

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Second Time is a Charm

Royal Going to Nationals in Kentucky

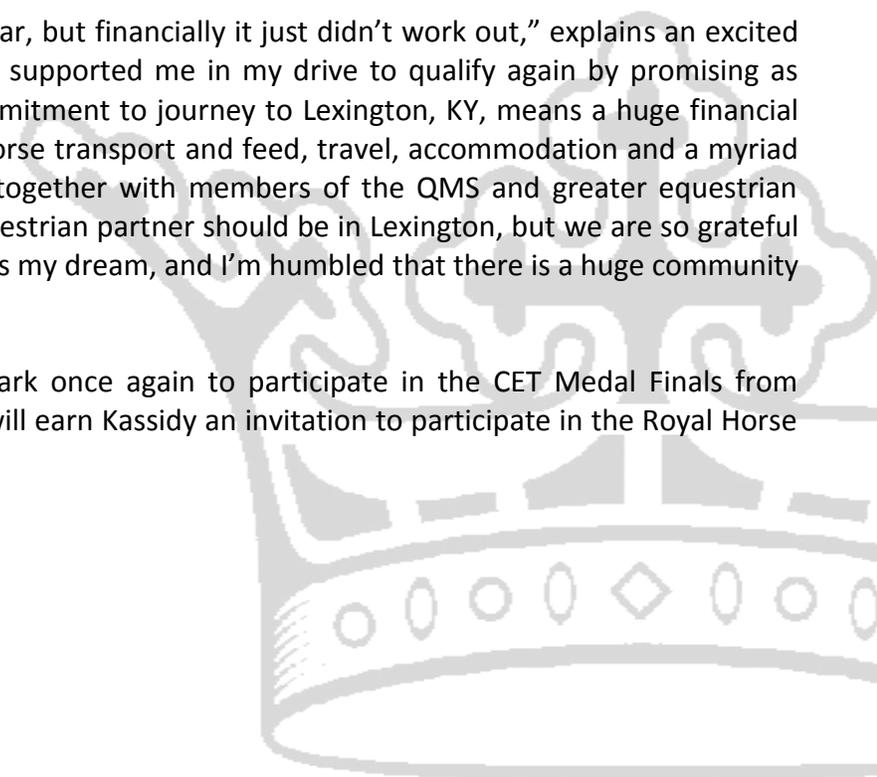
September 17, 2015 - Duncan, BC, Canada – For the second year in a row, a Queen Margaret's School's equestrian rider has qualified for the ASPCA Maclay National Finals in Lexington, Kentucky. The difference is that this year, she is going.

For Grade 12 QMS student Kassidy Keith it was a grueling equestrian summer circuit. She competed in several shows to earn the points she needed to qualify for the Maclay Regionals in Munro, WA, the show necessary to qualify for the nationals in Kentucky. Keith's outstanding performances at Thunderbird Show Park, Milner Downs and Evergreen earned her CET points as well as secured her ability to compete for a national position in the USA. Her determination to prove herself at the regionals meant that the right equine partner was paramount.

"When Kassidy qualified for the Maclay's again and had another shot at Lexington, we knew this was her chance to show at her highest level to date," explains QMS Head Coach Cheryl Keith. "It became of utmost importance that she ride with an equine partner she was comfortable with and already had an established relationship." QMS Alumni, Dr. Jolene Benham stepped up to assist by loaning Keith her horse, *Wallabee*. "I love *Wallabee* and have ridden him many times," says Kassidy. "We work well together and are both driven to show our best." The partnership earned the pair the Washington State Hunter Jumper Medal and a top five position at the Maclay's, the required result for Keith to gain a ticket to Kentucky.

"I was thrilled to qualify for the nationals last year, but financially it just didn't work out," explains an excited Kassidy. "This year, my mom Cheryl Keith, fully supported me in my drive to qualify again by promising as much aid as she could gather." Making the commitment to journey to Lexington, KY, means a huge financial investment that includes trainers, equipment, horse transport and feed, travel, accommodation and a myriad of other expenses. The Keith family is rallying together with members of the QMS and greater equestrian communities. "We're still looking at who my equestrian partner should be in Lexington, but we are so grateful to everyone who has offered us assistance. This is my dream, and I'm humbled that there is a huge community willing to support me so I can pursue it."

Keith will now journey to Thunderbird Show Park once again to participate in the CET Medal Finals from **September 17-20**. Placing in the top four there will earn Kassidy an invitation to participate in the Royal Horse Show this November in Toronto, ON.



About Queen Margaret's School

Established in 1921, **Queen Margaret's School (QMS)** is located on 27 country-like acres in Duncan, BC. QMS offers a co-ed Early Childhood Education program, co-ed Junior School (Kindergarten-Grade 7), University-Preparatory High School for girls (Grades 8-12) and all girls Boarding School (Grades 6-12). Queen Margaret's School is home to Canada's *only* on-campus school English riding Equestrian Program and an intensive ELL Program. The school's comprehensive scholastic and extra-curricular program provide opportunities for achievement and personal growth through academics, sports, visual and performing arts, riding and community service. We prepare students for university, for higher education, for life.

For more details about Queen Margaret's School, please visit the school's website at **www.qms.bc.ca**.

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Photo: *Kassidy Keith* and her partner *Wallabee* qualified for the ASPCA Maclay National Finals in Lexington, KY this October. This is Keith's second consecutive national qualification. (Photo courtesy of Quinn Saunders).

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