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The equestrian team is coming off of a second place finish at regionals last year. (Photo courtesy of Emma Sylvester '25).

Equestrian opens season with 3rd place finish

By Isabella Gaglione, Editor-in-Chief

EASTON -The equestrian team began its campaign with a third-place finish out of 11 teams in its semester-opening show in Ringoes, New Jersey, last Sunday.

With 23 total points, the team fell nine points behind Delaware Valley University and four points behind Bloomsburg University. The Leopards tied in points with host Lehigh University but clinched the podium spot by earning more points from jumping than Lehigh.

"I'm really proud of the team and how we all came together," senior captain Emma Sylvester said. "Obviously, there's always more room to improve, but I think we had some solid rides all around in each division, whether or not those were point riders."

Sunday's outing began with freshman Benjamin Morris placing third in open fences.

Freshman Natalie Myers earned first in intermediate fences and third in flat; senior Kristina Torkelsen placed fourth in intermediate fences.

"I rode well, I was honestly surprised over fences," Myers said. "It was good, but there were a lot of distances and there were some things that I was surprised that it scored that high."

Myers received the title of Reserve High Point Rider at her first collegiate show after breaking a three-way points tie with horse-related trivia.

"I was very happy with it," Myers said. "I thought the whole day went well and, I mean, it would have been fun either way, but it made it a good experience."

Myers' achievement highlighted the talent in this year's freshman class, according to sophomore rider Ava Gustafson.

"It shows that we do have a solid team that just came in in the freshman class," Gustafson said. "Her success is the team's success, so everyone can celebrate with her."

The limit level saw two podium finishes from Gustafson, who left the show with a third and first-place finish in fences and flat, respectively.

"You can gauge how well you've done because of knowing which mistakes you made and what you did well," Gustafson said. "So I know I had a solid ride for my jump. I made like, one solid mistake."

Gustafson's performance at this show allowed her to point out of her division.

"Everyone was super excited for me, and I'm happy to go against more advanced competition," she said. Sophomore Bram Halpert also pointed out of his division with a second-place finish in the novice division. Senior Connor Port placed fourth place in limit fences and Sylvester finished fifth in limit flat. Senior Ashley Holland placed sixth in limit flat.

A factor in the success of the team's rides is their horses, which are randomly selected for each show.

"It is pretty nerve-wracking, especially if you pull a horse that maybe was acting up in schooling or something, but a big part of it is just going with the flow and applying what you've learned in lessons to a show ring," Sylvester said.

The Leopards competed without their coach Kelly Poff, allowing the team to move in for support.

"It's a good opportunity for us to bond with each other because we really relied on each other for the support we might be lacking with Kelly's absence," Gustafson said.

That support helps in individual rides. "Riding can definitely be a mentally challenging sport because it's contingent on a lot of different factors," Gustafson said. "Just talking it out with people and getting the reassurance from your teammates can help remind you that you're capable."



Wills for Heroes

Free Service to Veterans, First Responders,
Spouses/Partners

Saturday, November 9, 2024

Monroe County Bar Association
Hosted by American Legion Post 346
126 E. 5th Street
East Stroudsburg PA 18301

In partnership with the Pennsylvania Bar Association's Young Lawyers Division, the Monroe County Bar Association is honored to invite you to participate in our upcoming **Wills for Heroes** program. This program is a free service that provides Wills*, Living Wills, and Healthcare and Financial Powers of Attorney to first responders, and their spouses and partners.

If you die without a Will, Pennsylvania's intestate laws will determine who will receive your property. Undoubtedly, your loved ones' grief will be overwhelming; a clear expression of your intent, desires, and wishes may help ease some of this inevitable burden. While nobody likes to think about an untimely death, it is best that you express your wishes through a written document. For your family's peace of mind, please consider this invaluable opportunity, offered completely free to you and your spouse/partner.

On **Saturday, November 9, 2024**, volunteer attorneys will be conducting a **Wills for Heroes** program. This event will be held at the **American Legion Post 346, 126 East 5th Street, East Stroudsburg PA**. Each appointment lasts approximately 1 hour and at the conclusion of it you will have notarized legal documents – a Will, Living Will, and Health Care and Financial Powers of Attorney (or any combination thereof). Appointments are being scheduled from **11:00 AM to 4:00 PM**.

Registration is required. Due to scheduling, walk-ins *may* not be accommodated. Register at:

www.pabar.org/wfh

The password is **WFH**.

You and your spouse/partner will have back-to-back appointments. Please schedule your appointment early as this event is sure to fill up fast.

If you have any questions about the program, please contact Lori Siegle at lori@monroebar.org. For more information on the program, visit the Pennsylvania Bar Association at [Wills for Heroes \(pabar.org\)](http://WillsforHeroes(pabar.org)).

*If your estate exceeds approximately **\$1,000,000**, this service is unavailable to you due to the complexity of your estate and the limited time to complete the legal documents. *For determining if your estate is over \$1,000,000, include your cash, personal property, stock and bonds, real estate equity, savings, cash value of a whole/universal life insurance policy only (not the amount of the insurance policy).*