



## Chesler-Ortiz takes first at \$75,000 World Cup qualifier

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For The Banner

There was no real labour for Frankie Chesler-Ortiz and her nine-year-old Dutch Warmblood mare Picolien Zeldenrust to deliver the winning jump off time of 52.65 seconds in the \$75,000 FEI World Cup Qualifier held at the Canadian Country Classic Halton Place Horse Show last weekend.

Regardless of the cold temperatures and the intermittent mist and rain, Chesler-Ortiz managed to outride and outrun 20 other horse-and-riders to be victorious in this challenging but fun class.

International course designer and former Canadian Equestrian Team Member Danny Foster built a highly technical and challenging 16 obstacle class on a meticulously groomed grass ring that boasts some tricky up and down slopes throughout.

This challenged riders to both jump the obstacles clear and to navigate over the uneven ground and the jumps cleanly.

"I have had the opportunity to ride over a Danny Foster designed class before," Chesler-Ortiz remarked, "and I have always found them to be both exciting and demanding. "Today's course was both fun to ride and at the same time was not just handed to

us, we all were working hard out there."

Not only were they designed skillfully, each jump in the ring boasted bright colours and decorations that caught the eye of all spectators as well as a few horses.

A model antique car, a canoe, cast iron work, flowers and plants were just a few highlights of the class.

Outside of the ring, a local car club presented their classic and priceless cars and over in the indoor arena, a market place sold everything from fine foods to horse ware.

There was also a popular silent auction in the spectators tent that helped to raise money for CASHh, the Cancer Assistance Service of Halton Hills.

Of the 20 horse-and-rider combinations to enter the class, only four survived to advance to the jump-off including Chesler-Ortiz with her Indoctro bred mare.

During the jump-off, the time allowed was condensed to promote speed and the jumps were raised and widened to encourage technical precision by the four riders competing in the second round of action.

A long gallop to a down hill double combination to a full gallop with a tight turn to the inside big blue oxer and then a quick and sharp rollback to the last jump, an eye-catching

rainbow coloured triple bar kept everyone on their toes.

Entering the ring third, Chesler-Ortiz knew there was already a double clear posted by fellow rider Mike Grinyer aboard his mount Alcatraz, so clear and quick was all that was on her mind.

"I knew that the time was going to have to be quick and I knew that Picolien could do it. She tries for me with her whole heart, I am so proud of her progress. I knew she would be a star from the first time I saw her and bought her as a young horse in Holland," the rider said.

Chesler-Ortiz managed to catch Grinyer's time by almost three seconds and held on to the lead to capture first place ahead of Mike Grinyer, Ainsley Vince aboard Catch 22 and Amy Millar on Sweet Dreams. She also finished in eighth aboard Ranville who had the second to last jump down in the first round to incur four faults.

Next show for the Sher-Al family is the American Gold Cup in Cleveland, Ohio and then on to the always exciting and competitive Tournament of Champions in Palgrave, where the Young Horse Development Series Finale will take place along with the \$25,000 AMJ Campbell Speed Derby, \$50,000 World Cup Qualifier and the \$100,000 Canada Cup Final.