



RECAP OF WOODSIDE SUMMER HORSE TRIALS

‘Sweet’ Win at Intermediate, ‘Wild’ Win at Preliminary, and Event’s Inaugural Modified Highlight Woodside Summer H.T.

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By Jonathan Horowitz

Woodside, CA — Fresh off winning the first-ever international gold medal in eventing for Puerto Rico at the 2023 Central American and Caribbean Games in El Salvador, Lauren Billys Shady and Can Be Sweet returned to their home base of California to win the Intermediate level at the Woodside Summer Horse Trials. Then, Castle Larchfield Purdy, the horse Shady took to two Olympics and one Pan American Games, won the first-ever Modified level held at Woodside with his new partner Nadia Vogt.

At 17 years old, Vogt happens to be four years younger than the 21-year-old Castle Larchfield Purdy. Another teenage rider, 19-year-old Gabriella Ringer, continued her success at the Preliminary level, and her victory aboard Get Wild at Woodside came against her trainers, James and Helen Alliston.

The Woodside Summer H.T. marked the second of three USEA-recognized events hosted at The Horse Park at Woodside in 2023, coming between the Woodside Spring H.T. in May that unveiled new cross-country courses and new custom-built show jumps and the upcoming Woodside Fall International in October that will mark the return of competition at the FEI levels to Woodside.

Shady and Can Be Sweet (Candyman x Tres Belle) won their fourth blue ribbon in their last five events competing at Intermediate with a finishing score of 38.1. Marc Grandia and GHS Calexico (Van Gogh x Penhaligon Cairo), the youngest horse in the field of 12 at the level at 8 years old, finished second with a score of 42.1. It was the bay Irish Sport Horse mare’s second run at Intermediate after they also finished second at The Event at Rebecca Farm in Montana.

“He’s quite confident, and he’s quite powerful, and he’s really different from the other horses I’ve had,” Shady said about Can Be Sweet. “He’s got a lot more [Thoroughbred] blood. He’s a lot hotter than the other horses I’ve ridden. So, for me, it was just taking my time to develop him and learn the ride, but

I've learned a lot getting to ride him and I really enjoy riding him. I just like how fast he is on cross-country. I've been on colder horses before, and that feeling of being able to really let it rip out there has been really fun for me. Also, just riding a horse that's a bit smaller has been fun for me, too, because it really suits my size. I feel like I'm kind of on a pocket rocket. I can be quite efficient on him, which is very nice."



Lauren Billys Shady and Can Be Sweet. Tina Fitch Photography

Shady said that the long-term goals for her and Can Be Sweet, an 11-year-old bay German Sport Horse gelding, could be the 2026 FEI Eventing World Championships and then the 2028 Olympics. They've been together since the horse came from Germany to the United States as a 5-year-old in 2017 and have come a long way from the first time she attempted to ride him.

"I did get bucked off the first day," Shady recalled. "When he landed in the U.S., I got on him on on the mounting block, and he bucked me off at the mounting block. So, we kind started with a bang, but other than that, he's been pretty fun to produce."



Lauren Billys Shady and Can Be Sweet. Tina Fitch Photography

Shady represented Puerto Rico at the 2016 and 2020 Olympics with Castle Larchfield Purdy (Karistos x Hallo Purdy), and the bay Irish Sport Horse gelding has since been teaching the next generation of eventers. Maddie Smith rode “Purdy” to success at the Preliminary and two-star levels in 2022 and the start of 2023, and Vogt began leasing him at the beginning of June.

“He’s a very cool horse; I don’t think I’ve ridden anything like him before,” Vogt said. “He saves you a lot if you mess up because he knows what he’s doing. I love riding him. Whenever I get on his back every day, it brings me joy. He’s very fun to work with—definitely tries to test you a little bit when you first get to know him, but he’s a very good horse. At home, he definitely is the horse of the property. He definitely thinks he’s the man of the barn.”

Vogt is a working student for Shady, and Purdy still resides at Shady’s barn.

“It’s been so fun because I still get to ride him every day,” Shady said. “I still get to train him every day. And then, he’s teaching young girls up the levels. He’s killing it. He’s so great at it. It’s fun to have him around, and he’s kind of the life of the party. Everybody wants to see him, he’s the king, but also he’s quite grumpy. He’s just fun. He’s part of the furniture of the barn. He needs to be there. He wouldn’t want anything different. He loves to compete. He loads himself on the trailer. He really likes to be out. So, it’s good for him.”



