



April 16, 2010

# Katcha' Reminiscing Makes Memories At Pin Oak

*Young trainer Chris Nelson rides the Hanoverian to victory over seasoned challengers.*

Anne Lang

CHRIS NELSON, a 19-year-old Dallas rider, hung out his professional shingle just over a year ago. So he never envisioned collecting the winner's trophy on Katcha' Reminiscing at the \$15,000 *The Chronicle of the Horse*/USHJA International Hunter Derby at the Pin Oak Charity Horse Show on March 26 in Katy, Texas.

Nelson had hopped aboard the 7-year-old Hanoverian for the first time just four days earlier, when he rode "Daria" to ribbons in the first year green division. Normally that's a job undertaken by Daria's trainer, Katja Kallenberger, who was unable to attend Pin Oak and ride the mare for her owner, Caroline Auclair.

**"She comes out of the stall every day and loves to jump, loves being a hunter."**

—Chris Nelson

"My main goal for the derby," Nelson admitted, "was to get this first year horse in the ring and go around. But she was so great, and it ended up being her day."

The winning performance also marked Daria's first time in a hunter derby.

With his relaxed mindset, Nelson was unfazed by the caliber of his 30 rivals, which included numerous horse-and-rider combinations with previous hunter derby wins to their credit.

Peter Pletcher, the most accomplished derby rider of the field, finished behind Nelson by the narrowest of margins, just .5 points on HH London owned by Double H Farm. Day Dream, ridden by Courtney Calcagnini and

Chris Nelson and Caroline Auclair's Katcha' Reminiscing won the \$15,000 *The Chronicle of the Horse*/USHJA International Hunter Derby at Pin Oak.



(Shawn McMillen Photo)





owned by Taylor Reid, finished third, 13 points behind Pletcher.

Going into the first round, Nelson said: "I was trying to be conservative, since I didn't completely know this horse. I didn't jump any of the four-foot fences. I took my time and just went around a couple of the option spots. I didn't really gallop up to any of the jumps; I just stayed on one nice consistent pace.

"A lot of the jumps were spooky," Nelson continued, "and so were some other things in the ring [including 3-D sponsor signs, portable trees, benches, flower islands and spectators in close proximity]. I wasn't sure how Daria would react. But I quickly found out that she has no spook at all."

That knowledge enabled Nelson to approach the handy round more boldly. As he passed through the in-gate, he was in fourth place, 9 points behind Pletcher and HH London, who were sitting in first.

"I just got on a nice big gallop," Nelson said, "did all the inside turns and did all the options that were available. There was a trot fence and a couple of tight turns, but overall the course [designed by Linda Allen] was very nice and inviting."

Nelson and Daria won the handy round with 182 points; Pletcher and HH London were second with 172.5.

"Peter had a ton of really, really nice horses," Nelson observed, "and he rode [all seven of] them great. He just had a few unlucky rubs that you couldn't predict. There didn't seem to be any big trouble spots on the course; any problems people had seemed to be particular to the individual horses."

As for Daria, Nelson had nothing but praise.

"She's very straightforward. She has a huge stride, and she's not spooky," Nelson said. "She really doesn't have any quirks; she's just a nice amateur hunter. She was very easy to get acquainted with. She comes out of the stall every day and loves to jump, loves being a hunter."

Kallenberger was "ecstatic" to learn of Daria's triumph. "I had said from the beginning that she would be a great derby horse," she stated.

The 16.3-hand Daria was imported from Germany in 2007 by Kallenberger's mother, Gillian, and Auclair bought her



(Shawn McMillen Photo)

Peter Pletcher had seven mounts in the \$15,000 *The Chronicle of the Horse*/USHJA International Hunter Derby at Pin Oak and finished second aboard Double H Farm's HH London.

the following year. Auclair, 23, lives in Dallas and has trained with Kallenberger at The Paddocks since 2001. (Like several of Kallenberger's clients, Auclair chose her horse's show name with a playful twist on her trainer's first name).

