

LE PRINTEMPS DES SPORTS ÉQUESTRES

LE GRAND PARQUET - FONTAINEBLEAU

19 TO 23 APRIL 2023

FONTAINEBLEAU, SEINE-ET-MARNE

4 APRIL 2023

PRESS RELEASE

THE EVENT!

DURING THE FIRST CDI 5*

AT LE PRINTEMPS DES SPORTS ÉQUESTRES,

THE CLASH OF THE QUEENS,

THE DUEL OF THE TITANS

For the first edition of its CDI 5*, Le Printemps des Sports Équestres, from 19 to 23 April, at the Grand Parquet is making a big impact. Two riders in particular, who dominate the dressage rings and have become legendary, will be competing among the fourteen most prominent combinations currently. In Fontainebleau, the British combination made up of Charlotte 'Lottie' Fry and Glamourdale will come face to face with the German combination of Isabell Werth and Emilio 107 for only the second time in her career. The French riders who are in fine form will also be there with their best horses.

They are THE combination who made the headlines at the beginning of 2023! The young British rider Charlotte Fry, Lottie to her friends and family, twenty-seven-years-old, who has been the best rider in the FEI World Rankings since January, is going from one success to the next, leaving commentators at a loss for words. She owes her rise to fame to a twelve-year-old stallion called Glamourdale, which has rapidly progressed. Judge for yourself: in one year, the horse has gone from the seventieth place to the first place in the world for dressage horses! A phenomenon! A golden combination, which the judges crowned with two gold medals in Herning last summer, in the Grand Prix Special and in the Grand Prix Freestyle, where it achieved more than the symbolic 90% score for the first time in its career! An average score that the other star combination in this first CDI 5* in Fontainebleau has never achieved. In February 2020, Germany's Isabell Werth and her gelding Emilio 107 came close to 88.5% in the FEI World Cup Freestyle test in Neumünster, a score they have regularly achieved since. And if Queen Werth may seem to be outdone in recent months by the new princess of world dressage, the young British rider points out that the German rider's reign demands respect!

'Isabell is definitely the queen! She is remarkable, a role model: she has inspired me since I was five. Plus, she's the nicest person in the world, always cheering and supporting!' said the British rider when interviewed by the Fédération Équestre Internationale after the Grand Prix Special at the World Championships in Herning, which she won and where the German rider came fourth, with her powerful 12-year-old stallion, DSP Quantaz.



WHEN THEY LAST CAME FACE TO FACE GLAMOURDALE WON

Lottie Fry's star stallion has not competed much since he was crowned in Denmark last summer. Twice in fact, at two FEI World Cup legs which he largely dominated. In London, Charlotte and Glamourdale had one of their most beautiful Freestyle performances, in front of the home crowd which was close to perfection, and their personal best in the Freestyle to Music test with a score of 90.995%! A few weeks later, they did it again in Den Bosch, winning the FEI World Cup Freestyle test again, and Isabell Werth and Emilio 107 finished third. With 86.835%, the British combination's score was below their previous one, despite a great test that was penalised when Glamourdale spooked during the canter half-pass: *'It's a pity, of course, especially as Glamourdale was showing one of his most beautiful rides today. There was a crazy atmosphere in the stands, which may have impressed him,'* said his rider. An atmosphere that disturbed Emilio, who was very tense before he went into the ring: *'He went on fire when Lottie's result came up!'* Werth explained. *'I was very satisfied with the first part, but I lost him a little in the canter work which is a shame as I lost the possibility there to compete with Lottie.'* The German combination finished third, with a score of 82.760%. The atmosphere at the Grand Parquet de Fontainebleau, which will be calmer than that of an FEI indoor World Cup leg, will undoubtedly calm the nerves of the two horses, which will be performing at their best level!

FRANCE'S RIDERS ARE GETTING READY FOR PARIS 2024

DOROTHEE SCHNEIDER, THE OTHER WORLD TOP 20 RIDER!

Another champion expected in the Le Printemps des Sports Équestres' ring, Germany's Dorothee Schneider, currently the nineteenth best rider in the FEI World Rankings, will be riding Sisters Act MT OLD, her young eleven-year-old mare which will be competing in her first CDI 5* in Fontainebleau. Last month, the combination was third in the Grand Prix and the Grand Prix Special at the CDI 4* in Lier, Belgium. Dorothee Schneider has also won two Olympic gold medals with the German team, in Rio in 2016 and in Tokyo last year; she is also the reigning European team gold medallist. Belgium, Spain, Luxembourg, Morocco and the Netherlands are among the other nations expected in Fontainebleau in two weeks' time.



As for the French riders, gender equality is the order of the day (in a discipline largely dominated by female riders), and the team that will be competing at the Paris 2024 Olympic and Paralympic Games next year is being prepared. Morgan Barbançon, the best French rider in the FEI rankings, who is currently World number 26, will lead a foursome that is increasingly present in international rings. The rider from Rhone-Alpes who was very successful on the American circuit last winter, will be performing with Habana Libre A, her young eleven-year-old with which she won everything in Florida, including the Grand Prix Special at CHD 5* in Wellington. Her fellow country woman, Pauline Basquin, the reigning French champion who went into the World Top 50 in January, will be riding her faithful Sertorius de Rima Z IFCE. Last month, THE French combination, who are on a roll currently and are part of the Cadre Noir de Saumur, smashed its personal best, finishing the keenly contested FEI World Cup leg in Den Bosch with a score of 76.165%.

