



2016 EQUESTRIAN OF THE YEAR – THE DR. GEORGE JACOBSON TROPHY ERIC LAMAZE



Founded in 1995, the Equestrian of the Year Award honours Dr. George Jacobson, and is given to an equestrian athlete who has achieved extraordinary results in equestrian competition in the current award year while acting as an exceptional role model and demonstrating true sportsmanship and dedication to vision and mission of EC.

The recipient for 2016 is Eric Lamaze of Schomberg, ON, who is receiving the honour for the third time in his career, having also been awarded the title in 2007 and 2008.

The 2016 season was one for the books for Eric, who took some time to regroup and rebuild after the devastating and unexpected loss of his legendary partner, Hickstead in 2011. With the help and support of Artisan Farms, Eric has spent the past few years bringing along a number of talented mounts up to the international level, including his most renowned partner, Fine Lady 5.

In 2016, the time and effort he devoted to bringing along a new string of horses paid off in a big way. In total, he had 47 top-three placings at the CSI level, including 18 wins. With a string of upwards of 15 horses, including five consistent grand prix partners, Eric could be found in the winner's circle of the world's most prestigious jumping competitions throughout the 2016 season.



Eric's success in 2016 started from the get-go, when he earned multiple wins in major grand prix classes at the Winter Equestrian Festival in Wellington, FL with multiple mounts, including Fine Lady 5 and Rosana du Park. From there, he toured the biggest competitions in Europe, winning at CSI 5* Antwerp in Belgium and CSIO 5* La Baule in France. A triumphant return to Canada for the Spruce Meadows summer tournament series resulted in top-three placings aboard all his top mounts, Fine Lady 5, Rosana du Park, Chacco Kid, Check Picobello Z and Melody des Hayettes Z. Highlights included first place with Rosana du Park in the \$80,000 TransCanada Winning Round and second place with Fine Lady 5 in the \$500,000 RBC Grand Prix during the CSIO 5* Spruce Meadows 'National' Tournament.

From Spruce Meadows, Eric travelled to the iconic CHIO Aachen in Germany for final preparation before the Rio 2016 Olympic Games. Together, he and Fine Lady 5 earned back-to-back wins in the €62,700 Turkish Airlines Prize of Europe and the €100,000 Prize of North Rhine-Westphalia.

However, the highlight of Eric's season, of course, came at the Rio 2016 Olympic Games when he brought home the Individual Bronze Medal and led the Canadian Show Jumping Team to a fourth place finish. With just one rail down across 6 rounds, remarkably, Fine Lady 5 was the only horse of the Games to complete five consecutive clear rounds.

When added to his Individual Gold and Team Silver from the 2008 Beijing Olympics, the Bronze in Rio gave Eric the record for the most Olympic medals won by a Canadian in equestrian sport.

However, Eric and Fine Lady 5 weren't done with 2016 yet. Due to his landmark season, in August 2016, Eric broke into the top 10 in the FEI Longines World Jumping Rankings for the first time in four years. Having begun the year in 39th place, he steadily climbed up the rankings, and after his Bronze medal finish in Rio, reached number five. This secured his place among the top 10 jumping athletes in the world invited to the Rolex Top 10 Final, held in Geneva, SUI in December. Together, Eric and Fine Lady 5 led the event from start to finish, marking the first time a Canadian has won the coveted title.

EC congratulates Eric on his incredible success in 2016 and commends him for representing Canada at the highest level of the sport around the world and on the podium.