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**Kenny Leads the Way in the \$78,000 The Agency 5* Speed Stake at the
2023 Hampton Classic Horse Show**

Ward Wins the \$39,000 2 Open Speed Class*

Bridgewater, NY – September 2, 2023 – After claiming several podium finishes during the week at the Hampton Classic, it was Darragh Kenny’s (IRL) turn to top the leaderboard in Saturday’s **\$78,000 The Agency 5* Speed Stake**. Kenny bested a field of 40 entries representing 14 nations with Kerry Anne LLC’s 11-year-old Oldenburg gelding *Eddy Blue*, stopping the clock in a faultless, blistering time of 69.27 seconds.



Darragh Kenny (IRL) and Eddy Blue won Saturday’s \$78,000 The Agency 5 Speed Stake © KindMedia*

The **Hampton Classic**, August 27-September 3, is one of the world's most prestigious horse shows, featuring competitors at every level from young children in leadline to Olympic, World, and World Cup Champions. The Classic also has competitions for riders with disabilities.

Of the nine horse-and-rider combinations to go clear over Alan Wade's 16-effort, 1.50m course for the \$78,000 The Agency 5* Speed Stake, only two stayed under the 70-second barrier: Kenny and World #5 ranked show jumper McLain Ward (USA). Just 0.41 seconds separated these two speed masters, with Ward tripping the timers in 69.68 seconds for a second-place finish aboard *Cedric 84*, Sport Four USA LLC's 11-year-old Oldenburg gelding.



Darragh Kenny and Eddy Blue © KindMedia

“I think I could have been a little quicker at the end of the course because I know the horse is very, very careful,” Kenny said. “You always have to worry about McLain’s rides, especially toward the end of a class. He’s one of the fastest and most competitive riders out there. With him coming up behind me, I likely could have made it more of a race to the finish as *Eddy Blue* is just learning to be a quick horse, but I’m very happy with his round and grateful to clinch the win.

“Alan (Wade) is one of the best course designers in the world,” he added. “He’s fantastic and super smart with his tracks. He knows that if he builds a short line at the end of the course, it’s going to be more difficult for us with our horses going fast, and that’s exactly what he did today. The lines were tough for a lot of people, but they worked out for me.”



McLain Ward (USA) and Cedric 84 finished second © KindMedia

Third place went to Kenny's countryman Conor Swail for his time of 71.16 seconds on *Vital Chance De La Roque*, a 14-year-old Selle Français gelding owned by Mannon Farm.



Conor Swail (IRL) and Vital Chance De La Roque earned third © KindMedia

In the morning, 45 entries representing 10 countries opened Jumper Ring 2 in the **\$39,000 2* Open Speed Class**, with course designer Nick Granat (USA) presenting a winding 15-effort, 1.45m track. Stopping the clock 1.2 seconds ahead of his fellow competitors with a time of 58.67 seconds, Ward claimed top honors with his speed specialist *Catoki*.

“*Catoki* is always a speed professional, and he came to the Classic just for this class,” Ward said of his, Bob Russell, and Marilla Van Beuren’s 14-year-old Westphalian gelding. “I wanted to compete and not miss some of these nice ranking classes on the schedule. The course rode well, and he performed at his best.”



McLain Ward and Catoki won the morning's \$39,000 2 Open Speed Class © KindMedia*

Luiz Francisco de Azevedo (BRA) rode Santa Cecelia Stables LLC's 16-year-old Dutch Warmblood gelding *Collin* to second-place honors in a time of 59.88 seconds. Third went to Diego Perez Bilbao (ESP) and *Dialuna*, Over Fences Farm LLC's 10-year-old Holsteiner mare, for their time of 63.50 seconds.

With his 5* victory, Kenny has overtaken the lead for the **\$30,000 Longines Rider Challenge** with 227 points. Kelli Cruciotti Vanderveen (USA) and Rodrigo Pessoa (BRA) have dropped into second and third place, respectively, on their overnight scores of 215 points and 206 points. The Challenge, which awards \$30,000 and a Longines watch to the rider accumulating the most points in the week's Open Jumper classes, will be awarded on Sunday following the \$425,000 Longines Hampton Classic 5* Grand Prix (2:00 p.m. start).

For live show results, visit TheHamptonClassic.com. Photos from the event are [available via Dropbox](#) with credits to KindMedia (unless otherwise noted in the folder name).

Each year approximately 50,000 people – including many A-list celebrities – come to watch the nation's best equestrian athletes compete at the Hampton Classic. Rated **USEF 'Premier-6'** for hunters and jumpers with designated **FEI 2* and 5*** classes, the Hampton Classic features more than 200 competitions in six spectacular show rings, the Agnetta Currey Boutique Garden with more than 70 vendors, and a wide selection of dining options, all on its world-class 60-acre showgrounds.

The Hampton Classic's FEI competition began Thursday, August 31, with the **\$10,000 Citarella Open Jumper CSI2*** and **\$39,000 Flecha Azul 5* Speed Stake** and continues throughout the weekend with eight 2*/5* classes featuring courses designed by Ireland's Alan Wade. FEI competition also included Friday's **\$39,000 Wölffer Estate 2* Jumper Classic**, **\$78,000 Douglas Elliman 5* Grand Prix Qualifier**, Saturday's **\$39,000 Open Speed Class CSI2***, and the **\$78,000 The Agency 5* Speed Stake**, and culminates with the **\$78,000 Hampton Classic 2* Grand Prix** and **\$425,000 Longines Hampton Classic 5* Grand Prix** on Sunday, September 3.

Outside the show rings, families can enjoy unique shopping; hands-on activities, pony rides and petting zoo animals at the Kids Exhibition Tent; and many more fun activities during News 12 Long Island Kids Day (Saturday, September 2).

Daily admission to the Classic is \$20 per carload. Grandstand tickets for the \$425,000 Longines Hampton Classic Grand Prix on Sunday, September 3, are \$55 per person for reserved bucket seating. Grandstand tickets are electronic only; E-Tickets are provided thanks to support from Green is the New Blue.

For those who can't make it to the show grounds, complimentary live webcasts of all Grand Prix and Aspinall Ring competitions air on the Hampton Classic website. Produced by ClipMyHorse.TV, the Grand Prix Ring livestreams are sponsored by Longines and the Aspinall Ring livestreams are sponsored by ClipMyHorse.TV. In addition, WVVH-TV, Hamptons Television, broadcasts up to five hours of competition and highlights each day during the Classic. These broadcasts can also be seen online at www.wvvh.tv.

For more information on the Hampton Classic Horse Show, please visit the Hampton Classic website at www.hamptonclassic.com or call 631-537-3177. Hampton Classic Horse Show, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) charitable corporation.