



FACT SHEET

information subject to change

Defender Kentucky Three-Day Event presented by MARS Equestrian™

April 23 – 26, 2026

Where:

Kentucky Horse Park – Lexington, KY

Featuring:

The **Defender Kentucky Three-Day Event presented by MARS Equestrian™** features one of only seven annual Five Star three-day events in the world and attracts many of the sport's best horses and riders. As the nation's premier three-day event, it serves as the Defender/USEF CCI5*-L Eventing National Championship presented by MARS Equestrian™ for U.S. athletes.

The **Cosequin® Lexington CCI4*-S** also returns as part of the event this year. It will be a designated qualifying event for the annual U.S. Equestrian Open of Eventing Final, which will take place at the Morven Park CCI4*-L in October. Comprised of 20 qualifying CCI4*-S events, the U.S. Equestrian Open of Eventing Series offers a \$200,000 prize pot during the Final, along with Series awards worth \$50,000 for athletes who accumulate the most points throughout the year.

The Defender Kentucky Three-Day Event also hosts the **Kentucky International CSI5* presented by Hagyard Equine Medical Institute**. The International features many of the world's best jumping horses and riders and includes a \$62,500 1.55m Qualifier competition on Thursday, followed by the \$200,000 1.50m Major League Show Jumping Team competition on Friday. Saturday will also feature the \$32,000 1.45m Power and Speed class before the pinnacle of the competition, the \$340,000 Kentucky International CSI5* 1.60m Grand Prix, which is held in the evening following the conclusion of the CCI cross-country competition.

What:

An equestrian triathlon, the sport of **Eventing** consists of three distinct elements: Dressage, Cross-Country, and Show Jumping. Originally, Eventing competitions were held around the world to test the fitness and training level of cavalry mounts. The winner is determined by the horse-and-rider combination with the fewest combined penalties from the three phases.

The Fédération Equestre Internationale (International Equestrian Federation – FEI), the world's governing body of equestrian sports, has designated the Defender Kentucky Three-Day Event as a **Five Star** Eventing competition. Stars are used by the FEI to denote the level of Eventing competitions, and Five Stars is the highest designation. The Defender Kentucky Three-Day Event is one of only seven annual Five Star three-day events in the world along with Badminton and Burghley in England; Luhmühlen in Germany; Pau in France; Adelaide in Australia; and the Mars Maryland 5 Star in the U.S. Kentucky is the first and longest-running Five Star in the Americas.

The Five Star riders compete for their share of \$400,000 in prize money.

Family Fun:

In addition to the breathtaking competition among the world's best riders and horses, the Defender Kentucky Three-Day Event features extensive shopping and browsing in the Sponsor Village, The Hill and International Trade Fair with almost 200 booths and tents. Defender Kentucky also features The Defender Tailgate on cross-country day. Ticket buyers also receive general admission to the Kentucky Horse Park, America's only theme park dedicated to horses.

For More Information:

Equestrian Events, Inc. - (859) 233-2362, (859) 254-5116 fax

Ticket Information - (859) 254-8123, www.kentuckythreedayevent.com

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