Corentin Pottier, from the Paris region, is the third French rider in the World Top 50. He will have the opportunity to confirm his progress over the last few months in front of a local audience: with twelve-year-old Gotilas du Feuillard, he too has regularly scored over 76% at shows where the competition is fierce. In the FEI World Cup leg in Basel, Switzerland, the combination finished with a score of 76.775%, their record; a month later, at the CDI 5* in Doha, Corentin and Gotilas were sixth in the Freestyle test, with a score of 76.530%. As for Alexandre Ayache and Jolene, the fourth French combination competing in Fontainebleau, they will be jumping back into the deep end in the CDI 5* after a winter competing in CDI 3* and 4* shows. At his last CDI 5*, at the FEI World Cup leg at Longines Equita Lyon, the rider from the South of France finished the Freestyle test with an average score of 73.250%, his record in a 5* competition.

For Sophie Dubourg, the French Equestrian Federation's National Technical Director, Le Printemps des Sports Équestres' first CDI 5* is 'excellent news, and already resembles the Olympic format. The whole event has an Olympic feeling this year.' This is the organising team that will be in charge of the equestrian events in Versailles, alongside the Paris 2024 Organising Committee; the test events will be held in Fontainebleau next year; in short, it really feels like the Games and it offers a great opportunity for our dressage riders in 2023.'

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Le Printemps des Sports Équestres CDI 5* - Grand Parquet de Fontainebleau - Carrière des Princes Grand Prix on Friday 21 April, at 8.15 am; Grand Prix Freestyle on Saturday 22 April, at 1.30 pm. Free entry

PRESS CONTACTS

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ABOUT GL EVENTS EQUESTRIAN SPORT

GL events Equestrian Sport, the GL events Group's equestrian department, is renowned for its expertise throughout the world. The Group has been involved in all the Olympic equestrian events since 1992 and has also organised events for the Fédération Équestre Internationale, the prestigious House of Hermès and on its own behalf, which have contributed to the finest hours of equestrian sports for the past 25 years. In Lyon, GL events Equestrian Sport organises one of the most renowned equestrian events on the international scene, Equita Lyon, the Salon du Cheval de Lyon, and its Longines Equita Lyon, Concours Hippique International, which plays host to four FEI World Cup legs in show jumping, dressage, ponies and driving. GL events Equestrian Sport was the organiser of both the Longines FEI World Cup Jumping and the FEI World Cup Dressage Finals in 2014 in Lyon and in 2018 in Paris.



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FURTHER INFORMATION
WHAT JEAN MOREL, THE NATIONAL SELECTOR
AND CHEF D'EQUIPE FOR THE FRENCH DRESSAGE
TEAM HAS TO SAY

I imagine that you're delighted that a new CDI 5* is being organised in France? JEAN MOREL: Yes, it's great news! GL events Equestrian Sport has a great deal of experience in high-level dressage, as it already organises a World Cup leg in Lyon: it's an opportunity and this experience will benefit us all. The level organised will allow us to host very good foreign riders, which is important for the French riders: the CDI 5* at Le Printemps des Sports Équestres will allow them to compete against top-quality dressage riders and see how they measure up to the current level of competition. A CDI 5* means good judges, good prize money (there are very few dressage competitions in the world that boast 100,000 euros in prize money) and very inspiring competition. The fact that the French riders are competing at home, and that the tests are being held during the French Master Pro Show Jumping Championships and a CSI 4* show, in an equestrian region, before a knowledgeable audience, puts pressure on them, which I believe is very healthy. With just over a year to go before the Paris 2024 Olympic and Paralympic Games, we need riders that remain calm when pressure mounts. Lastly, this CDI 5* at Le Printemps des Sports Équestres is allowing France to become a nation that organises shows again.

What objectives have you set for the French dressage riders at this CDI 5* at Le Printemps des Sports Équestres and for the coming season in general? JEAN MOREL: As a selector, my job is principally to motivate the troops, to make sure that they go to more shows, allotting the riders based on the different events on offer to French riders and creating personal sports projects, while also supporting them on the administrative side. I also select the best riders for the upcoming European Championships and the Paris 2024 Olympic and Paralympic Games, based on their results at the best shows. And Fontainebleau will be a wonderful show where they will have to shine. We know that an average score of 72-73 % at a smaller show would be worth 70 in a World Cup leg. These smaller shows are very important as part of the on-going training and progress of the horses, but the selections for the big events, the European Championships this year and the Paris 2024 Olympic and Paralympic Games, are made at the big shows, like Fontainebleau, where the most demanding judges are present. Riding well at these events is not something to be taken lightly, and that's what I need the riders in the French team to do.

A year after becoming the head of the French team, what can you tell us about your riders and the pool of talent available, with a view to the major events to come?

JEAN MOREL: When I arrived, I asked the riders to compete at shows to compare themselves to the competition. And they all did! They all realised that they had nothing to be ashamed of: our French riders are just as good as the others! They just weren't motivated enough. They aren't perfect yet, they still make little mistakes here and there, but look at Pauline Basquin, Corentin Pottier, Alexandre Ayache and Morgan Barbançon, to name but a few: they have all really progressed, their results prove it. They may sometimes lack consistency, but they've put in the work and it's paid off.

