

Session 2 – YOUTH

The Youth session will be run by a moderator and a panel of young athletes (16-24 years of age) from around the world representing all the disciplines as well as guest speakers focussing on specific topics. There are three core themes which will be explored: accessibility to the high-level sport, career pathways and sport presentation/media promotion. The biographies for the moderator, the athletes and the guest speakers can be found below.

BIOGRAPHIES

MODERATOR:

Catie Staszak (USA), multimedia sports journalist specialising in equine media

Catie Staszak is the broadcast analyst for the Longines FEI World Cup™ Jumping North American League. Staszak leads broadcasts from top horse shows and Jumping events across North America, working with FEI TV, the NBC Sports Network, and Carr-Hughes Productions, among others. A competitive equestrian of more than 22 years, Staszak's passion for, experience with, and knowledge about the sport has led her to pursue many endeavours within the industry. As a rider, she competed in the prestigious ASPCA Maclay Championship and the USEF Medal Final during her junior years and continues to compete successfully as an amateur while putting her main focus on her work in equestrian media. She has also helped cover mainstream sports in West Palm Beach, FL, with ESPN West Palm, WPTV News Channel 5, and WFLX FOX 29 and acted as a SportsCenter anchor on ESPN 106.3. Staszak graduated from the University of Miami with a perfect 4.0 GPA and was awarded the School of Communication Award as the college's most outstanding senior. She is grateful to be able to combine her two greatest passions into a career and hopes to help grow equestrian sports' popularity in mainstream media.

ATHLETE REPRESENTATIVES

Click on the links below for biographies on the athletes' panel for the youth session:

- **JUMPING** Bryan Balsiger (SUI)
- **DRESSAGE** Juan Matute Guimón (ESP)
- **PARA DRESSAGE** Gemma Rose Jen Foo (SIN)
- **EVENTING** Thaïs Méheust (FRA)
- **DRIVING** Martin Hölle (HUN)
- **ENDURANCE** Paulina Berriel Tarán (URU)
- **VAULTING** James Hocking (AUS)
- **REINING** Tabitha Sternberg-Allen (GBR)

GUEST SPEAKERS

Click on the links below to find out more about the guest speakers for the youth session:

- **Peter Bayer** (AUT), FIA Secretary General for Motor Sport
- **Maarten van der Heijden** (NED), Royal Dutch Equestrian Federation High Performance and Foreign Affairs Director and Secretary General

JUMPING ATHLETE REPRESENTATIVE

Athlete: BRYAN BALSIGER

Nationality: Switzerland (SUI)

Age: 21

Horses: Ak's Courage, Clouzot De Lassus, Poppee De Damvil

Major Events:

Individual gold medallist at the FEI European Championship for Young Riders 2017

Team bronze medallist at the FEI European Championship for Young Riders 2016

Competed at the FEI European Championship for Juniors 2015

Competed at the FEI European Championship for Children 2011

Competed at the FEI European Championship for Children 2011

Sporting philosophy/motto:

"Preparation is everything."

Famous relatives:

His parents Thomas and Patricia Balsiger, his brother Ken Balsiger and his partner Pauline Zoller have competed in jumping at elite level.

Added information:

His family runs the Ecurie Balsiger in Corcelles, Switzerland, where they run competitions and train riders and horses for jumping.

Links:

<http://www.fei.org/athlete/10061969/BALSIGER-Bryan>

<https://www.facebook.com/bryan.balsiger97/>

DRESSAGE ATHLETE REPRESENTATIVE

Athlete: JUAN MATUTE GUIMÓN

Nationality: Spain (ESP)

Age: 20

Horses: Copernico Ymas, Don Diego Ymas, Quantico Ymas

Major Events:

Freestyle gold medallist at the FEI European Championships for Juniors 2015

Competed at the FEI European Championships from 2012 – 2017 (junior, U25)

Individual bronze medallist at the FEI European Championships U25 2016

Individual bronze medallist at the FEI European Championships U25 2017

2nd place FEI Grand Prix CDI3* 2018 Wellington FL

1st place FEI Grand Prix (16-25) CDIU25 2018 Wellington FL

Competed CHIO Aachen 2014, 2016 & 2017 (winner of the U25 GP in 2016, 2nd & 3rd place in Small Tour 2017)

Added Information:

Continuing on the Dressage dynasty, Juan Matute is the son and protégé of three time Olympian Juan Matute Guimon Snr "so I grew up around horses. At the age of six I started riding ponies. My first introduction to the sport was through jumping, after that I switched to eventing and eventually to dressage."

