



NEWS RELEASE

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Courageous Comet named 2009 Rood & Riddle Thoroughbred Sport Horse of the Year

*Rood & Riddle Equine Hospital honors top
USEF Thoroughbred competitor at the annual TOBA Awards*

The Thoroughbred Owners and Breeders Association (TOBA) held its 25th annual National Awards Dinner in Lexington, Kentucky, September 10, 2010, honoring the achievements of Thoroughbred owners and breeders in North America. A new honor instituted this year, the Rood & Riddle Thoroughbred Sport Horse of the Year Award was awarded to top eventing horse, Courageous Comet, owned by Tom and Becky Holder.

Courageous Comet, a stakes-placed winner of moderate success in New York, left the racetrack in 2000 to begin a new career as sport horse. After initial training and use in fox hunting, Courageous Comet was sold to Becky Holder, an Olympic rider with a known reputation for turning ex-racehorses into top eventers. Courageous Comet excelled in his new career and helped Holder earn a spot on the U.S. team for the 2008 Beijing Olympics. In 2009 Holder and "Comet" won the CIC3* Maui Jim Horse Trials and finished second in two additional events. A third-place finish in the 2010 Rolex Kentucky Three-Day Event and victory in the American Eventing Championship September 9-12, earned the duo a place to represent the U.S. again, this time on the Land Rover U.S. Eventing Team at the 2010 Alltech FEI World Equestrian Games at the Kentucky Horse Park, September 25-October 10.

Rood & Riddle Equine Hospital, partnering with the United States Equestrian Federation and the Thoroughbred Owners and Breeders Association, created a series of awards to recognize Thoroughbreds which excel in the sport horse disciplines: eventing, show jumping, dressage, and hunters. Divisional awards, named for legendary Thoroughbred sport horses, will be given to those thoroughbreds who are the top point earners each year in U.S. Equestrian Federation (USEF) competitions: Hunter (**Stocking Stuffer Award**), Jumper (**Touch of Class Award**),

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Dressage (**Keen Award**) and Eventing (**Antigua Award**). The divisional honors will be awarded at the USEF's annual Silver Stirrup Awards Banquet in January 2011.

Courageous Comet was selected as the overall winner by a celebrity committee comprised of four chefs d'equipe (division heads) for each discipline: George Morris (show jumping), Mark Phillips (Eventing), Patty Heuckeroth (Hunters), Hilda Gurney (Dressage), as well as famed U.S. Olympics equestrian and racehorse trainer Michael Matz.

"Our goal in creating these awards is to increase awareness of Thoroughbreds' value as sport horses," explains Tom Riddle, DVM, a founding partner of Rood & Riddle Equine Hospital (www.roodandriddle.com) based in Lexington, Kentucky. "While some Thoroughbreds are raised specifically to be sport horses, others are finding greater success in their second careers as sport horses than they did in races. Through this award, we hope to decrease the number of unwanted horses in the U.S. by demonstrating their value in these non-racing disciplines."

With approximately 90 percent of Rood & Riddle's practice focused on Thoroughbred and sport horses, Dr. Riddle says that his team is excited to reach out to members of both communities through these awards. "We are interested in their worlds, and in helping them find solutions to issues above and beyond providing the finest veterinary care available. Thoroughbreds are prized for their beauty and athleticism. Our hope is that with these awards, we can direct more attention to their second career potential."

Mr. Tom Holder accepted the award on behalf of his wife, Becky, who was competing with Courageous Comet in the American Eventing Championship, where, fittingly, they scored an impressive victory. A perpetual grand prize trophy will also be displayed at Rood & Riddle Equine Hospital in Lexington, Kentucky.

About Rood & Riddle

Lexington-based Rood & Riddle is a full-service equine hospital established in 1986 as a referral center for horses requiring specialized medical and surgical care. Today, Rood & Riddle is known and respected throughout the world for its innovative and highly skilled treatment of horses. The hospital facility offers a full range of services including surgery, internal medicine, advanced diagnostic imaging, a focused Podiatry Center and a specialized Reproductive Center. The practice also provides ambulatory services (on-site care) for breeding farms, sport horse facilities, horse shows and events, with a variety of services, including emergency and preventative care, general reproduction, lameness, radiography, podiatry, and internal medicine.

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About TOBA

TOBA, based in Lexington, KY, was formed in 1961 and is a national trade organization of leading Thoroughbred horse breeders and owners. TOBA's mission is to "*improve the economics, integrity and pleasure of the sport on behalf of Thoroughbred owners and breeders.*" Projects managed by TOBA include the American Graded Stakes Committee, Sales Integrity Program, The Racing Game and Claiming Crown. Thoroughbred Charities of America (TCA) is the charitable arm of TOBA. TOBA is the owner of The Blood-Horse Inc., and is represented on the Board of Directors of the National Thoroughbred Racing Association as a founding member.

About the UNITED STATES EQUESTRIAN FEDERATION, The National Governing Body for Equestrian Sport

The vision of the United States Equestrian Federation® is to provide leadership for equestrian sport in the United States of America by promoting the pursuit of excellence from the grassroots to the Olympic Games, based on a foundation of fair, safe competition and the welfare of its human and equine athletes.