In 2009, Auclair and Daria were Zone 7 champions in the adult amateur hunter, 18-35, division and earned that title in the Texas Hunter/Jumper Association as well. Daria's transition to 3'6" this season has been a success: Prior to Pin Oak, in the first year green division,

## \$15,000 THE CHRONICLE OF THE HORSE/ USHJA INTERNATIONAL HUNTER DERBY

Katy, Texas—Mar. 26

HORSE/RIDER	1ST ROUND		2ND ROUND		TOTAL
	PANEL 1 Score/Bonus	PANEL 2 Score/Bonus	PANEL 1 Score/Bonus	PANEL 2 Score/Bonus	
1. Katcha' Reminiscing/Chris Nelson	88/1	90/1	89/3	88/2	362
2. HH London/Peter Pletcher	91/2	93/3	82.5/2	86/2	361.5
3. Day Dream/Courtney Calcagnini	86.5/2	87/2	82/2	84/3	348.5
4. Apparition/Jordan Siegel	86/2	92/3	77/1	74/2	337
5. Dominick/Peter Pletcher	83.5/2	82/2	83/3	77/3	335.5
6. Hamilton/Carson Gibson	84/2	78/2	84/1	81/1	333
7. Westview/Peter Pletcher	85.5/2	85/1	70/3	78/3	327.5
8. CR Cascano/Courtney Calcagnini	78/2	83/2	70/0	72/3	310
9. Tell All/Peter Pletcher	85/2	86/1	45/2	44/2	267
10. De Nada/Jessica Zienkiewicz	77/2	84/2	45/0	43/2	255
11. Caden/Carson Gibson	89/2	95/3	30/2	30/3	254
12. Blahnik/Lindsey Black	84.5/2	82.5/2	40/0	40/1	252

31 horses competed.





## HORSE SHOWS

she'd won three tricolors from five shows with Kallenberger in the irons. In the amateur-owner hunter, 18-35, division, Daria and Auclair had collected a tricolor nearly every time out.

### ► Boost To A Budding Career

Nelson was happy to add a hunter derby win to his equestrian record, which already shows a pattern of versatility. He began riding at age 10 with Renee Albrecq, then moved on to Mike McCormick and Tracy Fenney, whose Four M Farm is based in Nelson's hometown of Flower Mound, Texas.

Over the next seven years, McCormick helped shape Nelson as an all-around rider by putting him on a diverse array of hunters and jumpers—and was there to witness Nelson's coup in the hunter derby.

"This was super riding on Chris'

part," McCormick stated. "He really pulled it out. He had all the odds against him, but he kept at it, just doing what he had to do. Chris has always been a good, hard worker. He'll never give up and go away."

**"He had all the odds against him, but he kept at it, just doing what he had to do."**

—Mike McCormick

In 2008, Nelson took a working student position with Florida trainer Don Stewart (who coincidentally was one of the judges at the Pin Oak hunter derby). Coached by Stewart's partner Bibby Hill, Nelson rode in the ASPCA Maclay Region 5 competition on a Stewart-owned horse—and won.

"My time with Don really helped me," Nelson said. "He gave me a lot of opportunities and great horses to ride. He definitely took me to the next level."

That next level, Nelson decided, would be to start his own training enterprise in December 2008. Having finished high school through correspondence courses (a result of his hectic travel schedule), Nelson took online classes toward a college business degree, a commitment he's still juggling along with his riding and training activities.

Operating under the name Grand Prix Stables, Nelson oversees about 25 hunters and jumpers, ranging from youngsters to veteran show horses. He leases stalls at four different barns.

"My main focus is on buying and selling horses," Nelson explained, "and doing the grand prix."

Nelson appreciates that his younger

## Genn and Chantal Emerge Victorious in \$30,000 Grand Prix

In his early years, Chantal was almost too cautious. "Water jumps used to scare him, back when he was 5," said Wilhelm Genn. "But he overcame that fear and all the other little setbacks you generally have with a young horse. I just took my time and worked him through it."

These days, Genn said, Chantal, an 11-year-old Holsteiner, is still a careful jumper and remains serious about his job, most recently winning the \$30,000 Pin Oak Grand Prix on March 27. He's ridden Chantal since 2003, when he bought the gelding for his sister-in-law, Laura Ryan-Barnaclo of Cincinnati.

