



# SPRUCE MEADOWS

## THE MARKET

The worlds of commerce, sport and media have each changed dramatically since the 1970s. At the time the first Spruce Meadows tournaments were being conceived and organized, the FEI (Federation Equestre International — the world's governing body for the equestrian sports) was sanctioning 130 official international jumping events annually. These events were primarily organized in Europe, which represented nearly half of its member nations. Today the FEI sanctions 730 international jumping events annually throughout its 130-member-nation domain.

Spruce Meadows recognized from the start that in order to attract the very best in the sport to compete in the "remote" foothills of western Canada there needed to be incentive. Why leave the comfort and security of the well-established European Tour to risk the unknown? The answer was really quite simple and lay in the quality and potential rewards, the facilities and the strength of the organization.

From the beginning Spruce Meadows was committed to providing unparalleled facilities, superbly organized and managed tournaments, a new approach to media and — for the first time



in the sport — sponsor-funded prize money to rival that offered in "front page" sports.

This commitment to good friendship, good commerce and good sport was embraced by all of the stakeholders and has served to guide Spruce Meadows through the decades.

## ACHIEVEMENTS

Since attracting that first handful of athletes, fans, media and sponsors to the inaugural tournament



in 1976, Spruce Meadows has firmly established itself and its brand on the world sport stage in a similar manner to Wimbledon or Augusta.

Four-time Olympic gold medalist Ludger Beerbaum (GER) says, "Until you have won at Spruce Meadows you cannot be considered among the best."

Spruce Meadows has been recognized many times by the FEI as the number-one venue in the world. It has played host to major FEI championships at both the senior and junior levels of the sport and has organized over 100 FEI-sanctioned tournaments. Athletes from 43 nations have competed at Spruce Meadows since 1976.

Outside of the sporting arena, Spruce Meadows has hosted numerous royal visits, G8 Summit meetings, the World Petroleum Congress, visiting heads of state and the annual Changing Fortunes Round Table held each September in conjunction with the Spruce Meadows "Masters."

## HISTORY

Spruce Meadows officially opened in April 1975. The venue was created with four fundamental tenets that were to guide the dream and provide the pillars, or foundation, to ensure long-term viability.

They included the creation and operation of a leading facility to organize and host top international show jumping tournaments, and the breeding and training of Hannoverian horses for the Olympic disciplines.

In addition, Spruce Meadows established a training program to offer young Canadian athletes

the opportunity to train and compete at home at the highest level and became a very special place centered around the horse, accessible to everyone, from all walks of life, 365 days a year.

The dream of Spruce Meadows' founders Ron and Marg Southern was to create a unique environment of "good friendship, good commerce and good sport." This dream has been shared from its genesis by a committed group of corporates, volunteers, media, athletes, staff, fans and officials.

The Southernns understood that in addition to leading prize money and facilities, Spruce Meadows would have

to focus on and present top international sport, as opposed to the more societal approach to show jumping that was the norm in North America.

Spruce Meadows also needed to be accessible to everyone to gain acceptance and to silence the skeptics who equated the sport to the "mink and manure" crowd.

In June 1976, the inaugural Spruce Meadows tournament season commenced. It offered total sponsored prize money of \$174,000. The entry was primarily made up of North American-based athletes attending mostly out of curiosity. The



same held true for the handful of fans and media that had to travel many kilometres south of Calgary on gravel roads to experience international show jumping in a way that had never been seen before in North America. For those not able to attend, they could watch a twelve-minute television highlight segment on *Wide World of Sport*.

By the time Spruce Meadows celebrated its twentieth anniversary it was a vastly different place from the cattle feed lot originally purchased by the Southern in the early 1970s.

This unlikely facility in this unlikely place was now firmly entrenched on the world's sports calendar. Athletes, media, fans and sponsors embraced the Spruce Meadows brand and all it stood for.

To meet growing demand, the physical plant and infrastructure expanded considerably to include permanent state-of-the-art television production facilities, trade halls, hosting venues, business and convention facilities and stabling for up to one thousand visiting horses.

