



Vizcarrondo Jumps To The Win In Virginia CCI*

She and Trick take over the lead with a clear show jumping round.

Roberta Anderson

WITH A WIN in the Virginia International CCI* under their belts, it's hard to believe that Valerie Vizcarrondo and Trick have only been working together for six months.

Last December, Vizcarrondo saw a video of the 15.3-hand, off-the-track, Thoroughbred gelding and bought him sight unseen from an Oklahoma jumper sales barn.

"His name is Trick, and he has a couple of them," joked Vizcarrondo, of Harwood, Md., after finishing on her dressage score of 52.4 points, May 22-25 at the Virginia Horse Center in Lexington.

The 9-year-old gelding stood in second place after the dressage and endurance phases. Only 1.5 penalty points separated the top five horses going into the show jumping in the Anderson Coliseum.

Jumping indoors always adds an extra challenge, and Trick had a hairy moment at a vertical set at a right angle to the entry gate. He jumped the vertical from

nearly a standstill and then hung in the air over the next fence, the first element of a combination. But the pair quickly got back in sync and finished the course flawlessly, 4 seconds under the time.

That left the pressure on leaders Tracy McRae and Merrimac, who had held first place throughout the event. McRae and Merrimac jumped a flowing, flawless round, until the rail on the final jump came down.

Organizers Brian and Penny Ross run one of only a handful of three-days that still offer the long format, and the opportunity to compete at a traditional event seemed to be unanimously appreciated by the riders.

"I like the long format especially for where he [Trick] is," Vizcarrondo said. "It gave me the time to get him out in front of my leg on the roads and tracks and to figure out his balance. And the steeplechase gave me the opportunity to kick him

into gear. For green horses and riders especially, the long format is excellent."

Vizcarrondo said the questions on David O'Connor's cross-country course were fair and appropriate for a championship event. The rolling Virginia terrain makes riders utilize "all those skill factors you are supposed to have learned in your dressage," Vizcarrondo commented. "You have to be balanced and stay off your horse's back, but it's still a galloping course."

The 27-year old, graduate A Pony Clubber from the Annapolis Pony Club now operates Blue Clover Eventing, and she was exuberant after her double-clear cross-country.

"It was a good, long gallop up to the first water on the cross-country, and I had a complete loss of my right-handed steering," she recalled. "But he was on it, and I figured, 'Well we're going.' So I angled the first one and then angled the

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Valerie Vizcarrondo and Trick won the Virginia CCI*.



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second. We finally got back on track for the third element. He just thought the direct way was too easy, so he was going to add his own little flair. He's so good on his feet, and he's always thinking."

This was Trick's fifth start at preliminary, including a win two weeks earlier at MCTA (Md.). The horse came to Vizcarrondo with a record that his owner laughingly refers to as "spotty"—some hunter/jumper, some eventing, more than a few eliminations.

"He had some bad jumper habits; he rushed at things, jumped really flat," Vizcarrondo said. "We did a lot of gridwork to get him using himself and gain confidence. He needed to learn not to fly around like everything was a jump-off."

Their dressage was a personal best for the pair. "We're working on building strength, because he was so upside down when I got him," she said. "I am surprised he has come along so fast, because he really had some serious issues. It took me a week to put his bridle on the first time because no one could touch his right ear.

"I've got big hopes for this one, he's going to be a superstar," she added.

► Exceeding Expectations

McRae's "Mac," an 8-year-old, Thoroughbred gelding, wasn't even broke when the amateur rider from Bedford, Va., bought him three years ago.

"I've taught him pretty much all that he knows, and he's taught me," she reflected.

McRae watched the horse hanging out in a neighbor's field for about four years before buying him. She longed him over some cavaletti and liked what she saw. The duo went preliminary for the first time last year and completed their first intermediate earlier this year at Plantation (Pa.).

"He's been exceeding my expectations all along," she said. "He is supposed to be for sale, but now I don't know."

Wendy Bebie held on to third place with Hoover, a 12-year-old, 15.2-hand, Connemara-Selle Français cross that she bought two years ago as a foxhunter.

"I've always thought foxhunters ought to be well-trained enough to go to a novice horse trials," Bebie explained. "So I took him to one and then to a couple more. It wasn't always smooth, but it was quite clear he was good at it. And now he's going prelim, and we're having a great time. He looks like a tough, bullheaded, clumpy little pony which is exactly what he is."

Bebie, of Round Hill, Va., hunted Hoover last winter but now thinks he may be too hard to hold after experiencing steeplechase. "He thought the steeplechase was just a hoot," she said. "For once I was telling him to go faster. He's a much smarter, scopier, more athletic horse than I thought I had bought. I thought I had one event horse and one foxhunter, but it looks like now I have two event horses."