"He's sensitive and very tall [17.3 hands]," said Genn, of Lebanon, Ohio. "Yet for being as tall as he is, he has very quick legs. He's an elegant type of tall and an excellent athlete. The closeness of the [grand prix] crowd didn't faze him. He was very focused, after being a little nervous during the warm-up."

In the first round, a triple combination set in a diagonal line down the center following a left-hand turn required horses and riders to aim straight toward the bustling spectator stands before heading for the triple.

"You really had to press your horse close to the stands for the triple," Genn said, "and on that side of the arena there were a lot of spectators, a lot of tables and noise, which was distracting for many

of the horses. The first row is right above the railing, where if someone put their hand down they could almost touch the horses. I think that that's why there were more rails at the triple than anywhere else on course."

Genn also won the \$30,000 Pin Oak Hunter/Jumper Horse Show Grand Prix the previous week on Happy Z.



Wilhelm Genn and Chantal topped the \$30,000 Pin Oak Grand Prix.

(Shawn McMillen Photo)





Courtney Calcagnini guided Taylor Reid's Day Dream to third place in Pin Oak's \$15,000 *The Chronicle of the Horse*/USHJA International Hunter Derby.

sister Erin, 18, rides and shows many of his stables' horses. A high school senior, Erin catch-rides in the equitation, hunter and jumper divisions and campaigns her own grand prix horse. At the second Pin Oak show, Erin won the small junior hunter, 16-17, championship on Laura Beckworth's Holiday and earned the high-point junior hunter rider award.

KATY, TX—MAR. 23-28.

