

The 6th FEI Group IX Africa Vaulting Cup (SA, 2012)

On 16-17 June 2012 the Soweto Equestrian Foundation hosted the 6th FEI Group IX Africa Vaulting Cup at Hollyberry Hall, a stunning new indoor venue in Maple Road, Kyalami kindly loaned by Johan and Tessa Roodt.

Eighty-two young athletes from three Group IX countries (South Africa (57 vaulters), Mauritius (12 vaulters), and Zambia (13 vaulters)) competed over two days, as individuals and in teams representing their countries.

There were 10 C-grade entries (including 2 teams - one International and one from South Africa), 26 D-grade entries (including 6 teams - Mauritius, Zambia A & B, South Africa A & B and an International team), and 46 E-grade entries (including 13 teams - Zambia A & B, South Africa (KZN), South Africa (WP), South Africa (Gauteng 7 teams), Mauritius, and an International team). 9 pairs entered the walk pas de deux class: this was the first time a pas de deux class was offered. Host country South Africa won the three team categories and Mauritius won the pas de deux class.

Swiss International judge Anna Kull judged the competition and gave two excellent, well attended seminars for the vaulters, judges and coaches. Everyone was very grateful for her input!

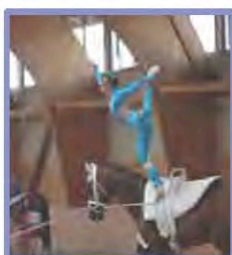
South African International vaulter, Jasyn Gertenbach spent the last two months coaching in Zambia, helping them to prepare for the event and his vaulters did him proud by winning the under-10 D-grade competition, having 6 well placed vaulters in the under-14 D-grade event and second and fourth places in the pas de deux event.

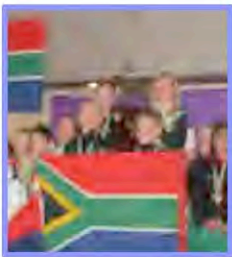
Polish vaulter Amelia Ogonowska has been coaching vaulting in Mauritius for most of the last year, and her influence was visible, especially in the pas de deux. Mauritius has done very well, considering that they are desperately short of suitable horses.

In South Africa, although there is good coaching in Gauteng, the other provinces do not always enjoy long-term international coaching, and Noordhoek (in the Western Cape) has no resident coach at all. In the past year Italian Sara Stopazzini and German Krisitina Boe visited South Africa to run clinics in Western Province, Pretoria and Midrand. The coaches for the FEI Group IX Africa Vaulting Cup were Nicole de Villiers, Amelia Ogonowska, Jasyn Gertenbach, Bongani Mabandla and Barbie Gertenbach.

For many vaulters in Africa, the FEI Group IX Africa Vaulting Cup is the highlight of the vaulting calendar, and the atmosphere was very enthusiastic, and competitive. Vaulters enjoyed an opening ceremony, nations evening, and a closing prize-giving dinner. Feedback since has been exceptionally positive. Unfortunately, the limiting factors that meant we had only two visiting countries, were lack of funds in other countries, as well as lack of horses and limited access to coaching.

The organisers of the Event would like to express their gratitude to the sponsors; Avis, Biotech, Equipage Insurance, Equus, FEI, HQ magazine, Kuda Insurance, Midfeeds, Mike's Kitchen, Super rock Drills, TB Images, The Soweto Equestrian Foundation and Western Shoppe. Without their help such a fabulous competition would not have been possible.





ANNA KULL (JUDGE): I've never seen such thankful little kids and coaches for my work!! It truly was a pleasure to work for all of you.

KARIN

LAING (PARENT): Both the evening functions were very well organized. It was such fun for the children to put on their "show" the evening of the opening. It created a fun and team spirit that lasted the whole show. It was a great touch that they all introduced themselves and made the show a very personal for us all.

At both functions the food was very good. And the programs both evenings were well coordinated and put together.

ANSIE

ANSIE

BARNARD

(MUSIC CO-ORDINATOR): Thanks to everyone who had a part in the past weekend's Africa Cup. It was a thoroughly enjoyable weekend - everything was well-organised, the venue was great, and most of all, the vibe was terrific! The teams from South Africa, Mauritius and Zambia all showed amazing team spirit and we had a great time competing as well as getting to know each other.

TESSA ROODT (VENUE OWNER):

We really enjoyed hosting the event at Hollyberry and working with you guys.

NIKKI

BAKER (PARENT): Just wanted to thank you and everyone else that was involved in putting on the show. Everything ran so smoothly and the venue was awesome!

RACHEL HOWARD (ZAMBIAN

COACH): I want to thank you for such a fantastic competition that was held earlier this month. I also want to thank the officials, especially Anna Kull and the Soweto Equestrian Foundation for hosting such a special event. The venue Hollyberry Hall was outstanding, which made the occasion even more memorable.

ROSS HOWE

(PARENT): It was a great event.

Barbie, thanks also for accommodating us prior to the show with horses and training sessions and for doing all the lunging throughout the show, your horses were wonderful.

CINDY TRICHARDT (SCRIBE):

Over the last few years I have been scribing at many of the vaulting events. ... We are all quick to judge negatively, and slow to give credit where it is due. Even two weeks after this event, I can honestly say that I left this event excited for future events and looking forward to more shows run in this fashion.

It was also very useful to attend the judging talk at your yard, and the opening and closing ceremonies, all were very well organized.

STEF VERMAAK

(PARAMEDIC): On behalf of my team, thank u for your kindness and professional way of treating us, we did enjoy the day and we will like to offer our assistance to you and your team any time. Once more thank you.

The children had a wonderful time, it was a huge experience for them and I was very proud of their spirit, sportsmanship and performances. They have returned to Zambia with even more enthusiasm to progress to the next grade.

CLOTILDE JAUFFRET (MESF): In the name of the MESF I would like to thank you so very much for organizing this competition.

Please also convey our thanks to all those involved in ensuring this competition was a success.

I went to the airport yesterday and we welcomed a tired and overwhelmingly enthusiastic team: vaulters, coaches and mums alike. They all loved it and said it was the most fantastic experience.

RENIER BARNARD (PARENT): AFRICA CUP!!!!!!!!!!!!!! What an event!!!!!! Memories were made and created. The absolute best part was the positive vibe and attitude. It was really nice to have a weekend of vaulting without any negativity. Arlene, Barbie, Nicole (alphabetical order) thank you, thank you and thank you!! We make you super-humans for creating a vaulting heaven..Great weekend, great vaulting, great vibe, GREAT afterparty!! Great to know you all!! If I just knew how to spell "awesome", I would have used it more to describe the weekend.

We know how much hard work goes into this kind of event so again a big thank you from all of us in Mauritius.

