

Smoke Rise Equestrians Win Major Honors



Cariann Johnson (left) and Catherine Apostol representing the Smoke Rise Riding Club achieved outstanding results in the Marshall and Sterling Pony Medal category. In this national competition where the top 75 riders in the country were named, Catherine finished sixth and Cariann seventh, bringing an unprecedented level of accomplishment to the Smoke Rise Riding Club.

Smoke Rise trainer, Ann Mitchell, prepared her riders by bringing them to events where the rings were similar to the ones the riders would experience in their major competitions. The training obviously paid off.

Catherine Apostol also went on to win 1st place in the US Hunter Jumper Association Zone 2 finals in Harrisburg, PA. Again, this was a first for the Riding Club. This competition was held in the massive equestrian arena of the Pennsylvania Farm and Expo Center. Only the top 15 riders from New Jersey, NY and PA qualified to compete in this prestigious event. The riders had to compete in three events and their scores for the events were combined to determine the overall winner.

Catherine was understandingly nervous in her first jumping event and committed some faults, which dropped her to a disappointing 9th place finish. However, she composed herself and executed a nearly flawless performance in her second jumping event, earning her a first place finish. In her final event, the “under saddle,” she and her pony, Winnie, also had an excellent result. In this event the judges looked for a pony that is well built with a smooth, quiet movement, good manners, good conformation and excellent temperament. When Catherine’s scores for the three events were combined she had the highest score among the 15 riders, earning her the coveted Championship blue ribbon.

There are numerous other Smoke Rise Riders who have had outstanding results for the season. We are awaiting the final standings of the NJ Horse Shows Association (NJHSA) and the NJ Professional Horsemen’s Association(NJPHA) where we expect to have a number of Smoke Rise Equestrians who will have earned ribbons as top performers.

Standby. We will report on these results as soon as they are released.