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Darragh Kenny teamed up with Gatsby just a few weeks ago, but they've kicked off a winning streak that includes the \$100,000 Hermès American Gold Cup Qualifier. Photo by Emily Riden/Phelps Media Group

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North Salem, N.Y.—Sept. 12

For anyone looking to wager on Sunday's \$200,000 American Gold Cup CSI-W Grand Prix, consider placing a bet on Darragh Kenny.

The Irishman is on quite the hot streak at this year's American Gold Cup; he earned a definitive victory on Sept. 11 in the \$34,000 Don Little Memorial Welcome Stake aboard Allison Toffolon's Gatsby, and the next day the same duo did it again, clinching the win in the \$100,000 Hermès American Gold Cup Qualifier.

Rewind to a month ago and Kenny had yet to even show the 10-year-old Irish Sport Horse. Now a few short weeks later, the pair has racked up an impressive track record, winning all four of their last four attempts.

"He's an amazing horse," Kenny said. "He just keeps winning all the time. It's unbelievable."

With three wins with Kenny already under his belt, today's 1.60-meter track, set on the beautiful grass field at Old Salem Farm, served as the next big test for Gatsby.

"This is the first time that I've ever jumped him this big and he jumped it so easily," Kenny said. "I was really happy with him."

Owned by Allison Toffolon of Bronxville, N.Y., Gatsby came to Kenny for the ride when Toffolon went off to school this fall at Southern Methodist University. Since then, Kenny has shown the 10-year-old Irish Sport Horse four times, finishing second the first time out and first in all three of their last efforts, including the win in the \$15,000 Merrill Lynch Speed Derby and the \$10,000 Open Jumpers, both at the Hampton Classic (N.Y.) in August.

"He's been absolutely incredible. I'm lucky to get the chance to ride him," Kenny said.

Toffolon will return to the saddle on Gatsby during the Winter Equestrian Festival in Wellington, FL, but in the meantime, there is no place that Kenny would rather have the ride on the stallion than at the American Gold Cup.

Many other more experienced horses did not fair as well as Gatsby, as rails continued to roll out of cups throughout the challenging course, designed by Alan Wade and intended to separate the best from the rest for qualification to compete in Sunday's \$200,000 American Gold Cup CSI-W Grand Prix.

"Alan Wade is an Irish course designer, and he is to me one of the best course designers in the world," Kenny said. "He's incredible. He built a really super course today. It caused a lot of problems everywhere, not just in one place. I think he got a great outcome in the class."

Of the 59 competitors competing in the first round, five would advance without fault to the jump-off, while 15 others would finish on just four faults.

Young rider Wilton Porter and his mount Diamonte Darco were the first to go clear in the opening round, but a thrown shoe in the schooling ring would move the talented pair down the return list for the jump-off.

Instead, it was Christine McCrea with Zerly, owned by Candy Tribble of Suffield, Conn., who came back first to jump off. The pair was clear all the way to the final fence, a large, orange Hermès oxer, but the rail hit the ground leaving them with 4 faults in a time of 48.12 seconds.

Megan Nusz and Dynamo, owned by Amalaya Investments of Houston, Texas, were next in the ring, and they were met with the same fate as a rail came down on the last oxer. The pair's slightly quicker time of 47.61 seconds would move them just ahead of McCrea and Zerly for the eventual fourth place finish.

Kenny and Gatsby were the next to return, and they left nothing to chance going clear all the way through to the end in a quick time of 44.280 seconds.

"I knew that Brianne [Goutal] could be very fast, and Wilton [Porter], his horse pulled a shoe in the warm-up, so he had to go after me. So I knew I had to be quick. In the end it proved to be quick enough," Kenny said.

With shoe back on, Porter and Diamonte Darco returned after Kenny to go clear in a time of 51.85 seconds, a time that would be good enough for the third place finish in the end.

Edging out Porter for the second place spot were last year's \$200,000 American Invitational CSI-W Grand Prix winners, Brianne Goutal and Nice de Prissey. The pair ended on a clear round in a time of 51.46 seconds. For the second day in a row, Kenny won the class by a significant margin of more than 5 seconds.

On Sunday, the horse show comes to an exciting conclusion with the \$200,000 American Gold Cup CSI4*W Grand Prix which kicks off at 2 p.m. EST.

All competition will be webcast live throughout the week at www.theamericangoldcup.com (5), and more information can be found by visiting the website or www.stadiumjumping.com (6).

\$100,000 HERMES AGC QUALIFIER CSI4

1. GATSBY /DARRAGH KENNY 0/0/44.280
2. NICE DE PRISSEY /BRIANNE GOUTAL 0/0/51.460
3. DIAMONTE DARCO /WILTON PORTER 0/0/51.850

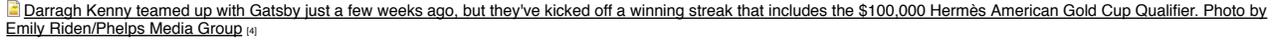
- 4. DYNAMO /MEAGAN NUSZ 0/4/47.610
- 5. ZERLY /CHRISTINE MCCREA 0/4/48.120
- 6. WINTER /DENISE WILSON 4/77.230
- 7. VINDICAT W /JESSICA SPRINGSTEEN 4/77.620
- 8. NAVALO DE POHETON /SCHUYLER RILEY 4/77.700
- 9. BIJZONDER /SHANE SWEETNAM 4/78.160
- 10. NOUGAT DU VALLET /KATHERINE DINAN 4/78.270
- 11. AIR FORCE ONE /KAMA GODEK 4/78.580
- 12. PALOUBET /WILTON PORTER 4/79.630

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