**1.25M JUMPER CH:** CR Mystery, Barbara Delozier.

**RES:** NKH Barbosa, NKH LLC.

**1.35M JUMPER CH:** L'Etoile, The L'Etoile Group LLC.

**RES:** Carastello, Deana Blackburn.

**1.40M JUMPER CH:** Ariado, Misty Davenport.

**RES Tie:** Commodore 2, Karola Giebmanns & Santana H, DS Holdings LLC.

**LOW JR. JUMPER CH:** Jade Du Vertain, Alexa Wisz.

**RES:** Cohiba, Amanda Seale.

**PONY JUMPER CH:** La-Ti-Da, Sarah Walker.

**RES:** Kelly, Alexis Bowen.

**HIGH ADULT AMATEUR JUMPER CH:** Alvarez, Guy Hodgson.

**RES:** CR Haribo, Emily Allen.

**HIGH CHILDREN'S JUMPER CH:** Skylark, Johanns De Leyer.

**RES:** She's An Angel, Brigid Dobbs.

**LOW ADULT AMATEUR JUMPER CH:** Haute Brion, Tracy Williams.

**RES:** Bella De Gala, Elizabeth Lyon.

**LOW AMATEUR-OWNER JUMPER CH:** Accra, Five-H Partners.

**RES:** Valentina, Miguel Torres Corzo.

**HIGH AMATEUR-OWNER JUMPER CH:** MTM Patent Pending, Kimberly Brunson.

**RES:** Chirac, Miguel Torres Corzo.

**LOW CHILDREN'S JUMPER CH:** Prince Charming, Aubrey Smith.

**RES:** Dolce's Mega Starburst, Ashley Kyle.

**HIGH JR. JUMPER CH:** Sacramento N, Kim Cox.

**RES Tie:** Poco 3, Wilhelm Genn & Gabriella Z, Lazy Creek Ranch Holdings LLC.

**1ST YR. GREEN HUNTER CH:** MTM Braggin Rights, MTM Farm.

**RES:** Vibe, Becky Gochman.

**2ND YR. GREEN/REGULAR WORKING HUNTER CH:** Curtain Call, Taylor Reid.

**RES:** Apparition, Jordan Siegel.

**CONFORMATION HUNTER CH:** MTM First Class Ticket, Mary Pierce.

**RES:** Dubari, Gayle Cox.

**AMATEUR-OWNER HUNTER, 18-35 CH:** Blahnik, Lindsey Black.

**RES:** Fun & Games, Lindsey Roberts.

**AMATEUR-OWNER HUNTER, 36 & OVER CH:** Ocean Park, Lynn Walsh.

**RES:** MTM Off The Cuff, Therese Peck.

**LARGE JR. HUNTER, 15 & UNDER CH:** Castello, Colleen McKenzie.

**RES:** MTM Braggin Rights, MTM Farm.

**LARGE JR. HUNTER, 16-17 CH:** Neander, Jackie Watkins.

**RES:** Primetime, Shadyside Farm.

**SMALL JR. HUNTER, 15 & UNDER CH:** Bachelorette, Grace Mitchell.

**RES:** Tuscan Sun, Peter Pletcher.



(Shawn McMillen Photo)

**SMALL JR. HUNTER, 16-17 CH:** Holiday, Laura Beckworth.

**RES:** Braddock, Steve Hummel.

**PRE-GREEN HUNTER CH:** Final Applause, Shannon Reid.

**RES:** Bandito, Jamie Jarvis.

**3'3" PRE-GREEN HUNTER CH:** Starry Night, Kristen Blomstrom.

**RES:** Halo, Hidden Sun Farm.

**MEDIUM/LARGE PONY HUNTER CH:** Woodland's Blue Haze, Jackson Brittan.

**RES:** Little Wonder, Kurstin Grady.

**SMALL PONY HUNTER CH:** Just The Fax, Amanda Roche.

**RES:** Champlain Clementine, Maple Lane Farm.

**LARGE GREEN PONY HUNTER CH:** Rollingwoods Undercover, Samantha Fedotova.

**RES:** Joplin, Scott Moseley.

**SMALL/MEDIUM GREEN PONY HUNTER CH:** Honorable, Claire McKean.

**RES:** Crystal Acres Chocolatier, Silver Oak Farms LLC.

**CHILDREN'S HUNTER, 14 & UNDER CH:** Dominick, Andrea Ramirez.

**RES:** CR Platinum, Emily Sinacola.

**CHILDREN'S HUNTER, 15-17 CH:** NLF Casabella, Lene Bruheim.

**RES:** Cellino, Julie Thompson.

**ADULT AMATEUR HUNTER, 18-35 CH:** Malibu, Mimi Herbert.

**RES:** What You Will, Brittany Hildebrand.

**ADULT AMATEUR HUNTER, 36-49 CH:** Isabelle, Shadyside Farm.

**RES:** Undeniable, Meredith Mulliken.

**ADULT AMATEUR HUNTER, 50 & OVER CH:** Rasputin, Merrilee Braley.

**RES:** Bliss, Laura Beckworth.

**MODIFIED CHILDREN'S HUNTER CH:** Aslan, Avalon McRae.

**RES Tie:** Steal Magnolia, Rebecca Odom & Wollie, KAC Horses LLC.

**MODIFIED ADULT AMATEUR HUNTER CH:** Markhem, Laura Sicuro.

**RES:** Riverton, Jane Gilday.

**BABY GREEN HUNTER CH:** Bethel's Peri, Jamie Jarvis.

**RES:** Shariatz, Stephanie Jewett.

**HOPEFUL HUNTER CH:** Regalo, Jana Arnoldy & Santa Cruz, Rio Vista Farm.

**RES:** White Chocolate, Sarah Brooks & Elle, Debbie Cardwell.

**SHORT STIRRUP HUNTER CH:** Sheza Windy Feature, Shannon Klein.

**RES:** CR Cascadero, Bridget McNeese.

**LONG STIRRUP HUNTER CH:** Touch Of Velvet A, Hollee Clawwater.

**RES:** Waterford, Rita Pickar.

**LOW AMATEUR-OWNER HUNTER CH:** Holiday, Laura Beckworth.

**RES:** Fun One, Emily Woodall.

**CHILDREN'S PONY HUNTER CH:** Black Onyx, KAC Horses LLC.

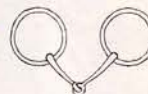
**RES:** Girl Power, Patricia O'Brian.

