



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact:

Erin Crady

Director of Marketing and Communications

(859) 276-2291

[ecrady@toba.org](mailto:ecrady@toba.org)

### **New awards will spotlight successful second career potential of Thoroughbred horses**

*Rood & Riddle Equine Hospital will honor top 2009 USEF Thoroughbred competitors*

LEXINGTON, Ky. - After Thoroughbreds have completed their race careers, they are often ideal candidates for another vocation. To call attention to these horses' second career possibilities, nationally-recognized Rood & Riddle Equine Hospital has created a series of annual awards, the first of which will be presented to the top Thoroughbred sport horses of 2009.

Divisional awards, named for legendary Thoroughbred sport horses, will be given to those Thoroughbreds who were the top achievers in 2009 U.S. Equestrian Federation (USEF) competitions in the following disciplines: Hunter (**Stocking Stuffer Award**), Jumper (**Touch of Class Award**), Dressage (**Keen Award**) and Eventing (**Antigua Award**). The USEF is assisting in the award selection process by tabulating the points earned and verifying that the winners are Thoroughbreds. The divisional honors will be awarded at the USEF's annual Silver Stirrup Awards Banquet in January 2011.

An overall winner selected from among the category winners will be presented with the **Rood & Riddle Thoroughbred Sport Horse Award** trophy during the Thoroughbred Owners and Breeders Association (TOBA) National Awards Dinner, September 10, 2010. A perpetual grand prize trophy will also be displayed at Rood & Riddle's Hospital in Lexington, Kentucky.

“Our goal in creating these awards is to increase awareness of Thoroughbreds’ value as sport horses,” explains Tom Riddle, DVM, a founding partner of Rood & Riddle Equine Hospital ([www.roodandriddle.com](http://www.roodandriddle.com)) based in Lexington, Kentucky. “While some Thoroughbreds are raised specifically to be sport horses, others are finding greater success in their second careers as sport horses than they did in races. Through this award, we hope to decrease the number of unwanted horses in the U.S. by demonstrating their value in these non-racing disciplines.”

“These awards are a wonderful way to heighten awareness so that we may broaden Thoroughbred horses’ careers beyond the racing world,” comments TOBA President Dan Metzger. “By spotlighting their successes in second careers, we hope the awards will encourage people to rehabilitate and retrain Thoroughbreds after they have retired from racing.”

The overall winner will be selected by a celebrity committee comprised of four chefs d’equipe (discipline heads) for each discipline: George Morris (show jumping), Mark Phillips (Eventing), Patty Heuckeroth (Hunters), Hilda Gurney (Dressage), as well as famed U.S. Olympics equestrian and racehorse trainer Michael Matz.

“Thoroughbreds are the best. They’re lighter, quicker and more intelligent,” says Morris. “The best of any breed is the Thoroughbred horse, the best of that breed is better than any other breed.”

Matz also applauds the awards. “I think it’s a great situation. If someone takes the time to train a young Thoroughbred it could be worth a lot of money.” He recalls, “The best horse I ever had was Jet Run, who wasn’t interested in racing but became one of the best show jumpers in the world. He showed in top level competitions from the time he was four years old until he was 16, was in two Olympic Games and won two consecutive Pan American Games. In another example, Mighty Ruler was a well bred Thoroughbred donated to the U.S. Equestrian team, who became a top jumper. There are a lot of stories like this.”

Matz encourages people interested in starting a Thoroughbred in a second career to be patient. “When a horse has an injury that will stop them from racing, for example, that doesn’t mean that with time they can’t come back and be a very good show horse. The most important consideration is that people have to take the time.”

Between 800 and 1000 Thoroughbred owners and breeders will be on hand to congratulate the first **Rood & Riddle Thoroughbred Sport Horse Award** honoree during TOBA’s Awards Dinner. “I believe the Rood & Riddle Thoroughbred Sport Horse Award will be extraordinarily well received because many of the people who attend are also involved with other disciplines. Ours is a closely knit community. Everyone knows each other and the issues that face racehorses. It all goes back to our love of the horses regardless of the discipline,” says Metzger.

With approximately 90 percent of Rood & Riddle’s practice focused on Thoroughbred and sport horses, Dr. Riddle says that his team is excited to reach out to members of both communities through

these awards. “We are interested in their worlds, and in helping them find solutions to issues above and beyond providing the finest veterinary care available. Thoroughbreds are prized for their beauty and athleticism. Our hope is that with these awards, we can direct more attention to their second career potential.”

Established in 1986, Rood & Riddle Equine Hospital is a worldwide leader in equine healthcare. For additional information about the awards, visit [www.roodandriddle.com](http://www.roodandriddle.com).

**Media Notes: For additional information, or to schedule an interview with Dr. Tom Riddle, please contact Media Relations, Inc. at 612-798-7220.**

### **About Rood & Riddle**

Lexington-based Rood & Riddle is a full-service equine hospital established in 1986 as a referral center for horses requiring specialized medical and surgical care. Today, Rood & Riddle is known and respected throughout the world for its innovative and highly skilled treatment of horses. The hospital facility offers a full range of services including surgery, internal medicine, advanced diagnostic imaging, a focused Podiatry Center and a specialized Reproductive Center. The practice also provides ambulatory services (on-site care) for breeding farms, sport horse facilities, horse shows and events, with a variety of services, including emergency and preventative care, general reproduction, lameness, radiography, podiatry, and internal medicine.

### **Biography: W. Thomas Riddle, DVM**

Dr. Tom Riddle is a graduate of the University of Georgia College of Veterinary Medicine and co-founder of Rood & Riddle Equine Hospital in Lexington, Kentucky. Dr. Riddle began practicing in Lexington immediately upon his graduation from veterinary school in 1978, as part of the resident veterinarian team at historic Spendthrift Farm. Four years later, he and Dr. Bill Rood formed a partnership, and in 1986, expanded their successful ambulatory practice by opening Rood & Riddle Equine Hospital. Today, Rood & Riddle is known and respected throughout the world for its innovative and highly skilled treatment of horses.

Dr. Riddle’s practice focuses primarily on reproductive medicine, where his expertise in fetal sexing has made the once-innovative procedure a widely accepted practice among his clients. In addition to his veterinary practice, Dr. Riddle serves as Director of Marketing for Rood & Riddle, is an active board member of the Kentucky Horse Park Foundation, a past president of the Kentucky Association of Equine Practitioners, and current president of the Society for Theriogenology.