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Quick reactions and great heart help Canada's Eric Lamaze and Hickstead capture second place in the Speed and Handiness Class at the 2006 FEI World Equestrian Games

Aachen, DE – August 29, 2006 – “Amazing round!” was the description used by Canadian Show Jumping Team Chef d'Équipe Terrence (Torchy) Millar after Eric Lamaze, of Schomberg, Ontario, and his mount Hickstead blazed through Frank Rothenberger's course for the Speed and Handiness competition at the 2006 FEI World Equestrian Games.

Lamaze and the 10-year-old Dutch warmblood stallion, Hickstead, owned by Torrey Pines (Lamaze's stable) and Ashland Stables Inc., were 84th in the line-up to enter the ring on a course that took its toll on many of the 116 riders in the class.

When Lamaze's turn came, he and Hickstead wasted no time blasting through the in-gate, speeding through the course in a time of 78.40 seconds, putting the pair in the lead. They held onto first place through 13 challengers until Beezie Madden (USA) and Authentic bested their time by 0.22 seconds capturing the lead in 77.62 seconds.

Canadian Chef de Mission, Michael Gallagher, said, “I didn't think he was going to get over that last fence. The horse was looking at the in-gate.”

Lamaze said, “My plan was to attack this course. I thought, ‘it was now or never.’ I got a little out of control at the end. He (Hickstead) saw the fence at the last minute and made it over – I'm not sure how. He jumped fantastic. He's so quick with his reactions and he has great heart. He really loves what he does; he loves competing. He can get strong after going that fast but I think by tomorrow he'll be calmer.”

Millar summed it up saying, “That was great. What an electrifying moment.”

Canada's Jill Henselwood and Special Ed had a good round, finishing in a time of 89.95 after knocking down only one jump. In a speed class the four faults received for a knock down are converted to time added to the total running

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time of the class. Jumping Chef d'Équipe, Torchy Millar, said, "Jill rode him well and she had a commendable round."

Chris Pratt, on Sue Grange's Rivendell, did well until he had a knockdown on jump #8, a wide oxer, and then a refusal at 9A, which came up quickly before the pair had re-grouped. They finished their round in 108.06 seconds, including the 4 jumping faults. "Rivendell was jumping well," said Millar, "but Chris should have kept going and taken the long route (through the alternate 9A-B combination). Then he would have had time to gather his reins."

In Style and Ian Millar were the last of the Canadians to go. Despite a very fast trip around the course, 12 jumping faults added to the running time gave the pair a total of 96.36 seconds.

At the end of this first class, the Canadian Team is in fourteenth place overall.

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