**BEST YOUNG HORSE:** West Sun, Kimberly Morgan.

**RES:** Fleetwood's Derby, Felicia Carroll.

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## TIDBITS



- Emma Roberts of Houston virtually swept the equitation divisions during the second week of Pin Oak, winning the Pessoa/USEF Medal, the overall USEF Show Jumping Talent Search and the overall WIHS Equitation class. Named best child rider on a horse, Roberts also was part of a three-way tie for first place in the High Junior Jumper Alamo Cup.
- On his medium pony Woodland's Blue Haze, Jackson Brittan, of Westlake, Texas, was champion in the medium/large pony hunter division and won the WIHS Pony Medal. Brittan earned the leading pony hunter rider award, and Woodland's Blue Haze was named high-point pony hunter.
- Laura Beckworth of Houston was champion in the low amateur-owner hunter division aboard her horse Holiday. The duo won high-point trophies for both horse and rider in that division. Beckworth also took first place in the NAL/WIHS Adult Hunter Classic on her horse Bliss.





### Pin Oak Celebrates Rich Tradition

The Pin Oak Charity Horse Show, long regarded as one of the Houston area's most prestigious sporting and social events, celebrated its 65th year this year.

Since its creation in 1945 at J.S. Abercrombie's Pin Oak Stables, the show has evolved into a two-week affair held at the Great Southwest Equestrian Center in nearby Katy, featuring hunters and jumpers as well as an assortment of American Saddlebreds, Andalusians/Lusitanos, Hackneys, harness ponies, Welsh ponies and roadster horses.

The show has raised more than \$4 million for Texas Children's Hospital and Ronald McDonald House of Houston.

More than 100 volunteers work year-round to solicit sponsorships and donations for the charity. Orchestrating all of that activity for the past 20 years has been Pin Oak President Lynn Walsh, a tireless worker behind the scenes and in the community, not to mention a constant, smiling, day-and-night presence at the show.

Somehow, in between, Walsh competes in the amateur-owner hunter, 36 and over, division, assisted by trainer and neighboring farm owner Peter Pletcher. This year, she won tricolors both weeks on Ocean Park, who also earned division high-point honors the second week.

"It would be very hard to replace Lynn Walsh as Pin Oak president," said Houston trainer Patty Roberts, who also

serves as a Pin Oak board vice-president and is chairman of the show's hunter/jumper committee. "She takes on every task there is, and she's not afraid to get her hands dirty. One day she might be meeting with corporate CEOs trying to solicit sponsorship money, and the next day she might be helping to serve hamburgers to the kids who are visiting as part of Education Day. Or she might be lugging around flowerpots to landscape the show grounds. Lynn truly does it all."

Walsh is always looking for new ways to improve the event, such as adding an AA-rated junior/amateur show to run in conjunction with the show's first week this year.

"The feedback we got on that was positive," Walsh reported. "The professionals liked not having to ride that week, and the juniors and amateurs appreciated being the stars. I'm really glad we did it, and it helped our numbers because the jumper entries were down slightly."

While Walsh cares deeply about keeping Pin Oak exhibitors happy, the show's charitable endeavors remain her primary focus.

"One thing that's very special to us is that Texas Children's Hospital is now building a west campus, full-service hospital not far from the equestrian center," Walsh explained. "So we're moving our donation from the downtown cancer center out to the west campus, which makes sense. We'll be providing the funding to build the hematology and oncology waiting room, where the kids come to get their treatments on their way to recovery."

"We like that," Walsh said, "because it's a positive area—there's a lot of hope that these kids will get better there. And [being exposed to] horses is sort of healing in its own way, so we hope to have a lot of Pin Oak identification in the waiting room to make the kids feel a little better."

In 2009, the U.S. Equestrian Federation chose Pin Oak as its first recipient of the Heritage Competition designation.

"I'm really indebted to the USEF for establishing this Heritage Award," Walsh said, "because it's the first step in helping shows like Pin Oak preserve themselves. That's important as the big circuits expand to as many as 12 weeks. They're starting to run over us. It's very important to preserve these historic shows, because they're such showcase events—they're not just another horse show, not just another long circuit."

Lynn Walsh has presided over all aspects of the Pin Oak Charity Horse Show for 20 years.



(Allen Kramer Photo)