

# LE PRINTEMPS DES SPORTS ÉQUESTRES

LE GRAND PARQUET - FONTAINEBLEAU

22 - 28 AVRIL 2024

PRESS RELEASE

FONTAINEBLEAU, 24<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2024

## CPEDI 3\* OF THE PRINTEMPS DES SPORTS ÉQUESTRES: THE MIGHTY AMERICANS!

The final classes of the first CPEDI 3\* competition of the Printemps des Sports Équestres took place today at the Grand Parquet de Fontainebleau. This morning, the para-dressage riders performed their final routines to music during the Freestyle Grand Prix. It gave all the riders the opportunity to test themselves against some serious competition, notably the American riders. In Grade I, the French rider Marie Vonderheyden managed to seal top spot.

### What the winning riders had to say:

Grade IV - **Kate Shoemaker** (riding Vianne). USA. 78.385

*"This is the first time I have competed in France. It's been an amazing an experience, I have to say! What's even more amazing is that the Olympic and Paralympic Games will be held just a few kilometres away in a few weeks' time; so, this was very special for me! This competition was almost a test event for the Games, and the venue was really impressive! Everything was organised in such a way as to make us feel like it was the Paralympics, and Fontainebleau provided us with excellent preparation for Paris 2024. Of course, we don't yet know who will be taking part this summer, there's still a long way to go before the American selection in June, but I see the Printemps des Sports Équestres as an important stepping stone."*

*"Vianne is an American-born mare and it's a real source of pride for an American rider to be able to ride a horse that was bred in the United States. It's the first time that has happened to me in fact. I'm talking about a mare, but I must say she doesn't really behave like one (laughs): nothing ever annoys her, and I love riding Vianne; she makes my job so much easier and makes everything so much fun. We've only been together since January, and this is just the second competition we've taken part in. She's only eight, so we're still very young as a couple, and that makes it really exciting for the future."*

Grade V - **Michèle George** (riding Best of 8). BEL. 77.080

*"I'd like to start by congratulating the organisers; I had a great time, everything was exceptional! During these three days of competition, I really felt like I was in a championship environment. When we enter the rectangle, there's a lot of movement everywhere; it's just so big and everything is so perfect! My mare could really feel the championship atmosphere; but I have to say, if I'm really honest and transparent, I wasn't expecting that. Best of 8 is a very sensitive mare. It was difficult to manage her emotions and find the right rhythm, but it served as a great training opportunity for the next part of the season. And of course, next up are the Olympic and Paralympic Games in Paris in 2024."*



Made by  
GL events  
Equestrian  
Sport

59 quai Rambaud  
69002 Lyon  
France

Tél. : +33 (0)4 78 176 250  
Fax : +33 (0)4 78 176 345

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Grade III - **Rebecca Hart** (riding Floratina). USA. 79.807

*"I've had three absolutely amazing days. We received a really warm welcome and the facilities and venue are just incredible. All the American riders particularly appreciated the fact that everything was so simple, right from the moment we arrived. We're staying in Europe for six weeks and then going back to the United States. In June, the American selection for the Paris 2024 Olympic and Paralympic Games will be announced and the riders selected will then be coming back to France. During the next six weeks, we'll be taking part in another international competition in Germany, in Mannheim; after that, we'll have three weeks off and then compete in a final event in Hagen, which will be important for the selection."*

*"Flora felt really at home in the arena at the Printemps des Sports Équestres and there was a really great connection between us. That's invaluable; you know, sometimes you're so focused on your riding that you forget to enjoy the moment. But that hasn't been the case here over the last three days. I've experienced some really great moments."*

Grade II - **Fiona Howard** (riding Jagger). USA. 76.613

*"I'm very happy with the work we accomplished with Jagger, who is a really special horse for me. The connection between us was perfect and, when we were in the middle of this massive arena, I really felt that he was going to give his all and make my job a lot easier. This Printemps des Sports Équestres competition was really great preparation for the year's main event."*

Grade I - **Marie Vonderheyden** (riding Bombastic d'Arion). FRA. 71.733

*"My horse was at the top of his game and the competition went really well. I've just arrived from the United States, where the temperatures are a bit warmer. Luckily, the cool weather in Fontainebleau didn't pose a problem for me during our routines. I was afraid it would make me tremble even more, which sometimes happens. I tried as hard as I could to stay busy and put plenty of energy into the performance, and to keep it going through every movement during the routines."*

The show-jumpers took to the arena today for the start of the FFE Master Pro, CSI2\* and CSI YH\* competitions. To see the full programme of events for the end of the week, please click [here](#).

## PRESS CONTACTS

### LE PRINTEMPS DES SPORTS ÉQUESTRES

Martine Dolbeau, Astrid Thisse-Prost

[presse.gles@gl-events.com](mailto:presse.gles@gl-events.com)

## EL COMM'

Eloïse Lépine - [eloise.lepine-ext@gl-events.com](mailto:eloise.lepine-ext@gl-events.com) - Mob. : +33 (0)6 15 52 35 28



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Equestrian  
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