



## LADYBUG CANADIAN BRED HORSE OF THE YEAR



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The Equestrian Canada (EC) 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.

The 2019 recipient, Ladybug, is a great example of the quality sport horses produced within Canada. The 2002 Hanoverian mare (Lapallo x Anforan xx) was bred by the Kmita family of John Kmita Ltd. in Weyburn, SK, is owned by Margaret, Robert and Simone Williams, and ridden by Kiara Williams-Brown of Navan, ON.

Ladybug has been a perfect dressage partner for 15-year-old Kiara, helping her to move up from the training level all the way to the small tour in just a few short years. In fact, Ladybug even allowed Kiara to reach the international level of competition and experience the thrill of competing for Canada at a major championship.

After a solid season in the FEI Junior division in 2018, Kiara and Ladybug were selected to join Team Canada Central and represent the maple leaf at the 2018 FEI North American Youth Championships (NAYC) in North Salem, NY. Despite experiencing a team environment and high-pressure atmosphere for the first time, Kiara and Ladybug's contributions helped Team Canada Central earn a score of 199.51 to take the bronze medal.



That same year, Kiara and Ladybug earned the Canadian Dressage Owners and Riders Association (CADORA) FEI Junior Champion title, and were also named the Ottawa Area Dressage Group (OADG) FEI Junior Champion and Freestyle Champion. Plus, the OADG provided Kiara with a special achievement award for her performance at NAYC.

In 2019, in addition to continuing to compete at the FEI Junior level, Kiara and Ladybug debuted at the small tour level, earning top placings across the province. This included winning the FEI Test of Choice at the CDI Kawartha Spring Classic I, and taking second in the FEI Prix St. Georges at Dewmont Dressage. They also earned top-three placings at the CDI 3\* Ottawa Dressage Festival and Westar Summer Fest.

They were equally successful at the FEI Junior level in 2019, highlighted by a Freestyle win at the RCRA Spring Dressage, which led to Kiara once again being selected to represent the maple leaf at NAYC 2019 on the highly competitive Ontario team, with Ladybug being named her alternate horse. Kiara and Ladybug also racked up more OADG year-end titles, including FEI Young Rider Champion.

Well-known on the national dressage circuit, Ladybug is highly regarded for her talent and frequent victories. She has also been chosen to participate in a variety of events and demonstrations outside the ring, including the 2018 CADORA Symposium with FEI 5\* judge, Stephen Clarke and Lendon Gray's 2019 Dressage4Kids Ontario Clinic.

Ladybug has allowed Kiara to travel and compete at top venues across North America, including stops in Vermont, New York and Florida. And their journey is far from over, with Kiara's sights set on moving up to the Under 25 Grand Prix level in the near future.

Aptly described by her nominators as "representing the best qualities of Canadian bred Hanoverian horses, with the ambition and drive needed for the highest level of our sport and the patience and generosity required to teach a learning rider", Ladybug is a deserving recipient of the 2019 Canadian Bred Horse of the Year Award. EC congratulates the entire team behind Ladybug, including the Williams family as riders/owners, and breeder, John Kmita Ltd.