

2008 Rolex FEI World Cup Final in Show Jumping Underway

Ten U.S. riders are up against strong international competition.

April 25, 2008

The 2008 Rolex FEI World Cup Final is underway in Goteborg, Sweden, and 10 American show jumpers are competing in the strong international field that includes 17 nations.

The Final, which runs April 24-27, features a unique format of three rounds of jumping. The list of the 10 horse-and-rider combinations representing the United States is:

U.S. EAST COAST LEAGUE

Rider/Age/Hometown/Horse/Age/Breed/Sex/Owner:

Kent Farrington/27/Chicago, Ill./Up Chiqui/11/Belgian Warmblood/G/Alex Boone, William Dobbs and Jim McNerney

McLain Ward/32/Brewster, N.Y./Phillipa/10/Warmblood/M/Sagamore Farm

Margie Engle/50/Wellington, Fla./Hidden Creek's Quervo Gold/15/Belgian Warmblood/G/Hidden Creek Farm

Lauren Hough/30/Wellington, Fla./Casadora/12/Dutch Warmblood/M/Laura and Meredith Mateo

Brianne Goutal/19/New York, N.Y./Onira/12/Dutch Warmblood/G/Cloverleaf Farm

Danielle Torano/34/Ft. Lauderdale, Fla./Vancouver D'Auvray/10/Belgian Warmblood/S/Sir Ruly Inc.

Todd Minikus/45/Loxahatchee, Fla./Olinda/12/Dutch Warmblood/M/Lawrence Houlihan

U.S. WEST COAST LEAGUE

Rider/Age/Hometown/Horse/Age/Breed/Sex/Owner:

Rich Fellers/49/Wilsonville, Ore./Flexible/12/Irish Bred/S/Harry and Mollie Chapman

Mandy Porter/42/Encinitas, Calif./Summer/11/Belgian Warmblood/M/Wild Turkey Farm

Richard Spooner/37/Aqua Dulce, Calif./Cristallo/10/Holsteiner/G/Show Jumping Syndications

East Coast League winner Kent Farrington has been in serious form with Up Chiqui since the beginning of 2007. The pair won multiple grand prix over the last 12 months including the Rolex/USEF National Championships and the \$150,000 CN US Open CSIO 5* on March 9, 2008.

One of the most experienced horses on the U.S. squad is Laura and Meredith Mateo's Casadora. The chestnut mare represented the U.S. at last summer's Pan American Games and won a team bronze medal with rider Lauren Hough. Together they jumped the only double clear at the \$75,000 Green Cove Springs World Cup Qualifier in January 2008. Casadora has a very consistent Grand Prix record and Hough is a veteran of the 2000 Olympic Team. They were 16th at the Final last year in Las Vegas.

"All is well, the horses and people have all arrived safely," Hough reported from Goteborg on April 22. "Everyone passed the jog and the warm-up goes this morning. We are all looking forward to the start."

Danielle Torano and 19-year-old Brianne Goutal will be making their first World Cup Final appearances, and both flashed plenty of quality form in Florida over the past 12 months. Torano who is married to fellow show jumper Jimmy Torano, was fourth behind Hough at Green Cove Springs with Vancouver D'Auvray. Highlights for Goutal included a second place finish in the \$50,000 Grand Prix in January with her World Cup horse, Onira.

Margie Engle and Todd Minikus are veterans of multiple U.S. squads and World Cup Finals. Engle has ridden in 14 World Cup Finals and placed 17th at the 2007 Final in Las Vegas with Hidden Creek's Quervo Gold. Engle is closing in on 200 grand prix wins. Minikus was on the bronze medal winning team at last summer's Pan American Games with Hough and won the \$30,000 WEF Challenge on March 19 with Olinda.

Peter Wylde didn't have much time to pack his bags; he and Esplanade were a substitution last week. Wylde, a member of the gold medal winning team at the 2004 Olympic Games, has all the experience to produce good results on short notice. Owned by Louisburg Farm, Esplanade was second in the World Cup Qualifier at the Kentucky National Horse Show.

The riders hailing from the West Coast have accolades of their own. Richard Spooner broke the century mark in 2008, and is only the second U.S. rider (Engle was the first) to achieve this feat. Nicknamed 'The Master of Faster' Spooner is looking to out-run and out-jump the competition on Cristallo in Sweden. Equally capable is Rich Fellers who won the West Coast League. Riding Flexible, Fellers won three of the four FEI World Cup Qualifiers at HITS Thermal.

Mandy Porter and Summer, owned by Wild Turkey Farm, outlasted 34 other pairs to win the \$50,000 STRONGID C 2X Grand Prix at HITS Thermal. They were also second in the \$50,000 Tourneau FEI World Cup Qualifier, presented by Adequan.