Juan Matute has seen great success under his father's tutelage, success which has been aided by the family's temporary relocation to Florida. "My father has been the main influence in my development as a rider. His experience and wisdom has inspired me to follow in his footsteps. My family and I moved to the US in 2008, and ever since I have combined academics with the pursuit of my goals as a dressage rider."

It is with utter dedication, commitment and the support of his family and long term sponsor that Juan has been able to represent Spain for six consecutive years at the Youth European Championships.

Links:

<http://www.fei.org/athlete/10003267/MATUTE-GUIMON-Juan>

<https://www.facebook.com/jmatuteguimon/>

PARA DRESSAGE ATHLETE REPRESENTATIVE

Athlete: GEMMA ROSE JEN FOO

Nationality: Singapore (SGP)

Age: 22

Horses: Cassis Royal (2016 Rio Paralympic & 2014 FEI World Equestrian Games ride), Avalon (2012 Paralympic ride), Bonbon, Don's Day Dream.

Major Events:

Competed in 2016 Paralympic Games in Rio

Competed in 2012 Paralympic Games in London

Competed in 2014 FEI World Equestrian Games™ in Caen, France

Added Information:

Gemma Rose Foo took up riding as a form of therapy at the age of 8. She was subsequently introduced to Para Dressage as a sport and competed in her first competition in 2008 organised by the Singapore Disability Sports Council.

In 2011 she represented Singapore and qualified for the 2012 London Paralympic Games, making history by being a member of the first ever Asian Para-Equestrian team to compete at a Paralympic Games. At age 16, Gemma was the youngest Singapore rider and the second youngest to compete in Para-Equestrian at the London Paralympic Games.

Gemma has also competed at the 2014 FEI World Equestrian Games™ in Normandy and the 2016 Rio Paralympic Games. She has qualified to compete at this year's FEI World Equestrian Games in Tryon, USA.

Gemma is currently pursuing her Bachelor of Arts Degree from Oklahoma City University.

Links:

<http://www.fei.org/athlete/10078839/FOO-Gemma-Rose-Jen>

EVENTING ATHLETE REPRESENTATIVE

Athlete: THAÏS MÉHEUST

Nationality: France (FRA)

Age: 20

Horses: Quamilha, Risotto Mail, Chaman, Vingtingt

Major Events:

Team gold medallist at FEI European Eventing Championships for Young Riders 2016

Multi-team medallist over pony, junior and young rider FEI European Championships

Gold medallist at FEI European Pony Championships 2011

Bronze medallist at FEI European Eventing Championships for Juniors 2012

5th place at FEI European Eventing Championships for Juniors 2014

Team silver at FEI European Eventing Championships for Juniors 2015

French Champion in Juniors 2017

Added Information:

Highly decorated, Thaïs has competed at seven FEI European Championships over Pony, Junior and Young Rider categories coming home with four team medals – an incredible achievement.

Thaïs started riding in Eventing at 8 years old, whilst also competing in horse ball and jumping, deciding at the tender age of nine to focus her attention solely on Eventing.

“Since the beginning I was involved with horses because my family is very passionate about them. This year I am in my last year as a young rider and I hope to be selected for the European Championships in Fontainebleau (France). I hope to go on to compete in Nations Cup teams and Bramham under 25.”