By the turn of the century Spruce Meadows had a full-time professional staff of 80, had attracted more than 5 million fans, had awarded two athletes more than \$1 million in prize money, drew daily crowds of more than 40,000 fans and its events were broadcast to 100 countries.

### THE PRODUCT

Spruce Meadows was created to celebrate the horse. The horse will always be central to Spruce Meadows' focus, operations and brand.

The vast majority of the year at Spruce Meadows is spent organizing and hosting the leading show jumping tournaments of the world in all of their complexity. This includes charter aircraft scheduling and coordination for the horses, television network negotiations, tournament advertising and promotion, sponsor relations, athlete relations, corporate hosting, competition scheduling, staffing and management, special features, media services, entertainment programs, trade fair management and television production and distribution.

Spruce Meadows organizes five FEI tournaments a year that offer \$6 million in prize money, attract over 400,000 fans and are broadcast worldwide. In essence, it is a professional sports franchise without a team, featuring one of the few sports in the world where men and women compete against each other on the same playing field.

Spruce Meadows also organizes a number of nationally sanctioned events that provide young athletes their own Spruce Meadows experience. These are often held in conjunction with the major FEI events to inspire junior and amateur



athletes and allow them to share the environment of major championship sport.

Each Spruce Meadows tournament carries a theme that allows the organizing committee to design entertainment and special features programs that run in conjunction with the sport. These include parades, performance stages, fireworks, cultural exhibits, international cuisine, education programs and children's activities.

### RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

On two occasions in the new millennium Spruce Meadows has been recognized as the sport's #1 venue/event in the world. This is a significant accomplishment against global competition in much older and established markets such as Rome (ITL), Aachen (GER), Barcelona (ESP), Dublin (IRE), Rotterdam (NED) and dozens of others on six continents.

For their efforts over the last four decades, in 2006 Spruce Meadows co-chairmen Ron and

Marg Southern were inducted into the Canadian Sports Hall of Fame.

The vision and purpose that spawned their dream of Spruce Meadows continue today with significant capital programs and development throughout the 360-acre property. These include expanded visitor capacity to meet growing demand; ongoing beautification and landscaping programs; new HDTV production facilities; education, cultural and community outreach initiatives; and a continuing focus on high-performance international sport.

In the first twenty seasons of tournaments, just two athletes had crossed the \$1 million threshold of Spruce Meadows winnings. At the conclusion of

the 2007 season, a dozen athletes could claim the same success, having won nearly \$15 million of the more than \$70 million awarded in its history.

### PROMOTION

Spruce Meadows utilizes the in-house talents of its graphics, design, television and media services teams for the creation and execution of all of its promotional initiatives. These are diverse, wide-reaching and often undertaken with sponsors and or media partners on a regional, national, worldwide basis. Promotions range from on-site product showcasing to international promotions that can be either athlete- or fan-focused.

One of the most significant marketing and promotional assets is the well-established loyalty of the fans, media and sponsors. This, in combination with the Spruce Meadows Television brand being in the marketplace virtually all year, has led to Spruce Meadows being considered a "destination" for thousands of fans and athletes annually.

### BRAND VALUES

The Spruce Meadows brand has been embraced around the world for how it has been established and for what it represents. While Spruce Meadows itself is different things to different people, for everyone Spruce Meadows is:

- clean
- green
- international
- sport
- basic family values
- adventure

### THINGS YOU DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT SPRUCE MEADOWS

- Spruce Meadows has a "Pegasus" Club made up of 500 volunteers.
- More than 15,000 competitive rounds are jumped each year at Spruce Meadows.
- Spruce Meadows hosts over 300 events each year outside of the show jumping tournaments.
- More than 100 corporates make up the Spruce Meadows family of sponsors.
- Spruce Meadows is home to 70 resident horses.
- Spruce Meadows' horses and riders have competed at the Olympic Games.
- General admission to Spruce Meadows tournaments has remained unchanged at \$5 since 1976. Children under 12 years and seniors are admitted free of charge.
- Spruce Meadows Television produces 130 hours of award-winning production each year, which is distributed to 100 countries.