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The run for the cup

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THE RUN FOR THE CUP

By Pam Mosier

Each spring, one of the South's largest outdoor parties is held at Springdale Race Course in Camden, SC, where more than 70,000 people jockey for a prime position. Held the last Saturday in March, the Carolina First Carolina Cup draws fans from the world over. And while the tailgating and steeplechase races provide lots of social time, many consider them all a backdrop for the main attraction—fashions!

The Carolina Cup has become the largest sporting/social event in South Carolina. This Palmetto State tradition has become one of the official "rites of spring" for our state and, indeed, for much of the Southeast. Over the years, fashionable attire has paralleled steeplechasing at the Cup. Every year, for months in advance, racing fans are shopping for the perfect Cup outfit. Come to the races, and you will see the latest in spring dresses and, a must for race goers,



the latest spring hats. Don't think the men will be outdone by the ladies. The guys are also sporting the latest in men's fashion with seersucker suits and bow ties.

It seems that Carolina Cup fashions have competed for attention with the horses on the race track. From the very first race in 1930, it was apparent that the Carolina Cup would be more than a horse race. Today, the Carolina Cup is still the place to be each spring, dressed in your finest, meeting old and new friends, and hopefully watching as a horse or two races by.

For those there purely for the equine sports, Springdale Race Course is known as the first full-length steeplechase course in the country where all the jumps are visible from the grandstand viewing area. The grandstand is the place for the serious race enthusiasts to enjoy a good time, too. The box holders and owners of competing

horses enjoy a sumptuous catered affair in the Lexus Post and Paddock Luncheon tent while other fans set up and host elaborate tailgate parties.

Springdale Race course is also the home of the Colonial Cup steeplechase races held the third Sunday in November. The more prestigious of the two races, this cup often determines horse, trainer and jockey of the year. The Colonial Cup combines steeplechasing with a shopping mecca of boutiques, arts and crafts in the Paddock Shops. The infield hosts the Jack Russell Terrier Trials, as well as mule and horse demonstrations. The fall race is fun for the whole family.

So whether you're a horse enthusiast or a fashionista, there is plenty to do at these events. For more on the sport, visit the adjacent National Steeplechase Museum where the history of the American steeplechase is told.



Photo courtesy of Renee Eckman.



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Turn to page 163 in the "green pages" for more on the Carolina First Carolina Cup.