Links:

<http://www.fei.org/athlete/10067243/MEHEUST-Thais>

DRIVING ATHLETE REPRESENTATIVE

Athlete: MARTIN HÖLLE

Nationality: Hungary (HUN)

Age: 20

Horses: Cheron, Dior, Eppie, Apache de la Licorne

Major Events:

Gold medallist FEI World Driving Championships for Pairs 2017 in both individual and team categories

Silver medallist at the FEI World Driving Pony Championships 2015

Gold medallist at the FEI World Driving Pony Championships 2013

Gold medallist at the FEI World Trophy for Juniors 2012

Hero / Idol:

Trained by Mieke van Tergouw (Riant Equestrian Centre in Beekbergen NED)

Added Information:

Martin has been a horse addict since he was a child getting his first pony at the age of 3 for his birthday. "My grandfather always had horses and so I spent a lot of time with them."

"When I was 8 years old I started to visit driving competitions in Hungary and I loved it straight away so I knew, this is what I am going to do." By 9 Martin was competing in his first competition with a pony pair which he says "was a complete disaster, but I still loved it and knew that somehow I needed to get better and do a lot of competitions." Training with famed Jozsef Dobrovitz from 2008 to 2018.

"In 2013 I moved to the Netherlands to train with Claudio Fumagalli and Mieke van Tergouw, which seems a good choice as we have achieved some great results together."

Martin impressively won the gold medal at the 2017 FEI World Driving Championships for Pairs despite having limited experience competing with horse pairs – showing his exceptional talent.

Martin is currently balancing competition with studying Business and Management at the Corvinus University Budapest.

Links:

<http://www.fei.org/athlete/10075190/HOLLE-Martin>

ENDURANCE ATHLETE REPRESENTATIVE

Athlete: PAULINA BERRIEL TARÁN

Nationality: Uruguay (URU)

Age: 16

Horses: Bourbon Endurance, A P Galadriel, Al Mllonguero, Sb Bayda Gebha

Major Events:

Multiple CEIYJ2*120 wins (Trinidad) and podium finishes (Casablanca, La Vinilla, Costa Azul & Veramonte).

Competed at a host of events worldwide

Added Information:

Paulina started riding at an early age, and at a mere six years old took part in her first endurance race. "From a very young age horses caught my attention, I have always felt a very special connection with them. Horses are my life and luckily I had family support from the beginning. I spend most of my time with horses, giving the best of myself to them at every race and training."

Paulina's greatest achievements include securing a good position in the Young Riders Endurance World Ranking 2017, becoming national champion and winning the challenging track at Walvis Bay, Namibia.

Links:

<http://www.fei.org/athlete/10115927/BERRIEL-Paulina>

VAULTING ATHLETE REPRESENTATIVE

Athlete: JAMES HOCKING

Nationality: Australia (AUS)

Age: 21

Horses: French Kiss, Hunterview Sinatra, Ghost Alfarvad Z

Major Events:

Competed as part of team Australia in the FEI World Equestrian Games™ 2010

Competed at the FEI World Championships 2016

Qualified and competed in the FEI World Cup™ Vaulting series 2017/2018

3rd place at the FEI World Cup™ Vaulting qualifier Paris 2017

2017 Australian National Vaulting Champion, Sydney, Australia

Hobbies:

Farming, music, physics, gymnastics, archery and animals.

Memorable sporting achievement:

Competing in the 2010 FEI World Equestrian Games™, Kentucky as the first ever Australian squad to compete at WEG

Most influential person in career:

Stefan Csandl, Lasse Kristensen, Tristyn Lowe, Nina Fritzell, David Rath and Tony Richardson.

Added Information:

Jamie found the sport of vaulting at the age of 6 after he fell from a horse whilst riding and his mother encouraged him to try vaulting.

Since then he has worked his way up the rankings going from being the smallest member of team Australia at the 2010 FEI World Equestrian Games™ in Lexington, Kentucky to making history being the first ever Australian vaulter to take part in FEI World Cup™ vaulting.

In his FEI World Cup™ vaulting debut he finished on the podium in 3rd at the Paris qualifier 2017.

