

## Germany Takes the Team Gold in Olympic Eventing

### Miles Jumps up to Individual Silver; Germany Proves Invincible at 2008 Olympic Games in Eventing

By Joanie Morris

August 12, 2008

Hong Kong, China – Gina Miles waved the flag for the US tonight at Sha Tin, winning an Individual Silver medal with McKinlaigh. The duo jumped two textbook clean rounds, adding nothing to their two-day score of 56.1.

"I always knew he was the best event horse in the world," said Miles. "He had his day to shine at the Olympic Games."

The 14-year-old Irish Sport Horse owned by Thom Schulz and Laura Coats stepped around the show jumping courses like an open hunter. Miles, from Creston, CA, represented the US at the 2002 World Equestrian Games and the 2007 Pan American Games. "It was my dream just to be in the individual final, to be fourth or fifth," said Miles. "This is the reward for a lifetime of hard work."

Miles' victory wasn't without a little bit of drama. McKinlaigh was put in the holding box at the final horse inspection. McKinlaigh was re-presented and passed after discussion between the Ground Jury of Martin Plewa, Christian Landholt and Marilyn Payne and the Veterinary Panel.

Overnight leader Hinrich Romeike rode Marius to an impressive Gold medal performance for Germany. An amateur rider, Romeike makes his living as a dentist in Germany. Marius put in an unbelievable performance for his grateful jockey. The pair had one rail down in the first round but returned to the ring and jumped a beautiful clear round.

"This horse means everything to my career," said Romeike of his nearly white 14-year-old Holsteiner gelding. "I would be nothing without this horse. I am a dental surgeon and dentist. I ride after work."

Great Britain's Tina Cook jumped up from seventh going into the second show jumping into the Bronze medal position with 10-year-old Miners Frolic. This pair jumped two beautiful clear rounds. The irony was, when Romeike cantered into the show jumping ring for the first round-- it didn't even matter how he jumped because the Germans had already won the Team Gold medal on the strength of the performance of Frank Ostholt (on Mr. Medicott), Andreas Dibowski (Butts Leon) and Ingrid Klimke (Abraxas). Romeike's one fence down maintained the overall individual lead (Klimke, who had been in second, had one down too) and the German Team finished on 166.10, five points clear of the Australians (171.20). Great Britain was third on 185.7. 52 horses show jumped over Leopoldo Palacios course and it became clear quite early that clear rounds would be hard to find.

The first round was for every horse remaining in the competition and to determine the team medals. The top 25 horses (a maximum of three from each nation) returned for the second round to determine individual medals. This format is only used in the Olympic Games.

Phillip Dutton had two uncharacteristic rails down in the first round on Bruce Duchossios' Connaught. The 15-year-old Irish thoroughbred gelding is known to be incredibly careful but he was a victim of the very electric atmosphere. "He wasn't concentrating," said Dutton after his first round. "I think the lights and the atmosphere distracted him. I thought he would be a little bit tired but he wasn't, he was pretty sharp. He was looking at everything else and not focusing on the jumps. I'm a bit disappointed." Dutton also returned for the second round with Connaught and the horse jumped his typical clear round. Unfortunately Dutton was eliminated from the individual portion of the competition because he inadvertently broke FEI Rule 257.253 for using illegal equipment. Connaught was wearing a pair of hind boots that were too heavy under this new rule incepted in February. Neither the Chef d'Equipe Mark Phillips or Dutton knew about the rule. There was never any intention to operate outside the rules.

Becky Holder and Courageous Comet put in a solid effort. Holder has struggled with the show jumping in the past with 'Comet' and was pleased with the 13-year-old Thoroughbred's effort. They had two down but Holder wasn't disappointed in her horse.

Karen O'Connor will use these Games as a stepping stone for the 2010 Alltech FEI World Equestrian Games with Mandiba. "I'm very proud of my horse," said O'Connor. "I'm looking forward to Kentucky in two years."



The Olympic Games continue in Sha Tin tomorrow with the first round of the Dressage competition at 7.15 pm. Courtney King-Dye will lead it off for the US with Mythilus at 9.28 pm.

For complete results, [click here](#).