



Collegiate Sport Clubs

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CU Equestrian Prepares for English Zones at Cal Poly

FORT LUPTON, Colo. – The only thing you could hear was the wind whipping through Fall River Farm’s ring as the battle between University of Colorado’s **Jen Burke** and the University of Wyoming’s Katie Hurrell got started.

Neck and neck all season, Burke and Hurrell came into the Equestrian English Regionals on Mar. 12 tied for the Cachione Cup lead with 76 points apiece, but only one could advance to the Intercollegiate Nationals in May.

The Cachione Cup is an award for the rider who gains the most individual points from each region in the open division, which is very competitive. Riders who earn the title in each division will then compete against other Cachione winners for the Cachione Cup title at nationals.

The course was grueling, incorporating bending lines, stout oxers and forward options. Burke started the class by laying down a solid, forward ride full of confidence. Hurrell answered the call, riding “Timmy” on a brilliantly executed course. The battle was just beginning. All eyes were glued to the ring as judge Laurie Grayson asked the competitors to switch horses and ride the course again.

After the second course, the two seemed tied and judge Grayson added a third horse to the equation, “Murphy.” Burke rode first, laying down a smooth hunter-type course that drew loud cheers from the crowd. Hurrell followed suit, riding a forward and direct course that showed her preparation. The crowd waited for the result, which was still too close to call.

Still unable to make a decision, the girls then mounted their original horses to begin an intense flat battle. Grayson tested the riders hard, even switching them halfway through. In the end, a mere two points separated Burke and Hurrell. Grayson chose Burke, a senior from Massachusetts as the zone eight, region five Cachione representative. Hurrell though did not let the defeat bring her down; she later qualified for zones in the open flat and will be traveling to California with some of her Wyoming teammates.

A well-fought battle which included three different horses, a difficult course, and a grueling flat class ended in victory for the University of Colorado and coach **Jill Pelzel**.

Pelzel will also be bringing her CU team to zones in California for the first time in school history. She will have a busy schedule as individual riders qualified in open flat and open fences (Burke), intermediate fences (**Andrea Fieger** and **Anna Bohlin**), novice fences (**Karly Hobbs**), intermediate flat (**Jenica Northrop**) and novice flat events (Hobbs and **Courtney Lennon**).

The English Zones will take place on Apr. 9-10 at the California Polytechnic State University in Pomona, Calif.

Story written by Kristina Harkin, CU Collegiate Sport Clubs Information Director Ron Knabenbauer contributed to this story.

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