Nadia Vogt and Castle Larchfield Purdy. Tina Fitch Photography

Woodside was Purdy’s second USEA-recognized event with Vogt after they finished third at Training at the Twin Rivers Summer H.T. in Paso Robles, California. At Woodside, they were the only horse and rider out of 18 entries in the event’s inaugural Modified level to finish on their dressage score, winning on 29.5 over Sophie Tice and Viva La Vida (Versace x Daydream by D’Accord) with 30.7.

“The cross-country was great,” Vogt said. “I’ve never done Prelim, but I thought it was a very good step-up for Prelim. I like that it followed the Preliminary track, and the course rode really nicely. There were a lot of open spots to gallop. The jumps were really nice, big, and bold.”

Running a Modified level for the first time represents the next chapter in the growth of eventing at Woodside.

“It rode beautifully; people said it looked ominous, but then afterward they came off satisfied and had a great sense of accomplishment because it rode well and was so aligned with the Preliminary course that it was a good test to get them ready for that,” said Victoria Klein, who serves on the Board of Governors of The Horse Park at Woodside.

Added Horse Park Executive Director Steve Roon: “One of the keys about the Modified course is that it takes advantage of all the terrain here at Woodside. It’s through the woods and water and up and down hills with lots of terrain questions and beautiful new jumps that were built for the Modified course.”

Ringer and Get Wild (Plot-Blue x Cantana) won their fifth-straight event at the Preliminary level. The streak started at the Area VI Championships held at the Ram Tap H.T. in Fresno, California, in October 2022. At Woodside, they finished on their dressage score of 27.6, ahead of James Alliston and Cora with 29.3. Ringer trains with James and Helen Alliston at Alliston Equestrian in Castro Valley, California. Helen was fourth on Call Me Rudi.



Gabriella Ringer and Get Wild. Tina Fitch Photography

“She always beats me—every time,” James said with a smile as the three of them rode back to their stables together after the awards ceremony.

Ringer said she’s grateful for the four events that James rode “Ace” back in 2021, including three wins at Preliminary.

“Being part of their barn and riding with such experts really just solidified our partnership and made us feel much stronger,” Ringer said. “He’s so careful, and he’s super scopey, and for the most part, he’s pretty brave. He’s just a really nice partner going to those big jumps knowing that he’ll clear them for sure.”

Ringer was part of the USEA Emerging Athletes U21 (EA21) Program for developing young riders this year and hopes to be selected for the Area VI team that will compete at the 2023 USEF Eventing Young Rider Championships at Galway Downs in Temecula, California, in November.

Get Wild’s win was the 11th at the level for the big 17.1 hh 11-year-old dark bay Dutch Warmblood gelding.

The team at Woodside will now look ahead to the Woodside Fall International on Oct. 6-8 that will feature the event’s first-ever CCI1*-S, as well as a CCI2*-S, CCI3*-S, and CCI4*-S, along with national levels from Starter through Advanced-Intermediate.

“[Bert Wood] will be building 10 additional jumps for Derek’s [di Grazia] FEI courses, and we’re going to continue enhancing all the courses as resources allow,” Klein said.

Links [Results](#) | [Website](#)

The full list of winners from the 2023 Woodside Summer H.T.:

Open Intermediate: Lauren Billys Shady and Can Be Sweet (38.1)
Open Preliminary: Gabriella Ringer and Get Wild (27.6)
Open Modified: Nadia Vogt and Castle Larchfield Purdy (29.5)
Open Training: Ella Garcia and Wynville (31.4)
Jr. Training Rider: Anya Ostrovsky and Dasset Whisper (28.8)
Sr. Training Rider: Suzanne Miller and Kryptonite Z (27.8)
Open Novice: Helen Alliston and Barony (25.0)
Jr. Novice Rider: Emma Slocum and Patito (26.1)
Sr. Novice Rider: Lauren Masi and Far N’ Away (31.4)
Novice Amateur: Rhiannon Gorin and CSF Handsome (27.8)
Open Beginner Novice: Ruth Bley and Celest Blue (24.4)
Jr. Beginner Novice: Katherine Jackman and Prada (25.6)
Sr. Beginner Novice Rider A: Olivia Bodner and Nil Phet (34.1)
Sr. Beginner Novice Rider B: Anne Johnson and Grandios Sky (30.0)
Starter A: Daniela Zarate and Lexington DF (22.7)
Starter B: Olivia Galuppo and Mischief Managed (29.3)

Connect with Woodside

Location: 3674 Sand Hill Road, Woodside, CA 94062

Email: Send message at <http://www.horsepark.org/emailmessage.php>

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