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Omaha Hosts 2017 FEI World Cup Finals

International Equestrian Event Draws Star Power

OMAHA, NE. March 30, 2017 – Olympic gold medalists, an NHL CEO, the star of one of television’s most popular shows, and the daughter of the richest man in the world will be on hand as Omaha hosts the 2017 FEI World Cup Horse Jumping and Dressage Finals from March 29th through April 2nd.

In 2014, the Fédération Equestre Internationale selected Omaha over cities such as London and Hong Kong to host this year’s World Cup. Last year Göteborg, Sweden hosted the World Cup and next year it will be in Paris, France.

“The FEI World Cup is considered one of the most prestigious competitions in the sport,” said Keith Backsen, executive director of Visit Omaha. “This event is expected to draw the best riders and horses from across the globe and provide Omaha yet another opportunity to host a high profile sporting event, complete with high profile riders and spectators,” added Backsen.

Riders from at least 18 countries, including five Olympic gold medalists from England, Switzerland, Germany and the United States, will compete in the 2017 World Cup in Omaha. The CEO of the NHL Boston Bruins hockey team will be among them; Charlie Jacobs has qualified in horse jumping. Kaley Cuoco, star of CBS’s “The Big Bang Theory,” has reserved tickets for the event and may be spotted in the stands cheering on California rider Karl Cook. And Jennifer Gates, daughter of U.S. billionaire Bill Gates, will ride in the Grand Prix, an event held in conjunction with the 2017 World Cup.

An international cargo plane carrying 40 horses arrived from Europe on Saturday, March 25th, and another plane with 13 horses onboard arrived from Palm Beach, Florida this past Monday. Temporary stables have been set up inside CenturyLink Center Omaha, the city’s 346,000 square foot convention center and arena. The five-day event includes a competition in two Olympic equestrian categories: show jumping and dressage, also known as “horse dancing.” The World Cup experience also includes family-friendly activities, a children’s education expo, live music, and a boutique and shopping village designed specifically around the warm-up arena so visitors may browse, shop, and dine while watching the world’s elite competitors warm up their horses.

Omaha is no stranger to big sporting events; the city hosted the U.S. Olympic Swim Trials in 2008, 2012 and 2016 in front of record-breaking crowds. The city has also been the site of U.S. Figure Skating and U.S. Speed Skating Championships, NORCECA and FIVB International Volleyball Championships, and has been home to the NCAA Men’s College World Series for more than 60 years.

Visit Omaha, also known as the Omaha Convention & Visitors Bureau, is the official tourism authority for the City of Omaha.

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