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THE SIX-HORSE HITCH SHOWDOWN AT THE BIG E ATTRACTS COMPETITORS FROM ACROSS THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA

During the final weekend of The Big E, Oct. 3-4, the highly anticipated $50,000 Six-Horse Hich Showdown took place in the Coliseum, in West Springfield, Mass. This competition is the grand finale of the Eastern States Exposition (ESE) Horse Show and stands as an annual opportunity for gentle giants to compete for top honors and the largest single-class prize money in the country.

There were 11 six-horse hitch finalists contending for the title of Grand Champion. Eastern States Exposition (ESE) ESE President and CEO Gene Cassidy and Elena Hovagimian, ESE Director of Agriculture, were both in attendance to present the Champion and Reserve Champion with their awards, as well as ride on the winning hitches during their victory laps. ESE Horse Show Hall of Fame inductee Amy Braden provided musical accompaniment via organ.

Emily Koss, the award coordinator for the ESE Horse Show, is to thank for preparing the spoils; winners receive a glass testimonial, a blanket generously supplied by the Vermont Flannel Co. and an ample purse.

Applicants are assessed on extensive criteria, including the quality of the horses, harness, wagon, driver, performance and overall visual appearance. Additionally, each pair or “team” in the hitch is individually judged for their skill and compatibility within their given role as lead team, swing team and wheel team.

The winners were as follows, in order of ranking:

1. Grand Champion: **Red Oak USA**, Arlington, Ohio, driven by Jason Honsberger
2. Reserve Champion: **Lor-Rob Dairy Farm Belgians**, East Bethany, N.Y., driven by Mark Barie
3. **White Mountain Percherons**, North Conway, N.H., driven by Justin Hussey, owned by Julie Hussey
4. **Dutch Country Organics**, Lagrange, Ind., driven by Mark Hochstettler
5. **Ames Percheron Farm Hitch**, Jordan, Minn., trained by Travis Shaw
6. **Stoney Hill Farm**, Penn Yan, N.Y., driven by Kyle Quartaro, owned by Quartaro and Jeff Swan
7. **Red Oak Canada**, Kahnawake of Quebec City, Canada, driven and trained by Wishe Bush
8. **Cedar Hedge Farm**, Bristol, Verm., driven by Lance Bean, trained by Amanada Morse, owned by Morse and Corey Barnes
9. **Trelane Farms**, Lisbon of Ontario, Canada, driven by Justin Hillie
10. **Pine Hollow Dairy**, Locke, N.Y., driven and trained by Dale Mattoon

11. **Mountain View Clydesdales**, Hebron, Conn., driven and trained by Davinia Saglio, owned by Chris Barr

The ESE Horse Show offers congratulations to all participants, particularly Red Oak USA and Lor-Rob Dairy Farm Belgians. ESE would also like to express appreciation for horse show manager, Jay Mullen; horse show administrator, Val Beyer; and his devoted team for making The ESE Draft Horse Show a great success.

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About The Big E

The Big E is the only multi-state fair in North America, celebrating the rich history, culture and traditions of the six New England states. As the principal event of Eastern States Exposition, The Big E presents the finest in agriculture, innovative, commercial, industrial and artistic developments, and the highest caliber of varied entertainment to the people of the United States for more than a century. The 17-day event has grown and become the largest event on the East Coast, recognized as the fourth largest fair in North America by its recent record annual attendance of 1.6 million fairgoers and counting. Head to TheBigE.com or follow us on social media to see what all the buzz is about.

Find images from the Six-Horse Hitch Showdown HERE.