



Paul O'Shea and Primo de Revel won the \$75,000 Equestrian Estates Planning Group Grand Prix at Silver Oak. Photo by Tammy Hardy. The inaugural edition of the Silver Oak Jumper Tournament drew to a close on Sunday,

under gorgeous sunny skies, low humidity and perfect temperatures in mid 70's. The fantastic weather put an exclamation point on what can only be described as an extraordinary debut for what certainly will become one of the nation's premier show jumping extravaganzas. A huge Sunday crowd documented the success of the local promotion that went into this first year event. From the three deep folks that lined every available spot along the rail, to many sold out luncheon tables in the numerous VIP tents surrounding the grand prix ring, the throng on hand enjoyed a great Sunday of big-time show jumping in the Granite State of New Hampshire.

"A lot of work went into this event. Seeing this great crowd on Sunday is very rewarding to me and those of us that love the sport of show jumping," said Show Chairman Jeff Papows. "Although this first year was everything we expected and more, we're already looking ahead to next year and the different improvements we can make. I'm confident that there will be more money offered next year and a few changes will make this wonderful event even better. I am confident my good friend David Birdsall would be proud."

The first round course designed by Olaf Petersen Jr. of Munich, Germany, proved to be king today, yielding only one clear round. Twenty-six riders showed over the track, and only Charlie Jacobs of Boston, MA, left all the fences intact aboard Flaming Star, but 10 would return for the winning round format. The course featured an open water and a vertical-oxer double combination, but the most daunting task was the oxer-vertical-oxer triple combination coming off a tight turn for home, which caused 22 horses to lower 28 rails.

"It was a big, long and wide opening galloping course, but then at the end, it was a short turn to home for a tight triple combination, so you really had to get your horse back and under control," said Course Designer Olaf Petersen, Jr. "But I was surprised that so many people had trouble through there to be honest."



Kevin Babington and Mark Q. Photo by Tammy Hardy. The lone clear rider, Jacobs, stated,

"The combination was quite difficult. I had seen a number of riders get stuck in there. The footing was pretty deep in there, so when I went in I looked at the jump and saw how deep it was and I tried to stay as far left as I could through the turn so my horse could have the best footing possible. I came in real quiet, sat up, and kicked real hard to get out in two."

The format for today's class invited the top 10 finishers from the first round to return for the jump-off in reverse order of faults and time, with only Jacobs returning on a score of zero. The shortened track began over an oxer-vertical line to a new vertical oxer line, before bending to a third oxer. Riders then rolled back and galloped over the first two fences in the triple combination and finished over a vertical towards the gate.

Irish rider Darragh Kenny set the original score to beat in the jump-off, clearing the course in 48.590 seconds with Quiz. His total of four faults from the first round would hold up for fourth place. Fellow Irishman Kevin Babington and Mark Q soon bested him, shaving off valuable time through the rollbacks and clearing the course in 46.276 seconds, which would earn the second place award, also with four faults from the first round. Ramiro Quintana of Argentina followed aboard Whitney. The pair was right on Babington's heels, but fell just shy of the time breaking the beam at 46.972 seconds to take home the third place award.

When Paul O'Shea entered the ring he had his eye on the prize with his experienced mount Primo De Revel. The luck of the Irish was on his side, as he quickly made his way around the arena, never wasting a second in the air and leaving each rail in place in a time of 45.112 seconds, and just his first round four faults.

"My plan was just to be a little bit faster than Kevin," explained O'Shea. Between the third and fourth fences I did one less stride, and then to the last fence I also left a stride out. I had the advantage of watching him and everyone else go, so that was a big help."



Paul O'Shea and Primo de Revel. Photo by Tammy Hardy. All of the pressure fell on Jacobs and Flaming Star,

because with less than four faults they would claim the win. Unfortunately, that would not be the case. They lowered the height of two fences, bringing their grand total to eight faults, finishing in eighth place to seal O'Shea's victory.

"Hats off to Paul O'Shea, he had a great week," stated Jacobs. "Olaf had built a very similarly difficult course last year. One horse jumped clean and won the class. I was hoping to win the class as the one clean, but I came back and had a couple rails, and those are the breaks. It was fun; it was a good class. We'll keep going and jump next week at Fieldstone before the Masters at Spruce Meadows."

"The first round did not walk as hard as it rode," admitted O'Shea after his win. "The triple combination walked a little short, and with my horse, when I jumped in, I really supported him up front. He was good in front, but knocked it behind. In the jump-off I just kept my hand really soft and he jumped it really well in front and behind."

O'Shea continued, "We have this format a lot in Europe, and sometimes it has worked to my advantage and sometimes it has not, but today it really did, so I was very happy about that." O'Shea has been riding Primo De Revel, a 12-year-old Dutch Warmblood gelding, for six years. "We've had a lot of fun," he noted. "He hasn't jumped since Lake Placid when he won the grand prix, and before that he won the grand prix in April during the spring series in Wellington. I am over the moon with him. He's a really fantastic horse. He's a real trier. He's very easy to ride, very straight forward, I just have to get him to the jump. He does everything else."

The Silver Oak Tournament already resulted in one win for O'Shea, who has had a wonderful week in New Hampshire. "I love this show; everything has just been fantastic," he expressed. "The ground was fantastic today, there was a super crowd, they had a band, there was great food, they thought of everything for the horses and the riders. The stalls are actually a stall and a half. They are huge stalls. I've never been at a show where the stalls are so big, which is very nice for the horses. I think the horses really enjoyed it!"

RESULTS:

219 - Grand Prix II2a/d - 26 entries □

- 1 205 Primo De Revel Michael Hayden Paul O'Shea
- 2 225 Mark Q Kevin Babington Kevin Babington
- 3 251 Whitney St Bride's Farm Ramiro Quintana
- 4 155 Quiz Oakland Ventures Darragh Kenny
- 5 241 Wintu Jane Forbes-Clark Leslie Howard
- 6 230 Shorapur Shorapur Llc Kevin Babington
- 7 240 Tic - Tac Jane Forbes-Clark Leslie Howard
- 8 102 Flaming Star CMJ Sporthorse Llc Charles Jacobs
- 9 153 Picolo Oakland Ventures Darragh Kenny
- 10 216 Roundthorn Madios Tequestrian Farms Llc Lauren Tisbo
- 11 172 My Pleasure My Pleasure Llc Peter Leone
- 12 146 Kismet 50 Bellissimo Llc Candice King

Source: Press release from Phelps Media Group, Inc.