



TRYON INTERNATIONAL EQUESTRIAN CENTER:

*Let the*  
**World Equestrian**  
*Games Begin*

**THE TRYON INTERNATIONAL EQUESTRIAN CENTER IS READY FOR ITS CLOSE UP.**

TIEC has been selected as the host venue for the FEI World Equestrian Games™ 2018 (WEG). The Games are the major international championship event for the eight core equestrian disciplines of show jumping, dressage and para-equestrian dressage, eventing, driving, endurance, vaulting and reining. The WEG is held every four years, halfway between the Summer Olympic Games cycle and will take place from September 11 through 23, 2018. The appeal of the event is the rare opportunity to see so many different aspects of horse sport in one location.



**ONE SMALL PIECE OF PAPER. ONE BIG IDEA.**

Sitting in the rolling hills of the Blue Ridge Mountains in North Carolina, Mark Bellissimo had a vision for a world class equestrian center. "I sketched out this whole venue on one piece of paper. I sat up on the hill and drew all of the buildings and venues," remembers Bellissimo, "Some smaller changes have been made, and my daughter has saved and dated them all."

Breaking ground in 2014, Bellissimo with his wife Katherine and the Tryon Equestrian Partners set out to create the state of the art 1600-acre Tryon International Equestrian Center (TIEC). Rapid development was aided by the local community which welcomed a major job generating venue after an economic downturn. Bellissimo reports, "We have spent about 180 million dollars to date, and we will probably spend another 180-200 million dollars."

"We are thrilled with this news and thank the FEI Bureau for having faith in us and entrusting us with the honor of hosting this prestigious event," Bellissimo said. "It's a really great fit for the Carolinas' equestrian heritage and we look forward to working closely with the FEI and with USEF to produce a tremendous FEI World Equestrian Games in 2018."

“ WE ARE VERY PLEASED THAT TRYON WILL BE THE HOST OF THE FEI WORLD EQUESTRIAN GAMES 2018,”

FEI President Ingmar de Vos said. "The Tryon team submitted a



Photo Credit overview shots: Mollie Bailey.



Photo Credit: Frantz Photography.

really impressive bid and we have every confidence in the organizing committee. It's a truly spectacular venue and almost all the necessary infrastructure for our eight disciplines is already in place. We are looking forward to a fantastic celebration of top level sport as all the disciplines come together to crown their world champions at the Games."

This is not Bellissimo's first rodeo. Together Bellissimo and his partners have invested nearly \$500 million in equestrian related assets and properties in Wellington, Florida (including Palm Beach International Equestrian Center, and International Polo Club Palm Beach) North Carolina, and Colorado.

This "can do" attitude is needed as TIEC was only awarded the bid in 2016 following the withdrawal of Bromont, Canada. "The special thing with these World Equestrian Games is that we are putting our reputation on the line. We are not an organizing committee that is going to dispend after the games," says Bellissimo, "This is a private organization. We do this because we love the sport." His Equestrian Sport Productions is considered one of the best teams in the business.

OVER THE TWO WEEKS APPROXIMATELY 500,000 SPECTATORS ARE EXPECTED WITH 1000 ATHLETES AND 1500 HORSES COMPETING FROM 70 NATIONS.



It can have as much as a \$400 million impact on the community and surrounding areas. Bellissimo's mission is always to get broader exposure for the sport, "WEG has the potential to present a breakthrough. We want to connect to those 200 million people on Facebook who have 'horses' as an interest. Twenty-seven million people ride a horse every year, which is more than the eight million who ski, 23 million who play tennis or the 25 million who golf each year."

Top show jumper McLain Ward notes, "When I found out that the World Equestrian Games were coming to Tryon I was excited about it. It is a beautiful setting with spectacular conditions and the weather will be very good that time of the year. And I think we have a community,

not only local, but also a community in the US that will stand behind it."

The venue is in the process of expanding and has 1,200 permanent stables, 12 arenas including a floodlit international arena with a potential spectator seating capacity of up to 20,000 and VIP seating for up to 1,500, a covered arena with 5,000 seats, and a world-class cross country course that will be used for both Eventing and Driving. The venue is surrounded by hundreds of acres of land that will be prepped for the Endurance course. TIEC also has ten restaurants and numerous retail outlets. An on-site state-of-the-art veterinary facility is currently under construction.

#### SO HERE ARE SOME INSIDE TIPS OF HOW TO ENJOY THE FEI WEG:

##### TICKETS:

A variety of ticketing types and prices will be offered such as an All Games Pass for each week of competition or both weeks, an All Session Day Pass, All Session Discipline Pass, as well as individual event tickets, and opening and closing ceremonies. There is also a General Grounds Day Pass that gives attendees access to event grounds and the equine expo. A complete list of ticketing options is available online at [www.tryon2018.com](http://www.tryon2018.com)

##### HOW TO GET THERE:

For navigation the address of TIEC is: 25 International Drive, Mill Springs NC 28756  
Check in at [www.tryon2018.com](http://www.tryon2018.com) to see where off site parking and shuttle buses will be located once available.

##### AIRPORTS:

Asheville Regional Airport - approximately 40 minutes from TIEC  
Greenville-Spartanburg International Airport - approximately 50 minutes from TIEC  
Charlotte Douglas International Airport - approximately 1 hr. 15 mins.  
Rutherford County Airport, Rutherfordton NC - private aircraft

##### LODGING

Onsite housing reserved for athletes, judges, officials, WEG employees  
Connections Housing is coordinating with the public - Go to [www.tryon2018.com](http://www.tryon2018.com) and click on the tab "Lodging" where you can search 50 hotels.  
For groups contact [tryon@connectionshousing.com](mailto:tryon@connectionshousing.com)

##### VIP & CORPORATE HOSPITALITY

Jan Ivey [jivey@tryon.com](mailto:jivey@tryon.com)

##### BROADCAST AND LIVE STREAMING

NBC Sports Group will have 15 hours live coverage on NBC and NBCSN with streaming on NBCsports.com, NBC Sports app, OlympicChannel.com, Olympic Channel app.

And PS - No pets

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