

Combined Driver Chester Weber Adds A “Unique Splash” To His Driving Team

Ocala, FL (February 15, 2011) – As the eight-time USEF National Four-In-Hand Combined Driving Champion, Chester Weber has made history with his team of horses. Now, the highly-successful and decorated driver is adding two new equine teammates to his barn with the goal of increasing the depth and talent of his world-class combined driving team.

Uniek (pronounced unique and called Nick around the barn) and Splash, two bay, 16.2-hand KWPN horses bred in Holland, are now part of Team Weber thanks to the generosity of Jane Forbes Clark, an active supporter of high performance equestrian sports as well as President and CEO of the United States Equestrian Team Foundation. “Following the 2010 World Equestrian Games, Jane and I had a long conversation with the U.S. team coach, Michael Freund, and we identified Nick and Splash as two of the most talented horses in the sport,” Weber said. “We were lucky enough that they seem to fit with the group we have going in size and color. Jane had previously leased the horses but when we made the decision to move forward she purchased them.”



Nick and Splash bring international experience to the table, a component that benefits Team Weber. “With these new horses added to my existing team, our goals for 2011 are to prepare ourselves for the 2012 World Championships in Riesenbeck and to continue to insure our preparedness for the 2014 World Equestrian Games in France,” Weber said. “It would also be nice to win a ninth USEF National Four-In-Hand Combined Driving Championship.”

Clark said she is happy to have Nick and Splash as permanent members of Team Clark. “I had leased them for the 2010 competition year and they were part of the US Team Silver Medal effort at the World Equestrian Games with Jimmy Fairclough,” Clark said. “I look forward to many more medal winning occasions with these horses as they become additions to Chester’s extremely successful International Combined Driving Team for 2011 and going forward to Normandy.”

Weber said that Nick and Splash will start showing with his team in the spring, as Weber and Freund are evaluating where the two horses best fit. “Michael and I both feel that Nick and Splash add quality and depth to our program. We had them at the Sunshine State Combined Driving Event last weekend and trained them on the competition grounds, and they were perfect,” Weber said.

While Weber is looking forward to adding the two powerhouse horses to his string, Freund is equally excited and thanked Clark for sponsoring Weber. “These two new horses in Chester’s group make him very strong for the future,” Freund said. “This gives Chester the possibility of driving a dressage under 30 points!”

Keady Cadwell, of Tremont Farm in Southern Pines, North Carolina, previously owned and competed the two Dutch Warmbloods. "I am happy that Nick and Splash will be able to help Jane, Chester and ultimately the USA driving reach their goals," Cadwell said.

Cadwell described the horses as "big movers with easy going temperaments. Nick is a wise gentleman always on his best behavior and Splash is a clown and likes to be the center of attention," she said, adding that both horses also have the WOW factor. "They are big boys with lots and lots of white. White faces, white legs and Splash also has a white spot on his side. He was named for this but it turns out that he also loves water, buckets, streams, hoses and, of course, automatic waterers."

Cadwell purchased Nick as a four-year-old from Spain and bought Splash as a three-year-old in Holland. "Nick does it all and is a superstar in all phases. As well as a truly beautiful dressage horse, he is quick and smart in the marathon. Splash has also done all phases, and is an amazingly talented horse that makes you smile every day," Cadwell said. "It doesn't matter if you are at Aachen or working at home by yourself, they both give you their best! Both have competed in the pair, all phases left and right. In the team they go in the lead. They match unbelievable well and work so well together."

As a driving force in the world of combined driving, Weber is excited about the future. "We have increased the depth of our string of horses with the addition of Jane Clark's horses to my stable," Weber said. "It is a great addition and certainly increases our assets. I couldn't be more pleased."

For more information on Weber and his combined driving team, visit their website at www.chesterweber.com.

Photo: Two new faces welcomed at Live Oak Combined Driving. Splash (left) and Uniek (right) are now part of eight-time USEF National Four-In-Hand Combined Driving Champion, Chester Weber's Team. (Photo courtesy of Live Oak Combined Driving)