

gelding preliminaries and the winner of the grand championship competition. Easter Cloud, shown by John T. Hook and owned by Longview Farm of Lee's Summit, Mo., was awarded the honor of being crowned the first Five-Gaited World's Grand Champion.

The show's other two grand finales, the three-gaited and fine harness, were not established until the 1930s. The reports vary somewhat, but the Three-Gaited World's Grand championship was first held in 1936 or 1937. The first Fine Harness World's Grand championship was also instituted in 1936.

The show has only been cancelled one time and that was in 1942 during World War II. It was held the next year at Church Hill Downs. Over the years, several shows have claimed to hold world's championship classes, however, the Kentucky State Fair is acknowledged as the home of these prestigious titles and in 1988 the fair copyrighted the title.

This year the WCHS will hold its 100th show and is appropriately billing it as "The Centennial of Champions". In commemoration of this grand occasion, WCHS will award a total of \$100,000 in prize money in the Five-Gaited Grand Championship. This is to be the largest prize ever awarded in an American Saddlebred performance class. The show will run from August 17-23, in Freedom Hall with the Five-Gaited Grand Championship being held Saturday, August 23.

This year's "Centennial of Champions" judges are David Cunningham of Knoxville, Tenn.; Brent Jacobs of Georgetown, Ky.; Lisa Jensen Richardson of Bedford, N.H.; Michael Richardson of Bedford, N.H.; and L. Thomas Oxley of Richmond, Ontario Canada.

The American Saddlebred classes will be judged by Cunningham, Jacobs, Richardson and Richardson. Hackney/Harness Pony classes will be judged by Oxley, Cunningham and Jacobs, while Roadster Horse and Roadster Pony classes will be judged by Oxley, Cunningham, Jacobs and Michael Richardson. Marking the world's champions in the equitation section will be Jacobs, Richardson, and Richardson.

Rules for entry can be found in the WCHS premium books and are available online from the official KSF website or by calling in or mailing a request to the Kentucky State Fair Horse Show Office in Louisville, Ky.

Scarlett Mattson, show manager, and Mary Anne Cronan, Kentucky State Fair Board chairperson, have put a great deal of effort into making this year's show something special and different from past years. "Because it's the 100th year of the show, it will be more impressive than the other shows," said Cronan. "There will be some special trophies and we are introducing some new elements into the show."

One of the new things Mattson and Cronan are excited about is the new three-color logo that will appear on t-shirts, programs, etc. A special commemorative pin will also be available for purchase at the show this year. In addition to the commemorative pin, a smaller pin that mimics the new logo will be handed out to everyone at the show.

In an attempt to make this year's show even more memorable, organizers would like to encourage anyone who has ribbons, pictures, programs or other items that might be of interest from World's Championship Horse Shows of yesteryear to use those items to decorate their tack rooms instead of using the standard fare.

Also, Alan Balch, president of the USA Equestrian Federation is creating a "Centennial of

Champions" video presentation to be aired during the show. In order to do this he needs your help! Please send photos, videos and any other memorabilia that you might have from the WCHS no later than July 15, 2003, to the USA Equestrian Federation, 4047 Iron Works Parkway, Lexington, KY 40511, attn: Karen Fish. All items will be scanned and returned to you within 10 days of receipt.

Show manager Scarlett Mattson has attended the WCHS for as long as she can remember. "It's so exciting to be a part of something like this," Mattson said. "If you are old enough and have attended the show most of your life, you've probably seen all of the top horses perform there."

Kentucky State Fair Board chairperson Mary Anne Cronan is also thrilled to be a part of this year's events. "It's a wonderful opportunity to be a part of this horse show. It has touched so many people's lives in so many ways," Cronan said. "It's going to be a spectacular year."

For many the green sawdust and yellow mums formed in the shape of a horseshoe have become synonymous with the WCHS over the years. What began as the dream of a gentleman from Mexico to have a true competition for world champion horses, the World's Championship Horse Show, has successfully evolved into the culmination of the show season for American Saddlebreds, Hackney/Harness Ponies and Road Horses and a must attend event for everyone in the industry.