

Farlinger and Stanley Stone take Grand Prix at Autumn Classic

By Bill Rea

It's a poorly-kept secret that Orangeville's Kim Farlinger has a fast mount in Stanley Stone.

The pair proved that yet again Sunday, as they rode to victory in the \$25,000 Grand Prix, presented by RAM Equestrian, in the Autumn Classic at Caledon Equestrian Park in Palgrave.

It was a big field, as 38 entries took to the course, and 11 of them made it to the jump-off. They had a rather generous 84 seconds to get through the track, so there were relatively few time faults assessed, but various jumps throughout the course proved to be tricky, and that excused a lot of entries from the second round.

But some performed well despite that, including Hugh Graham from Schomberg, who guided Knock Out 3E cleanly through the first round, and set a fast enough pace in the jump-off to take third.

Schomberg's Beth Underhill knocked down a rail on one of the early jumps, riding Count Me in, and missed the jump-off. Mac Cone of King City came after Underhill, riding ZAIA DI SAN GIOVANNI, but he collected eight faults.

Sam Pegg of Cannington was first to go in the jump-off aboard Shaia de Macheco, and they turned in a fast and clear round in 41.45 seconds. It looked like that might stand, but Graham, going eighth in the round, chopped more than a second from his time, competing the course in 40.01.

Kelly Soleau-Millar of Wellington was a very busy lady, riding three entries in Sunday's event. And all three of them made it to the jump-off.

She ran into some grief in the second round with her first mount Centre Ice. The horse refused at the second jump, then knocked a rail down when they finally cleared it. The eight faults finished them in 11th place for the day.

Her next mount was Itty Bitty, and they took about a second and a half off of Graham's time to take the lead in 38.5.

Farlinger and Stanley Stone were next, and they put the proverbial pedal to the metal, turing in a clear round in just 37.54.

Soleau-Millar had one last chance on Cacharel. Their time of 39.28 would have been good enough for third place, but a rail came down on the very last jump, and that left them in ninth.

And to make the weekend even better, Farlinger and Stanley Stone were the winners Friday in the \$10,000 Open Welcome, presented by Equistro.

She wasn't sure, but Farlinger thought Sunday's victory was the sixth this season on Stanley Stone at the Palgrave facility.

?Stanley was fantastic all week,? she declared after the awards ceremony.

The 12-year-old warmblood gelding is owned by Alan Chesler.

She added luck played a bit of a role, citing that she got to go late in the first round and was the second last to go in the jump-off, meaning she knew what time they had to beat.

?I don't think he even rubbed a jump,? she said of her mount.

She also observed the jump-off was tricky Sunday, with a lot of turns early on, and galloping at the end.

?I was able to go after Hugh and Kelly,? she reflected.

Thinking back to Frida's event, she said it was a good class. Time was tight, so there weren't many clear rounds.

Farlinger said the course needed a careful horse who could jump and run, and that's what she had.

?He knows his job and he really knows what he needs to win,? she remarked.



Kim Farlinger of Orangeville cleared all the jumps Sunday aboard Stanley Stone to take the \$25,000 Grand Prix.