

\$25,000 Welcome Stake Goes to Todd Minikus and Ultimo Van Ter Moude at North Coast

Minikus tops a field of twenty-two and six in the jump-off for third win in two days in Cleveland

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Todd Minikus on Ultimo Van Ter Moude

Moreland Hills, Ohio – September 11, 2008 - - Another picture perfect day of sunshine and warm temperatures greeted the competitors for day two of the all new North Coast Jumper Classic in Moreland Hills, Ohio .

Unfortunately, according to the local weather forecasts, they're saying that today might have been the last nice day we'll see for a while. A storm front is forecast to move into the area late tonight and is expected to stall over Lake Erie and linger until Monday. If that weren't enough, they're saying we'll start to see the remnants of Hurricane Ike coming through the area right after that.

The good news, of course, is the all weather footing in the grand prix arena at the Polo Field. Years ago,

as many of you might recall, a weather forecast like this could shut down the entire show for days.

Today's agenda featured two classes, the \$5,000 NAL Open Speed Stake and the main event, the \$25,000 Welcome Stake. Riders this week are competing over the tests designed by Jose "Pepe" Gamarra.

For the \$25,000 Welcome Stake, Gamarra offered up a course of 13 numbered obstacles with 16 jumping efforts that included a double and triple combination. The double, at 5 a b was oxer to vertical, and the triple at 9 a b c, consisted of vertical, vertical, oxer.

Today's class had a total 21 starters, and the course yielded six clean rounds for the tiebreaker. In addition, Alison Robitaille mastered the track with Via Volo, but came up short on the time allowed. Her score of 2 faults would net her today's eventual seventh place finish. Another six horse and rider combinations had four faults.

For the short course Gamarra reduced the test to seven jumps, and he sent the six qualifiers over a twisting left, right, right, left track and then a final gallop to the last fence.

Yesterday's 1.40m winner Raymond W, with Leslie Howard in the irons, led the way back for round two. Howard set the tiebreaker table with her second clear go of the day, tripping the finish line timers in 37.431 seconds.

Following Howard was Debbie Stephens and Chapeau Z. Stephens topped Howard's time, but did it at the expense of rail. So her final time of 36.416 seconds went for naught as she moved into second place with the four faults added on.

Beezie Madden and Danny Boy, the next pair to compete, couldn't leave them all standing the second time around either. Pulling a single rail, Madden was 3/10ths of a second slower than Stephens, and slid into third place at the time in 36.759 seconds.



Todd Minikus with Ultimo Van Ter Moude

Mario Deslauriers unseated Howard as the fourth to go in today's jump-off. Riding Diablo, Deslauriers shaved a second and a half off of Raymond W's time, cruising home in 35.809 seconds. He didn't, however, get much time to enjoy his reign as class leader.

Todd Minikus, piloting Ultimo Van Ter Moude, moved up a spot in the order to give Beezie Madden some additional time to get ready on her second horse, and quickly disposed of Deslauriers. Slicing and dicing, and bucking and kicking his way around the short track, Minikus managed to carve an additional two full seconds off of the top time, racing home in 33.794 seconds.

Madden then returned and wrapped up today's Welcome Stake with Crème Brûlée. While Madden was able to register the fourth clear round of the jump-off, she was only fast enough to move into second place. Madden broke the beams in 35.254 seconds to pick today's red ribbon.

"Ultimo had a great show in Southhampton and then got a nice week off while I went out to Calgary. So he came in really fresh and jumped outstanding today. I really couldn't be happier with him," said Minikus, who posted his third win in two days at the North Coast Classic.

What about moving up in the jump-off, thus giving Beezie Madden the advantage of going last? "There have been times, once or twice this year, when I had a couple in the jump-off and the other people wouldn't move up. I've always thought that was a little "funny" ya know? Why not just come in and give it your best shot and let the chips fall?" Minikus asked. "I didn't want to play that same game today."

And was that your best shot, as fast as you could have gone? "Other than having to slow down a little once or twice because he was frisky and bucked at my leg once or twice and I had to pull on the reins, yeah, he was pretty fast and he jumped great," he said.

Just prior to today's main event was the **\$5,000 NAL Open Speed Stake** with 14 starters.

After finishing second twice yesterday, by only a little over a second in total time (once by only 4/100ths of a second), Mario Deslauriers made sure that didn't happen again today.

But, it took another photo finish to get the job done.

Today, Deslauriers turned the tables and edged out Alison Robitaille by 5/100ths of a second for the victory.

Riding Concerto, Deslauriers flew across the finish line in 61.708 seconds, edging out Robitaille and Garfield 211, who cruised home in 61.756 seconds.

Three seconds further back in third place was Holly Orlando and Pugnax. Orlando's finish time was 64.555 seconds.

Following that, it was a gap of eight seconds back to today's fourth place finisher, Superieur and Kimberly Prince. Prince rolled home in a time of 72.353 seconds.



Angela Moore was the fastest of today's four fault finishers, taking fifth place honors with Land Baron. Moore had four faults in 63.821 seconds. Rounding out the top six was Robitaille and her second mount, Pourquoi, crossing the finish line in 64.783 seconds, again, with four faults.

Today's winner Deslauriers, who just recently joined the Jane Forbes Clark (right, with Bruce Burr) team, said it's just a matter of time, and getting to know his new partners. "It's starting to come in line. As you get to know the horses, you can take a few more chances and go a little faster. Concerto has been very solid for me since I started, and it seems like its going better and better," he said.



"I just started maybe the last week of June," Deslauriers detailed. "So, not too much time yet. They showed a bit in Spruce Meadows and then in Bromont and Ottawa. So this is just our fourth show together here."

And, you're happy with the progress? "Yeah, for sure, for sure," he smiled. "Some days are better than others, but I think all of the horses are going really well. I'm very excited about this new opportunity. The future looks very bright, so I'm very thrilled."

Tomorrow, we'll bring our raincoat and check in with the Junior and Amateur

Minikus and Ultimo Van Ter Moude

Owner Jumpers at the North Coast Classic.

