

2010 Leonard King



Throughout his career, Leonard King has been a leader in moving the sport of show jumping forward, helping to popularize it in America with several groundbreaking efforts.

King was one of the founding members of the American Grandprix Association and he served as the Association's first President, holding the position from its inception in 1978 through 1999. In this role he helped to unify disparate Grand Prix events into a cohesive series attractive to sponsors and media. He used his position to lead the sport forward, personally negotiating major agreements with corporate sponsors new to the sport such as Mercedes-Benz, and he helped give the sport new positioning.

As the sport of show jumping grew in the U.S., national television networks began to take an interest. King served as co-producer and manager of the first show jumping competition ever to be nationally televised when he partnered with CBS to air coverage of the Grand Prix at Upperville, VA. He then helped convince CBS to take a chance on televising the AGA Championships and other events.

King was co-producer and manager of the American Gold Cup, both at John F. Kennedy Stadium in Philadelphia and the Devon Show Grounds, and he produced and managed the Philadelphia Horse Show, the Baltimore Jumper Classic and the Valley Forge Grand Prix. He served as the President of the Devon Horse Show and Country Fair before becoming its Chairman.

King was the first North American (U.S. and Canada) representative to the International Equestrian Federation's World Cup Committee. He was also co-producer and manager of the first FEI World Cup Final in the United States when it was held in Baltimore in 1980.

King was a member of the United States Equestrian Team's Board of Directors, and served as Chairman of its Development Committee. He was also a member of the American Horse Shows Association's Jumper Committee. He was one of the founders of the Show Jumping Hall of Fame and served on its Board of Directors and was its Treasurer for more than 10 years. He was a nationally and internationally recognized judge, judging many of this country's most prestigious horse shows in addition to the FEI World Cup Finals.

