



Horses

Rule at

Texas Rose Park

By *Aimee Robinson* | Photos By *Sarah A. Miller*

Some of the country's top equestrians and show horses frequent the Texas Rose Horse Park near Tyler, a riding and jumping facility that hosts world-class events.

On Sept. 25-28, Rose Park will be the site of the Nutrena American Eventing Championships – the premier jumping and riding event in the United States. Hundreds of the top riders, on every level, will compete for prize money and the chance to be named the best in the nation.

In promoting the upcoming competition, the United States Eventing Association praises the Texas Rose Horse Park for having “championship-caliber courses on all

levels” and excellent amenities that include “high-quality permanent stabling as well as spectacular viewing areas for almost all of the show grounds.”

The family-owned operation, with 700 horse stalls and seven show arenas has hosted major competitions on its rolling hills north of Tyler since 2007.

Capt. Mark Phillips of Great Britain, an equestrian Olympic gold medalist who helped

design the courses that will be used in the national championships, says that Texas Rose Park has “some of the best footing (competition surfaces for horses) anywhere in the world.” A surface with good footing helps horses perform at their highest level and reduces the chances of injury.

The footing along with each detail at the park was made with the welfare of horses in mind, Texas Rose Horse Park co-owner, Kim Brunson, says. “We wanted to get back to what’s best for the horse.”

EVENTING

The sport of eventing harkens back to the earliest days of horsemanship when boots were always polished, hunt coats pressed and well-groomed horses glimmered on the show grounds.

Eventing presents a challenging set of three tests of horse-and-rider teamwork that takes place over three days.

Test 1. Dressage emphasizes balance and discipline through a series of complex movements. The purpose of dressage is to demonstrate the level of communication between the horse and rider to and to display the power and grace required to perform each movement with balance, rhythm and suppleness.

Test 2. Cross-country jumping is a high-speed test of endurance and trust as horse-and-rider pairs soar across open fields and confront obstacles in hopes of a clear, safe and fast round.

Test 3. Show jumping is a quick-on-the-hooves contest in which horse and rider must clear a set of jumps set up inside a challenging stadium course.

A TOP RIDER

Equestrian Ellen Doughty-Hume of Forney has been riding since she was 8 years old and travels across the country to take part in competitions.

She even said “I do” to her husband on the grounds of the Kentucky Horse Park in Lexington, Kentucky, during one of the country’s most prestigious horse shows, the Rolex Kentucky Three-Day Event.

During the wedding ceremony, her father took the reins of her show horse, Sir Oberon, and led her down the aisle to her husband-to-

be, Alistair. During the ceremony, Obie stood with his mane neatly plaited and decked in a blanket of lace as U.S. equestrian Olympian and ordained minister David O’Connor wedded the couple.

Unlike many riders, Hume doesn’t have a trainer and she didn’t grow up in the equestrian world. She used videos and attended clinics to advance her riding skills. When she was 16, she spent \$2,000 to

purchase her first horse, a thoroughbred that she trained herself for competitions.

Hume enjoys riding at Texas Rose Park. She says the hills, terrain and challenges make the horse park unique. “It’s just a really nice venue to go to. I try to show there as often as I can.”

For more information about upcoming events at the Texas Rose Horse Park, visit texasrosehorsepark.com. 



The Park

Housed on Texas Rose Horse Park’s 1,700 acres are a full-size lighted indoor arena, six all-weather footing outdoor show arenas including one Grand Prix Jumper Ring, three show barns housing more than 350 stalls, a tent pad that can accommodate 350 more horses, a beginner novice through advanced cross-country course, a RV park and concession court.

The park hosts top-rated dressage shows, hunter/jumper shows, horse trial events and breed shows as well as dog agility trials and training events, horse jumping clinics and equestrian drill competitions.

It also serves non-equestrian events including fundraisers, weddings and corporate outings.

