Hugh Graham notches another win at Equestrian Park

By Bill Rea

Schomberg's Hugh Graham and Knock Out 3E have had a pretty good show-jumping season, and they added to that recently by winning the $25,000 Fall Finale Grand Prix.

They were among 212 horse and rider combinations that entered the event, held in the indoor arena at Caledon Equestrian Park, and only five entries made it to the jump-off.

Graham was third in the jump-off, and was the second competitor to jump clear, shaving a fraction of a second off the time posted by Hyde Moffat of Brantford, who was also clear aboard Stormin'. The final competitor was Kassidy Keith of Nobleton, riding Cracker Jack. She turned in a very impressive time of 38.9 seconds (more than a second off the pace Graham had set), but they knocked down a rail on the course and that earned her four jumping faults, dropping her back into third place.

It was a rather frustrating day for other local competitors. Sam Walker of Nobleton had two entries.

He was the first contestant in the ring on Anicmo, but two refusals on the course meant disqualification. Things went better with his other mount, Acardi Du Houssoit Z. They turned in a fast round, but picked up four jumping faults and had to settle for eight place in the end.

Kendra Martenfeld of Schomberg was entered on EVERDEEN, but they had two refusals as well.

Kim Farlinger of Orangeville had two mounts in the competition too. Her first ride was on Stanley Stone, who again proved he's a very fast horse, posting the best time in the first round. He alas knocked over rails on two jumps, leaving with eight faults.

Farlinger's other mount was Concello, who picked up four faults, finishing in ninth.

Jay Hayes from Orangeville almost made it to the jump-off on Paratrooper. They were clear on the course, but they took a little more than a second too long to do it, and drew one fault to finish seventh.

Needless to say, Graham was pleased with the performance of his mount, an 11-year-old Canadian Sport Horse gelding owned and bred by King Ridge Stables of King City.

?He's a fast horse,? he said,?so I didn't have to leave him a lot of room.?

The pair were victorious last Friday in the second phase of the Caledon Cup competition, also held in the indoor arena. Graham said he had gone easy on Knock Out over the week, so he was well rested when it came to Sunday.

He observed that some horses are better when it comes to competing indoors, but that's not an issue with his mount.

?This horse jumps both places well,? he remarked.

The next couple of weeks are going to see Graham and Knock Out 3E taking part in some shows in Ohio, but he said they will be back for the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair.

Schomberg's Hugh Graham cleared this jump on Knock Out 3E on the way to victory in the $25,000 Fall Finale Grand Prix.Photo by Bill Rea