Bebie competes her other event horse, Phoenix, at the advanced level.

► Galway Blazer Shows The Way

Laura Roberts won the young rider CCI* in her first three-day start. The 16-year-old high school sophomore said her trainer Jennifer Simmons made it possible.

"It was fun and definitely different," said Roberts, of Herndon, Va. "Jen walked me through it, explaining it all to me."

Roberts said her partner's experience also helped. Galway Blazer, a 12-year-old Connemara-Thoroughbred, formerly competed at the advanced level with Wendy Lewis.

"It's nice to know that he knows what he's doing," she said. "If I make a little mistake, he has my back. I'm still learning, and he's teaching me a lot."

The pair won at the Fair Hill Horse



(Brent Gemma Photo)

Halle Dillon guided Naval Parade to victory in the CCIYH* at the Virginia CCI.

VIRGINIA THREE-DAY EVENT AND HORSE TRIALS

Lexington, Va.—May 22-25

CCI*

HORSE/RIDER	DRESSAGE	SPEED & ENDURANCE			SHOW JUMPING Jump/Time	TOTAL
		A&C	B	D		
		Jump/Time	Jump/Time			
1. Trick/Valerie Vizcarrondo	52.4	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	52.4
2. Merrimac/Tracy McRae	52.1	0/0	0/0	0/0	4/0	56.1
3. Hoover/Wendy Bebie	54.5	0/0	0/0	0/0	4/2	60.5
4. Top Drawer/Catana Deskins	57.6	0/0	1/0	0/2.6	0/0	66.0
5. Rocket/Douglas Payne	66.7	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	66.7
6. Tako/Helen Murray	55.7	0/0	0/10	0/0.8	4/2	72.1
7. Henery Will/Stephen Steinhoff	59.3	0/0	0/7	0/0.4	4/2	72.9
8. It's Hilca/Elizabeth Stewart	59.5	0/0	0/2	0/13.6	0/1	76.5
9. Leap Of Faith/Amanda Schoemer	73.1	0/0	0/6	0/6.0	4/0	89.5
10. Flash Point/Duncan MacRae	65.5	0/0	0/0	0/0	4/21	90.5

Also competed: 11. Root Twenty Six/S. Morris, 106.0; 12. SuzieQ/N. Smith, 108.5; 13. Rue/C. Gallagher, 121.5.

Eliminated in show jumping: Fruition's First/H. Payne. Retired in show jumping: Sassy JR/L. Borger. Eliminated on cross-country: Aurora/M. Hansen. Retired on cross-country: Mandala/C. Rutledge.

CCIY*

HORSE/RIDER	DRESSAGE	SPEED & ENDURANCE			SHOW JUMPING Jump/Time	TOTAL
		A&C	B	D		
		Jump/Time	Jump/Time			
1. Galway Blazer/Laura Roberts	52.4	0/0	0/10	0/0	0/0	62.0
2. Baseline/Kaitlin Spurlock	63.6	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	63.6
3. Cold Harbor/Andrew Diemer	59.3	0/0	0/0	0/6.4	0/0	65.7
4. Copperfield/Alex Martone	63.8	0/0	0/0	0/0	4/1	68.8
5. Jumpstreet/Heather Johnston	66.9	0/0	0/0	0/0	8/0	74.9
6. Southern Tango/Katherine Sunderland	74.8	0/0	0/0	0/0	4/0	78.8
7. El Guapo/Meredith Barnes	64.3	0/0	0/2	0/1.2	16/5	88.1
8. Carlingford Sky/Elizabeth McKimmon	75.0	0/0	0/18	0/11.6	4/2	110.2
9. The Hoodlum/Vance Frey	66.7	0/0	0/24	0/12.0	8/5	115.7
10. Karoo/Carroll Courtenay	54.5	0/23	0/0	20/12.0	20/47	176.5

Eliminated on cross-country for dangerous riding: Savannah IX/M. Curtiss. Eliminated on cross-country: Brandenburg's Lucky Charm/K. Berta; In The Nick Of Time/A. Bossong; Decoraed/C. Neubeiser. Retired on cross-country: Brisco Bay/I. deLavis; Doctor Prosper/M. Cavanaugh.

CCIYH*

HORSE/RIDER	DRESSAGE	SPEED & ENDURANCE			SHOW JUMPING Jump/Time	TOTAL
		A&C	B	D		
		Jump/Time	Jump/Time			
1. Naval Parade/Halle Dillon	65.2	0/0	0/0	0/0	8/0	73.2
2. Rosetta Stone/Katie Ruppel	61.4	0/0	0/0	20/0.8	0/4	86.2
3. BFF In Disguise/Colleen Rutledge	56.0	0/0	0/11	0/21.6	12/1	101.8

Withdrawn before show jumping: Hondo/D. Crowell.