

Tiffany Foster scores second \$35,000 WEF Challenge Cup of season

For the second time this season, Canada's Tiffany Foster of North Vancouver, B.C., won the \$35,000 Ruby et Violette WEF Challenge Cup last Thursday at the Winter Equestrian Festival in Wellington, Florida.

Held each Thursday during the 12-week Winter Equestrian Festival, Foster claimed victory in week eight, riding Brighton before returning to the International Arena to take her second victory with Victor in the final week of competition.

A starting field of 38 entries attempted the track set by course designer Anthony D'Ambrosio of Red Hook, N.Y., with 11 passing the test to qualify for the jump-off. Returning half-way through the jump-off order, Foster laid down another clear round in a time of 40.22 seconds that could not be beat. The final challenger, Samuel Parot of Chile, came closest to catching her time but still fell exactly two seconds short when crossing the timers in 42.22 seconds aboard Atlantis.

"I know Victor very well, we've been together for a long time, and I knew this jump-off was going to suit him," said Foster of the 14-year-old Dutch Warmblood gelding owned by Artisan Farms and Torrey Pines Stable. "He has a pretty good right drift and a lot of the turns were going to the right, so when I walked the jump-off I was hoping I could get into this one because I knew it would be a good one for him. It feels good going into a class like that when you know a horse so well."

In addition to the win, Foster also picked up a \$3,000 bonus in the SSG Gloves Go Clean for the Green promotion for wearing SSG Digital style riding gloves on her way to victory.

"I think it is a great idea, and I would like to thank SSG Gloves," said Foster of the popular promotion run by the Canadian glove manufacturer. "It is a super bonus. With these gloves, they are so nice to wear, you just put them on and you're not doing any extra work at all to win the bonus. I wear them in every class, so it is truly an added bonus. We as riders are really appreciative and grateful that they do that. It helps and goes a long way."

In addition to winning the WEF Challenge Cup in weeks eight and 12, Foster has also been named the Martha Jolicoeur Leading Lady Rider on three occasions, thanks to her consistent performances throughout the 12-week circuit. Between Foster and Eric Lamaze, the pair won half of the WEF Challenge Cup classes offered in 2016. Even more impressive is the fact that the six wins came with five different horses, all owned by Andy and Carlene Ziegler's Artisan Farms in partnership with Lamaze's Torrey Pines Stable.

"Eric has a good plan for us going into the winter circuit," said Foster, 31, of working with 2008 Canadian Olympic Champion Eric Lamaze of Schomberg. "Thanks to Artisan Farms and their generosity with how many horses we have, we are able to make a schedule that suits the horses the best and they are never overused. I came into this week with Victor after he had three weeks off, and I have still been able to compete in every single class throughout the whole circuit because I have so many great horses, and that is because of Artisan."

"Andy and Carlene have invested in a lot of young horses for us and I think you'll see as time goes on, like with my young horse, Brighton, that when they come out, we already have a pretty strong partnership with them," she added. "We've been doing smaller classes with them, but for a long time."

At the conclusion of the Winter Equestrian Festival, Foster will return to Artisan Farms' European base in Vrasene, Belgium. She will then compete as a member of the Canadian Team in the Furusiyya Nations' Cup to be held during CSIO4* Coapexpan, Mexico, from April 28 to May 1.



Tiffany Foster and Victor sail over the Artisan Farms signature fence on their way to victory in the \$35,000 Ruby et Violette WEF

Challenge Cup Round XII held March 31 at the Winter Equestrian Festival in Wellington, Florida. Photo by Starting Gate Communications