2018 CANADIAN BRED HORSE OF THE YEAR: WKM XENIA

Photo Credit: Cealy Tetley

The Canadian Bred Horse of the Year Award is given to a horse bred within Canada who holds an outstanding national or international performance record that has helped to enhance the reputation and visibility of Canadian bred horses.

WKM Xenia (Cat Weasel Z x Nickelson B), a nine-year-old Canadian Warmblood mare owned and ridden by Brennan McCullagh of Stonewall, MB, perfectly fits the bill for the title after a stellar 2018 season competing in her home province of Manitoba and beyond.

The statuesque chestnut is a product of WKM Stables in Alexander, MB, which is owned and operated by Wilf and Karen McKay. WKM Xenia's competitive instinct and natural athletic ability shine in the ring, and are a testament to the McKays' expertise, developed over half a century of running their successful breeding program.

WKM Xenia and McCullagh established themselves as home province heroes in 2018, collecting wins across Manitoba at the Heart of the Continent, Marcy Schweizer Memorial Fund Derby, and Beach Party Horse Show. In addition, the duo made their mark on Ontario, winning the $10,000 Under 25 (U25) Young Rider Development class at the Classic at Palgrave Phase 2 in

Palgrave, ON. WKM Xenia and McCullagh finished their season on a high note at the Royal Horse Show in Toronto, ON, where they won Phase 2 of the Uplands U25 Jumping National Championship to claim the overall Reserve Champion title.

With McCullagh in the irons, WKM Xenia also turned heads at the international level in 2018 with a strong third place finish in her first-ever FEI competition, the Angelstone Tournaments Headwaters Cup CSI 2* in Rockwood, ON.

Born, bred, and shown out of Manitoba, WKM Xenia consistently stands out in crowded fields of experienced and largely imported horses. Her 2018 record alone irrefutably illustrates Canada's ability to breed champions, and, still in the early stages of her career, she already sets an example of the remarkable heights that Canadian bred horses can reach.

EC is proud to name WKM Xenia as the 2018 Canadian Bred Horse of the Year, and congratulates the entire team behind her, including breeders, Wilf and Karen McKay, and rider/owner, Brennan McCullagh.