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For Immediate Release

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Syracuse Invitational Sporthorse Tournament Returns to Syracuse *2008 Gold Medal Olympic Team to Participate*

SYRACUSE, NEW YORK, October 27, 2008— The Syracuse Invitational Sporthorse Tournament returns to the city this week, bigger and better according to organizers. The Tournament, which is in its sixth year adds, the 125th National Horse Show to its line-up, bringing the history and prestige of that venerable institution which called Madison Square Garden in New York City home for over 100 years.

“A lot has happened at the Tournament since that first year when Syracuse welcomed this new sport into the community,” says John Madden, Chairman of the Organizing Committee and Cazenovia resident. “We have more horses and riders this year, but the real story is that we are more established, and with the added cache of the National Horse Show, we had to turn away about 1200 very good riders who wanted to compete. That just shows how badly people want to make it to Syracuse. People are working all year to qualify to compete here.”

Beyond the increase in numbers, Madden points to a number of new initiatives this year. “We are increasing our educational offerings all the time. Two lectures by noted author and animal behaviorist Dr. Temple Grandin is sure to sell out. We’ve got such a full range of free lectures and activities, exhibitors and things for kids, that we’re using every available inch of the Oncenter and the War Memorial, not to mention a good part of the County parking garage that will serve as stabling for most of our 400 horses during the Tournament. In fact, we found that we needed to add another night of competition to fit everything in – this year things get started on Tuesday night instead of Wednesday.”

“We are thrilled to welcome the Tournament back to Syracuse for its sixth year now,” said Syracuse Convention and Visitors Bureau President, David Holder. “Not only does it draw a crowd of nearly 18,000, the Tournament also has an economic impact of over \$6.2 million on Onondaga County.”

Some highlights of the Tournament are Friday night’s honoring of the gold medal U.S. Olympic show jumping team in their only appearance together since their Olympic win. Special “Halloween with the Horses” activities will take place as well, including a costume contest, trick or treating, and a fast-paced Gambler’s Choice competition that requires riders to take the challenging course on in full costume.

Saturday's highlight is the \$100,000 Budweiser World Cup Qualifier of Syracuse. Competition wraps up on Sunday with the Animal Planet Sporthorse Cup scheduled to be broadcast on Animal Planet on January 10th, 2009.

The ticketed competitions are as follows: (Full schedule is available at [www.SyracuseInvitational .com](http://www.SyracuseInvitational.com))

Wednesday, October 29 • Start time: 7:00 p.m.

- National Horse Show Opening Night Hunter Competitions

Thursday, October 30 • Start time: 7:00 p.m.

- Pasmore Stables Horsemen's Cup
- Regular Working Hunter Stake—presented by Brookway Stables
- Atlas Fence 1.40m Speed

Friday, October 31 • Start time: 7:00 p.m.

- Syracuse Corporate Team Challenge
- CN Gambler's Choice

Saturday, November 1

Afternoon Session start time: 2:00 p.m.

- TK99 Speed Derby presented by BMW
- Empire Tractor Ride & Drive
- National Horse Show ASPCA Maclay Final Round

Evening session start time: 7:00 p.m.

- Budweiser FEI World Cup Qualifier of Syracuse

Sunday, November 2 • Start time: 2:00 p.m .

- Animal Planet Sporthorse Cup

(To be televised Jan. 10, 2009 on Animal Planet)

Some highlights of events outside the competition arena include (free unless noted):

- Two presentations by Dr. Temple Grandin, author of *Animals in Translation* and *Thinking in Pictures*: and other reports from my life with autism (ticketed) partial proceeds to benefit the Facilitated Communication Institute at Syracuse University
- Practical Horseman Presents: Horse and Rider Potential – An Insider's View with: George Morris, coach of the gold medal Olympic team, and noted trainer John Madden (ticketed)
- Equine Industry Career and College Fair Program
- How do horses fly? Learn how horses travel through the friendly skies and experience their accommodations first hand
- Joseph Pentangelo of television's *Animal Precinct* will speak on how to spot horse abuse and neglect
- The Budweiser Clydesdales
- Meet the Olympic team on Friday at 5:00 p.m. Also, "Conversations with the Riders" will be held throughout the week during which audience members will get a chance to 'get up close and personal' with some of the top riders at the Tournament
- Cazenovia College miniature horse drill team
- The therapeutic power of horses – a discussion and demonstration of therapeutic riding with an emphasis on its uses with autism. Session presented by NARHA premier accredited EquiCenter with the support of Syracuse area NARHA member facility From The Ground Up Therapeutic Riding Center
- USEF Drugs and Medications Workshop with - Dr. Stephen Schumacher, Chief Administrator of USEF's Equine Drugs & Medications Program (ticketed)
- A Journey through the Digestive System of the Horse – with a live endoscopic exam (ticketed)
- Equus Foundation "Deal or No Deal" dinner (ticketed)

- Kids' activities including the always-popular craft table, autograph sessions, and other activities, plus “Halloween With the Horses”
- The Horsin' Around program will again welcome children from local schools for field trips to the Tournament

Tickets for featured competitions: Tickets for Morris/Madden Clinic and featured Tournament competitions (Wednesday, Thursday and Friday at 7 PM; Saturday at 2PM and at 7PM; and Sunday at 2PM) range from \$10.00 to \$25.00 and are available through Ticketmaster (www.ticketmaster.com) and the Oncenter Box Office (315-435-2121).

The Syracuse Invitational Sporthorse Tournament featuring the 125th National Horse Show welcomes the top-ranked equestrians from across the US and the world to downtown Syracuse to compete at the War Memorial Arena in the Oncenter Complex. The event features a full slate of high-level competition, entertainment, shopping and exhibitions and runs October 29 to November 2, 2008. A 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization, the Syracuse Invitational benefits Cornell University Equine Hospital and Vera House.

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