Links:

<http://www.fei.org/athlete/10046990/HOCKING-James>

REINING ATHLETE REPRESENTATIVE

Athlete: TABITHA STERNBERG-ALLEN

Nationality: Great Britain (GBR)

Age: 19

Horses: FS Gunner Got Lucky, Yelena My Way, Dunit in Pale, Smart a little

Major Events:

Bronze team medallist at the FEI European Championships for Juniors 2013

Competed at the FEI Europeans Championships for Juniors 2015

Competed at the FEI World Championships for Young Riders 2017

CRY3* wins in Bodiam (2017)

Added Information:

Horses have always been a huge part of Tabitha's life with her father being a horse trainer and her mother also competing "for as long as I can remember."

"Horses have been a staple part of growing up. I started riding at the age of 4, on a donkey called Lancelot and I haven't looked back since, working my way from lead-line classes to European and World Championship level. I have been fortunate to represent my country three times now and even compete in the first FEI Young Rider World Championships in Reining. One of my greatest achievements was winning the team bronze medal at the FEI Junior Championships as well as taking multiple national titles against young riders and seniors alike."

As well as being a world class Reiner, Tabitha balances this with studying veterinary medicine at the Royal Veterinary College with a particular interest in sports horse medicine.

Links:

<http://www.fei.org/athlete/10095212/STERNBERG-ALLEN-Tabitha>

GUEST SPEAKER

PETER BAYER (AUT), FIA Secretary General for Motor Sport

Peter Bayer is a creative leader with more than 20 years of experience in developing and successfully delivering international sports and entertainment businesses.

In September 2009, he was appointed Chief Executive Officer of the Innsbruck 2012 Winter Youth Olympic Games (inaugural edition), which received The Most Innovative Event Award at ISEM 2012, and for which Peter was awarded an Olympic Order.

From January 2013 to February 2017 Peter has been the CEO of OSM – Open Sports Management, an organisation set up by Sir Keith Mills, created to promote the Ocean Sailing World Championships.

In addition, Peter joined Origin Sports Group in London as a Board member and Executive Director in March 2016. Origin Sports Group is a portfolio sports company, which delivers growth for its clients and customers through investment and development of sports properties.

In March 2017 Peter was appointed Secretary General for Sport of the FIA – Federation Internationale de l'Automobile. The FIA is the governing body of Formula 1, World Rally Championship, World Rally Cross Championship, Formula E, World Touring Car Championship, World Endurance Championship and World Karting Championship. The FIA is an arbitrator, a body to define rules and ethics that raise the values of the sport to the highest level, that provide a show that thrills, and that ensure motorsport continues to be a laboratory for the automobiles of the future.

Peter currently lives in Lausanne, Switzerland, is married and has two sons.

GUEST SPEAKER

MAARTEN VAN DER HEIJDEN (NED), Royal Dutch Equestrian Federation, High Performance and Foreign Affairs Director and Secretary General

Secretary General and High Performance Director of the Royal Dutch Equestrian Federation, Maarten van der Heijden, is heading the high performance department and programs since end 2008. He is an experienced manager/director in other domains (public health and education), is specialized in change management and innovation and holds two master degrees in pedagogics/psychology and science of education. He is also a dressage-rider at GP level and an FEI Dressage 4* judge, and did compete in early years in Jumping ZZ/1.40 m and eventing ZZ/1*. He has reached the highest trainer/coach level in the Netherlands (Topsport level 6) and the Master Coach in the Sports program of the NOC.

Added Information:

On his proudest moments, he says: "Looking back on my life and my career, I have had many proud moments that are all characterized by intense team cooperation for excellent results.

In my former job as director of behavioural scientists I had the opportunity to build bridges between psychiatrists and psychologists for optimal treatment of patients with very serious behavioural and psychiatric problems combined with a mental handicap.

In my present duty as high performance director I am so grateful for the opportunity to enable and stimulate optimal teamwork within teams and staff in all equestrian disciplines with the joint goal of Orange and top results".

His most valued lesson: "Dealing with and treating adolescents with the most serious behavioural and psychiatric disorders (and their parents), is very helpful to get the importance of winning medals in topsport in perspective.

"I have a lot of respect for: People who keep their authenticity in all circumstances. »