

► Deslauriers Gets It Done

Lucy Deslauriers will be graduating to full-sized mounts this year, so this marked her final trip to USEF Pony Finals. But she made her swan song appearance count, winning the Equisport Insurance/USEF Pony Medal Final on Aug. 13.

The initial track caused problems everywhere, especially in the first two fences, a line coming toward the in-gate set at 90' for small ponies, 95' for mediums and 101'6" for larges.

"Too many times the course designers start with a single fence," said Sue Ashe, who judged the class along with Bob Braswell and spent several days helping Bobby Murphy design the course. "The first line wasn't extremely forward, but you just had to get your rhythm and come on. The kids didn't need to really gallop it—they just needed to open up their stride."

Plenty of serpentine turns and a halt after the final fence tripped up competitors. After 183 riders took a turn around the Alltech Arena—the first time the class was held in this venue—Deslauriers was called back ninth of the 25 riders invited for the second round. That was where she really impressed the judges.

"She was cool as a cucumber, and she got better and better as the class went on," said Ashe, Wellington, Fla. "Once she got to the second round she absolutely won that class."

"I was pretty nervous," admitted Deslauriers, of New York City. "I knew the other riders were great. I just wanted to go in and put in the best test I could ride."

Deslauriers, 13, stayed on top,



At her final USEF Pony Medal Finals appearance, Lucy Deslauriers topped the Equisport Insurance/USEF Medal Final.

(MOLLIE BAILEY PHOTO)

finishing ahead of Daisy Farish, with Ava Stearns taking third. Deslauriers tacked up Centerfield for the occasion, a gray Welsh-Thoroughbred cross (Champlain Rainmaker—Nautical Quest) who finished overall third in the large pony hunter division.

Both Deslauriers' parents—Lisa Deslauriers (née Tarnopol Silverman) and Mario Deslauriers—have competed internationally for the United States, with Mario holding the record as the youngest rider—at 19—to win the FEI World Cup Final. Her parents coach her at home, and Krista Freundlich of Beacon Hill Stables and Stonehenge Stables help her at shows.

"It's helpful because they can tell me how I can ride the course better the next time," said Lucy. "The hardest one on me is actually my twin brother Jack. He doesn't ride, but he really knows what's going on."