

# LE PRINTEMPS DES SPORTS ÉQUESTRES

LE GRAND PARQUET - FONTAINEBLEAU

21<sup>st</sup> - 27<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2025

PRESS RELEASE,  
FONTAINEBLEAU, 27 April 2025

## THE *PRINTEMPS DES SPORTS ÉQUESTRES* **GRAND PRIX GL EVENTS: YURI MANSUR WINS BY SIX ONE-HUNDREDTHS OF A SECOND!**

It is just a stone's throw from Versailles to Fontainebleau. And this Sunday afternoon, the bridge between the two was clear in the Princes' arena at the Grand Parquet. For the five-star Grand Prix sponsored by GL events, many of the obstacles present at the last Paris 2024 Olympic Games made a comeback in the arena. The Eiffel Tower, the Little Prince, the lavender fences, the "Notre-Dame de Paris" wall .... And many others. Yuri Mansur and Miss Blue Saint-Blue Farm clearly liked the little nod to the Olympics. The Brazilian won an intense Grand Prix that went down to the wire. The Belgian riders Grégory Wathelet and Gilles Thomas, on BondJamesbond de Hay and Ermitage Kalone respectively, took second and third place.

The tricky course designed by Grégory Bodo was full of surprises. Impressive obstacles at the highest levels possible, a demanding circuit with, notably, a double vertical just a few strides after a large water jump, and the river after the vertical Eiffel Tower jump, etc. All these difficulties meant that only 11 riders reached the jump-off out of the 50 couples entered in the class.

The clear round ridden by the world number 1, who was also the first rider out, opened up a whole range of possibilities. But the number 3 jump, a vertical over a water trough and the lavender fences at jump number 5 crushed the hopes of some of the most serious contenders for the top spots in this highly coveted Grand Prix.

As regards the French riders, only Simon Delestre on I Amelusina R 51 managed to qualify for the second leg of this class, which was full of surprises.

During the first round, the riders needed to be careful, but in the jump-off, they needed to be accurate ... and quick. Very quick. And eleven of the riders in the jump-off understood this completely. Starting just after Sweden's Henrik von Eckermann and Minute Man (4 points), the Belgian rider Gilles Thomas was the first to sign a double clear round in 41.67sec. This pushed the riders immediately after him to pull out all the stops. Some of them tried, but failed, like Simon Delestre who was penalised by 4 points, relegating him to the tenth place overall. Others managed



GL events  
Equestrian  
Sport

59 quai Rambaud  
69002 Lyon  
France

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

SAS AU CAPITAL DE 1 000 000 €  
TVA : FR55453100562  
SIREN 453 100 562 RCS LYON  
SIRET : 453100562 00033

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to complete a double clear round but were unable to get close to the Belgian rider's time.

Some were even very close indeed, since the six riders with double clear rounds were all in exactly the same second!

However, two of these champion riders actually managed to do better. Yuri Mansur finally took the lead by completing his jump-off without a penalty in 41.52 seconds thanks to the shortest trajectories. Then, Belgium's Grégory Wathelet on Bond Jamesbond de Hay, who started just the Brazilian, ultimately came up just 6 hundredths of a second short of victory.

None of the remaining riders managed to upset the order on the podium, which saw the Brazil on the top step, with two Belgians in second and third place.

This Grand Prix, which had all the hallmarks of an Olympic event, both in terms of the quality of the line-up and the technical difficulty of the course, was a fitting way to round off the week in front of the large crowd in Fontainebleau, who enjoyed a wonderful moment of top-level sport.

## WHAT THEY SAID...:

### Yuri Mansur (BRA), winner of the Grand Prix GL events

"I knew the first time I rode this mare that she is amazingly talented. I think this is the sixth 5-star Grand Prix she has won. I did everything I could and the horse responded, but given the level of the riders I was up against, I had to take a lot of risks. The line-up of riders and horses was incredible!"

### Grégory Wathelet (BEL), second in the Grand Prix GL events

"There's not much I would change if I had to do this jump-off again now. I tried, I gave it everything I had. Bond Jamesbond was amazing once again. It was another extremely close jump-off, just like the one we had a few months ago at the Longines Equita Lyon. At the time, I was on the right side of things, now I'm on the wrong side. But I'm very happy for Yuri. He deserves it. We all did our best. And I was really pleased with my horse today.

Finally, and I think I can speak on behalf of all the riders here, I'd like to say a big thank you to Sylvie Robert for organising events like this. It's a real pleasure for all of us!"

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**Gilles Thomas (BEL), third in the Grand Prix GL events**

"I watched Henrik von Eckermann's round, because his horse has more or less the same canter as mine. Perhaps I could have taken off a stride on the approach to the double. But I'm very happy to be in third place anyway."

**Simon Delestre, best-ranked French rider in the *Grand Prix GL* events**

*"I Amelusina R 51 did a very good first round, which left me feeling positive. But in a jump-off like this, with this level of competition, you have to take risks. I made a little contact with a bar and then i slowed down, because in a jump-off like this, if you make a mistake, you're not going to win anyway."*

**Grégory Bodo, course designer of the CSI5\* *Printemps des Sports Équestres***

*"I've been working on this course since the start of the week. It was clearly a nod to Paris 2024 and I think everyone appreciated that. It wasn't easy because, when you look at the starting line-up, you could see that there may be at least 20 riders in the jump-off. But you need to create a course that brings a certain balance in terms of faults. For me, a good course means 8 points maximum for half of the starters, and today we had 29 riders with 8 points maximum. My aim was to create a course with the dimensions of a real 5-star class, which truly impresses the public."*

**Sylvie Robert, President of GL events Equestrian Sport**

*"I would like to thank the French Equestrian Federation for their confidence in allowing us to organise the French Championships and for the amazing support we received for this year's Printemps des Sports Équestres. I would also like to thank the International Equestrian Federation and the local authorities, without whose support we would not be able to organise this event on this beautiful Grand Parquet site, which has already undergone some major changes and is still being improved. It's a facility that is suited to hosting great sport."*

*I'd also like to thank our private partners, including the GL events Group, the Laiterie de Montaigu, the LIM Group and the Fences agency, which also contributes to the life of this event through its auctions. Finally, I'd like to thank all the excellent riders who took part in the Printemps des Sports Équestres, which is a relatively new event but which attracts an incredible line-up thanks to you and the confidence you have shown in us."*

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*I'd also like to thank Grégory Bodo, who designed some excellent courses for us throughout the week.*

*As you saw, we used some of the obstacles that we purchased from the Paris 2024 Olympic and Paralympic Games. These obstacles will only be used here, in Fontainebleau. And I think you'll see them back here next year in the main grass arena. This year, the arena was not quite ready yet, and we didn't want to take any risks, since the surface was not settled enough for the competition. In the future, we also want to continue to focus on para-dressage classes, which we feel are particularly important, and which we hope we can continue to organise alongside the top CDI5\* and CSI5\* events.*

*Naturally, I'd like to finish by saying a huge thank you to the fantastic team that work with me, who have just been through twelve incredible busy months. They're incredible."*

## PRESS CONTACTS

THE 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)

Cell: +33 (0) 6 15 52 35 28



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Equestrian  
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