L.

Temkin's penalties enabled Bec Braitling and Caravaggio II to move into third after a cross-country run the Australian professional is thrilled with. Like her barn mate and good friend Andrea Baxter, Braitling said it's not easy showing at home. "We lost some time early out on the track with the new jumps. He saw that white steeplechase from 1000 yards away and said, 'No!'. We struggled to get a rhythm there. There is no such thing as a home field advantage."

Braitling had immediately high expectations for the 10-year-old British Sporthorse purchased as a 6-year-old. After finishing 5th at the Galway Downs 4\*-S two weeks ago, this is his debut in the Long format. "I knew straight away I wanted him and that I would take him to Kentucky one day." He has a big step and gallop, is easy to ride and the good kind of spookiness that works to their advantage most of the time, Braitling explained. In Friday's dressage, maybe not so much, but once they nail down the flying changes, she's confident the sky's the limit for "Ernie."

### **Patterson Atop the 3\*-L**

Young rider Alina Patterson and her own 10-year-old German Sporthorse Flashback have a two-rail lock on the division after clean and fast cross-country. The Washington-based rider's slight concerns about her horse's stamina were erased as he had fuel to spare going into show jumping.

Alessandra Allen-Shinn and Fool Me Once were also double clear today, to move into second on a 39.4. Unfortunately, the division's third contenders, Alexis Helffrich and M Creme De La Creme SE retired on cross-country, paring the show jumping finalé to two.

### **Nielsen & New Ride Lead the 2\*-L**

Yesterday, Sacramento-area professional Marissa Nielsen accomplished her goal of a "boring and accurate test" with Global Absolute. That paid off in the form of a 28.3 division leading dressage score, to which they added no penalties today. It's the first FEI competition for the 7-year-old Mecklenburg and their new partnership takes an auspicious start into show jumping.

The top three standings remained unchanged as another professional, Barb Crabo of Arizona, maintains the second seed with her 10-year-old Sport Pony, Mine the Melody. In third are Jessica DiCostanzo and Cocoa Z, a 9-year-old Zangershiede mare, who are moving up the levels together since pairing up three years ago.

An entrepreneur who launched the equestrian marketing company, Equivont, around the same time, DiCostanzo used to be a jumper rider, then an FEI level dressage rider. "I was kind of struggling between the two disciplines, then I realized I could do both with eventing."

Thus far, cross-country has been a weak point relative to strong dressage and show jumping, but today indicated otherwise with bold clearance of obstacles that had been issues in the past. DiCostanzo credits Bec Braitling for putting some valuable training miles on the mare

while she recovered from a broken leg. She credits Cocoa with taking the reins in a few of the track's many tricky spots. A double clear keeps them on a 30.8 dressage for tomorrow's show jumping. "She is very scopey and careful, especially for a little horse. I just hope I can give her the ride she deserves."

The standings are tight in this division: the top six are all within a rail of one another. James Alliston and Calaro, Camille Brewer and Cooley Rock Star and Josey Thompson and Pistol Annie are all capable of taking over the lead if things go their way over Marc Donovan's course.

### **Sunday Schedule**

Long format horses have their final inspection Sunday morning, starting at 7:30 a.m. Then, the Flag Ring that was dressed for dressage on Friday is transformed into the stage for an exciting show jumping conclusion. International ceremonies begin with the National Anthem at 11:40, then 4\*-L at 11:45; 3\*-L at 12:40; and 2\*-L at 1:35.

Awards will be presented at the conclusion of each division. In the 4\*-L, this will include \$5,000 in prizes and the presentation of the inaugural McKinglaigh Cup. The beautiful trophy has been donated by Thom Schulz in honor of his lovely late wife Laura Coats. Schulz and Coats owned McKinlaigh, the Irish Sporthorse who partnered with Gina Miles in 2008 Olympic individual silver. McKinlaigh was developed and lived out his retired life at the couple's Rainbow Ranch in nearby Creston.

Winners of each of the Long Format divisions will also receive a custom jump made by Jen and Earl McFall's Dragonfire Farm, along with prizes from Twin Rivers' generous sponsors.

### **Sponsors**

The Spring International is made possible by generous sponsors: Presenting sponsors include [Professional's Choice](#), manufacturers of sports medicine boots for equine athletes; [Auburn Labs](#), manufacturers of the adaptogenic APF Formula for horses, people and dogs; [Best Western PLUS Black Oak](#), which offers exclusive discounts for exhibitors; and [Get Away RV Rentals](#), which delivers fully-outfitted RVs to the venue for those who want to stay on site.

Supporting sponsors include [Riding Warehouse](#), the horse gear and apparel supplier; and Chubby Cov, makers of beautiful custom stock ties.

### **Up Next**

The Spring International anchors an exciting year of competition at Twin Rivers Ranch. The Fall International in September is a fixture of the West Coast circuit and the 2021 season finalé is another prestigious calendar highlight: The Future Event Horse and Dutta Corp. Young Event Horse West Coast Championships. These two West Coast championships were staged together for the first time last year by the Twin Rivers team, receiving high praise from all involved.

Schooling One Day Horse Trials: May 23

Schooling Show: June 6

CDS Dressage: June 12-13

Summer Horse Trials: July 1-4

Area VI Adult Camp: July 30-31

CDS Dressage: Aug. 14-15

Fall International: Sept. 23-26, featuring the Adequan®/USEF Eventing Youth Team Challenge

USEA Future Event Horse & USEA Dutta Corp. Young Event Horse West Coast Championships (and an FEH qualifier), Oct. 29-30.

Schooling Halloween Horse Trials: Oct. 31

**Fast Facts:**

**Location:** 8715 N. River Road, Paso Robles, CA. 93446; email: [info@twinrivershorsepark.com](mailto:info@twinrivershorsepark.com)

**Ride Times:** Available [www.twinrivershorsepark.com](http://www.twinrivershorsepark.com) a few days before competition begins.

**Results:** [www.twinrivershorsepark.com](http://www.twinrivershorsepark.com)

**Show Photographer:** Ride On Photo by Tayler

**Video:** Ride On Video

**Livestream:** [www.rideonvideo.com](http://www.rideonvideo.com)

**Volunteer:** [www.twinrivershorsepark.com/volunteer](http://www.twinrivershorsepark.com/volunteer)

**Facebook:** Twin Rivers Ranch, Equestrian Events

**Instagram:** TwinRivers2020