

Georgia, TCU and Auburn win Equestrian National Championships

WACO, Texas — The University of Georgia won its third overall Varsity Equestrian National Championship (VENC) at the Heart O' Texas Fair Complex on Saturday in Waco, Texas. TCU won the Western national title while Auburn claimed the Hunter Seat championship.

The Bulldog riders claimed their first national crown since 2004 without finishing first in either riding discipline, Hunt Seat or Western. Georgia's strong finish in both disciplines, second in Western and third in Hunter Seat, allowed the Bulldogs to claim a team title.

"It's an incredible feeling to come out on top in such a tough, tough competition," said Georgia head coach Meghan Boenig. "The whole weekend was a roller-coaster emotionally. We are just ecstatic to be bringing the title back to Georgia."

In just its second year of competition, TCU captured the national championship, thus finishing the season a perfect 15-0. The Frogs' title match came with some drama as their match against the No. 2 seed Georgia came down to a tiebreaker won by the Frogs 1027-1026. The two teams battled to a 4-4 tie after splitting the Horsemanship and the Reining.

"God bless this team," said head coach Gary Reynolds said. "I thank these girls who've worked so hard and sacrificed so much to get to this point."

The Auburn equestrian team won its first Hunter Seat national championship defeating second-seed Texas A&M, 5-2. The title is the second national title for Auburn; the Tigers previously won the overall title in 2006.

"Our Hunt Seat team has been the strongest team at Nationals," said Auburn head coach Greg Williams. "The girls did a phenomenal job. It is so fun to win a discipline title like Hunt Seat."

For the first time in VENC history, individual national championships were contested. South Carolina's Kristin Terebesi swept Hunter Seat honors claiming the Equitation Over Fences title over Baylor's Nicole Brown (162-160) and posting a 164-163 win over Georgia's Haylie Jayne in Equitation on the Flat. In Western competition, Georgia's Sarah Locker defeated Oklahoma State's Leah Kuehn, 137-134, in Reining. Texas A&M's Caroline Gunn claimed Horsemanship honors with a 155-148 victory over Georgia's Laura Upton.

Overall Standings

1. Georgia
2. Texas A&M
3. Auburn
4. Oklahoma State
5. Kansas State

Western Team Finishes

1. TCU
2. Georgia
3. Kansas State
4. Oklahoma State
5. Texas A&M

Hunter Seat Team Finishes

1. Auburn
2. Texas A&M
3. Georgia
4. Oklahoma State
5. South Carolina

Individual Champions:**Hunter Seat**

Equitation Over Fences: Kristin Terebesi - South Carolina

Equitation on the Flat: Kristin Terebesi - South Carolina

Western

Horsemanship: Caroline Gunn - Texas A&M

Reining: Sarah Locker - Georgia