

Wellington Girl Rides Her Way To Title



For junior show jumper Frankie Chesler of Wellington, winning the KHT Overseas Junior Jumper Series Award at the 1997 Cosequin Winter Equestrian Festival wasn't really part of her plans.

"I was riding Quarter Horses and doing a lot of barrel racing last year," said the 16 year old, 10th grade student. "I used to go to hunter-jumper shows to watch my dad ride and I got bored being at the shows without a horse to ride. So we got a Quarter Horse we thought could jump."

The Quarter Horse was a 16.1 hand veteran registered as Texas Joe Twiggs. Chesler quickly noticed that nothing scared him, not even taking off from the bad spots the still-learning rider would sometimes get him to.

"He was so brave, I changed his name to Braveheart," she said. "Now his nickname is Mel, for Mel Gibson."

It didn't take long for the new combination to start to click. Starting to

show just this past winter at the Cosequin Winter Equestrian Festival, Chesler and Braveheart started winning on a regular basis.

They won both Junior Jumper (High) Classics during the Festival's stay at the Palm Beach Polo Equestrian Club. Their consistent placings put them in the starting field in the \$15,000 Trelawny Farm Junior American Invitational at Houlihan's Stadium, in Tampa, where they placed eighth.

"Riding in the stadium where they hold the American Invitational was a real

thrill," Chesler said. "It was a great experience."

Chesler returned to Houlihan's Stadium the next night where the Cosequin Winter Equestrian Festival honored it's circuit champions with a special ceremony before the \$100,000 Budweiser American Invitational. Chesler was honored as the Junior Jumper (High) Circuit Champion and as the leading overall Junior Jumper.

"I never expected to lead the circuit," she said. "This was my first time riding high juniors and although I did think I'd get some rib-

bons, I never thought I'd do this well."

While Chesler may not have expected her 1997 accomplishments, success is not new to her. At age nine, she won the Pony Classic at the Winter Equestrian Festival. She also was second in the country in the Children's Jumper Division.

Frankie has been coached through the years by her parents, Sherry and Alan Chesler of Sher-Al Farm. They started her in leadline classes when she was four years old.



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Frankie Chesler and her American Quarterhorse, Braveheart, have been a formidable presence in the junior jumper division, and are the current circuit leaders.

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