

## Thompson Ends On Top

Cassandra Thompson of Mill Valley, Calif., and her 13-year-old Hanoverian mare Dondaly (Donner-schall—Luna Lucia) took top honors in the first level championship for riders 14 and under. The pair have been together for two years and had a 68.15 percent average in their two tests at the CDS championships.

“It was kind of stressful,” Thompson, 15, said of her weekend. “I didn’t know if I was going to have that high of a percentage on Sunday or not because I made an error in my test. Danielle Bonavito, who placed second, had a really good test, so I was really surprised that I won.”

Thompson was less than .3 percent ahead of Bonavito after Saturday’s ride. “We didn’t have any errors, but she was kind of stiff,” Thompson said of her first test. “She was really good on Sunday. She was actually really soft that day, but I had the error on that short diagonal — M to E — it gets me every time. It’s a total change of the test, and it always confuses me.”

Even with the error near the end of the trot work, Thompson scored 70.26 percent for her first level, test 4, ride.

Thompson has been riding dressage for three years and trains with Erin King at Riverside Equestrian Center in Petaluma, Calif. She competed in the hunters and jumpers for several years before moving into the dressage arena.

“I love Dondaly,” Thompson said of the 16.1-hand chestnut. “She has some moments where she can just freak out at anything, and it can be totally random. But most of the time she’s really cool about everything, and she’s fun to ride. She’s a great mare.”

- Sheri Scott