



## **2016 JUNIOR EQUESTRIAN OF THE YEAR – THE GILLIAN WILSON TROPHY PRESENTED BY ASMAR EQUESTRIAN CARMEN HOLMES-SMITH**



Founded in 1993, the Junior Equestrian of the Year Award is given to a junior who has excelled in equestrian competition in the current award year while demonstrating exceptional talent, horsemanship and dedication to equestrian sport, as well as the vision and mission of Equestrian Canada (EC). The award is given in honour of Gillian Wilson, who served as technical director of the Canadian Equestrian Federation for more than 15 years.

The 2016 recipient, Carmen Holmes-Smith of Chase, BC took up the reins at a young age - following in the footsteps of her father, Nick Holmes-Smith, a two-time Canadian Olympian in eventing – and has never looked back.

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Coming up through the levels of eventing, Carmen has always displayed a drive to succeed and has been part of the British Columbia Young Rider Program since its inception. Although she qualified for the 2015 FEI North American Junior and Young Rider Championships (NAJYRC), unfortunately she was unable to compete due to a last-minute injury of her horse. However, true to her positive nature and unfailing willingness to help out her fellow riders, Carmen still travelled to Kentucky for the Championships in order to support and assist Canada's team, which included her sister, Tosca.

The following year proved to be Carmen's time to shine, as she once again qualified for NAJYRC, and travelled to Parker, CO to represent Canada in the CICJ 1\* division aboard her mother's horse, Spartacus. Carmen started strong and never let up. After finishing the dressage phase in a tie for seventh, she charged up the standings due to her flawless performances in the cross-country and jumping phases to earn the Individual Gold Medal.

In addition to being recognized as a rising star in eventing, Carmen is well-known for her hard work and dedication, juggling her riding career and the care of her horses while simultaneously attending the University of Victoria. She is also described as an excellent role model with a wonderfully caring and supportive attitude toward her fellow competitors.

EC commends Carmen on her competitive excellence and exemplary sportsmanship, and is pleased to present her with the 2016 Junior Equestrian of the Year title.



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