



INTERNATIONAL
YOUNG BREEDERS
WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS
GERMANY 2026

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Press Release 05: Sachsen-Thüringen becomes World Champion. Successful 12th WBFSH International Young Breeders World Championships in Celle – Equestrian sports bring people together across national borders.

Celle, July 2026 – For four days, the Lower Saxony State Stud in Celle was the focal point for the next generation of international breeders. The 12th WBFSH International Young Breeders World Championships brought together young horse enthusiasts from 19 horse breeding associations across 10 nations and provided ideal conditions for a competition at the highest professional level. In addition to thrilling competitions in the various disciplines, the championships were characterized above all by friendship, fairness, and international exchange.

With its unique historic ambiance, the Lower Saxony State Stud in Celle proved to be an exceptional venue for the World Championships. The historic facility not only provided excellent conditions for the competitions but also lent the event a distinctive setting. The State Stud's team, led by State Stud Manager **Dr. Axel Brockmann**, played a decisive role in the event's success by supporting the World Championships with great dedication and ensuring optimal conditions.

The theory test was the first part of the competition on Thursday afternoon. In 60 minutes, participants had to correctly answer 50 multiple-choice questions—a feat that 20 participants achieved with a perfect score. The first evening is traditionally all about friendship. Fun welcome games break the ice and are always the best way to kick off a great weekend together.

On Friday, the seniors (ages 21–26) began by professionally presenting their horses. The best-groomed horse was selected, and the winning team was rewarded with a special prize. Afterward, the competition moved straight into the premier discipline: the in-hand presentation on the triangular course. In this discipline, drawn horses must be showcased impressively—with a willingness to take risks, yet still harmoniously and along correct lines. The younger age group (ages 16–20) demonstrated their keen eye for detail, first in evaluating athleticism and free jumping, and then in the afternoon during the conformation evaluation. The goal here is, after the judging panel has commented on two horses in each round, to independently evaluate the subsequently presented horses in such a way that there are no—or as few as possible—discrepancies from the judging panel's scores.

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The day concluded on a high note with an impressive show program presented by the Lower Saxony State Stud in Celle, held in celebration of the 25th anniversary of the international young breeders' competitions. Against the historic backdrop of the Grabensee stable, the Celle stallions were presented under saddle, in hand, and in front of a carriage. In perfect summer weather, the presentation delighted participants, guests, and supporters alike and made for an unforgettable evening.

On this occasion, Dr Ludwig Christmann, the founder of the young breeders' programme, was honoured in front of his young breeders by his successor, Dr Astrid von Velsen-Zerweck, for his services to the promotion of young people and his work as chairman of the Society for the Promotion of Equine Science (GWP). He was invited to sign the Golden Book of the Lower Saxony State Stud. Dr Christmann's idea, conceived in 1986, has, 40 years later, become an international platform for passionate horse lovers and has already had a lasting impact on several generations.

On Saturday, the two age groups swapped disciplines, before the evening setting provided the festive backdrop for the awards ceremony, after which the winners and runners-up celebrated with the traditional victory dip in Celle's Hengstbrunnen fountain. The championship celebration capped off an unforgettable weekend for everyone involved, before the group set off on Sunday for joint tours of the FAMOS Stud Farm and Hof Brüning.

Just as impressive as the athletic achievements was the atmosphere among the young participants. New friendships were formed across language and national borders, existing connections were deepened, and a shared respect and joy for horses, breeding, and athletic competition were palpable at all times. The historic setting of the state stud farm, in particular, fostered open dialogue and gave the event a special character marked by appreciation and dedication to the common cause. The World Championships thus once again confirmed their importance as an international platform for the next generation of breeders and for cultural exchange within the global warmblood breeding community.

The young breeders would like to express their sincere thanks to the German Horse Breeding Associations for their support; without their commitment, this event would not have been possible. Many horse owners naturally made their superbly prepared horses available for the competitions, thereby making an indispensable contribution to the success of the Championships. Thanks also go to the numerous sponsors who supported both the event and the winners of the individual disciplines with cash prizes and honorary awards. Special thanks go to Team Hannover, which provided by far the largest contingent of volunteers in the organizing team led by Lisa Kurtz.

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Winners of the Disciplines

Overall Team Standings

Gold: Sachsen-Thüringen (1.813,5 Points)
Silber: Irish Sport Horse (1.811,5 Points)
Bronze: Holstein (1.796,5 Points)

Junior Team Standings

Gold: Selle Francais (927,5 Points)
Silber: Holstein (921,5 Points)
Bronze: Brandenburg-Anhalt (914,5 Points)

Senior Team Standings

Gold: Sachsen-Thüringen (910,5 Points)
Silber: Irish Sport Horse (902 Points)
Bronze: Swedish Warmblood (897 Points)

Junior Individual Standings

Gold: Hilma Alden, Swedish Warmblood (319 Points)
Silber: Henni Edler, Brandenburg-Anhalt (315 Points)
Bronze: Ambre Bouvier, Selle Francais (312 Points)

Senior Individual Standings

Gold: Julienne Freund, Sachsen-Thüringen (307 Points)
Silber: Ellen McWey, Irish Sport Horse (305,5 Points)
Bronze: Thea Karlsson, Swedish Warmblood (305 Points)

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