

LONGINES GLOBAL CHAMPIONS TOUR OF

# CANNES

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## SERGIO ALVAREZ MOYA TAKES OVER CANNES !

Third and final evening on the Cannes Croisette for the best riders in the World. A sporting climax punctuated by the triumph of the Valkenswaard United team in the Global Champions League Prix Leclerc and a commendable victory by the Spanish Sergio Alvarez Moya in the Longines Global Champions Tour Grand Prix of Cannes - Mauritius with 300,000€ of prize money on offer!



*Sergio Alvarez Moya & Arrayan (c)sportfot*



*Alberto Zorzi & MHS Going Global (c)sportfot*

6.30pm, a full stadium, the Global Champions League (GCL) Prix Leclerc, was played out against the clock over 15 jumps standing at 1.55/1.60m, the first few to go, those seeking qualification for the next class, the Longines Global Champions Tour Grand Prix of Cannes - Mauritius. 8 faults, 16 faults, 16 faults, the first couples to launch into the adventure didn't seem able to find the keys to the course, all leaving poles on the ground. However the wait for the first clear round wasn't long, and the number four on the start list obliged. The Colombian Carlos Enrique Lopez Lizarazo and the bay Cuplandra, carefully concentrating, managed a perfect and very fast round in 65''54 and stayed unbeaten. The tension rose swiftly amongst the riders that followed as only the best 25 would get their ticket for the Grand Prix. With this at stake, a good number let themselves be caught out, notably by the entry to n°5 the double (spread - upright), which was a very square parallel and proved to be very selective. Only eight, including French rider Patrice Delaveau on his energetic Aquila, found the answers to all the questions before making way for the deciding 2nd round of the GCL for the best 15 teams out of the 18 on the circuit. In front of an enthusiastic audience, encouraged by the music, they were 30 to pull out all the stops: to preserve the placing of their team, to even better it, but equally in order to open the door to the following class.

In the lead after the first round on Thursday evening, the St Tropez Pirates suffered at the hands of this tight and technical course. The clear round by French Simon Delestre in the saddle of Hermes Ryan was unfortunately not sufficient as his team mate, Belgian Jérôme Guéry, left the ring with 12 faults, relegating them to 5th place. This under performance was to the advantage of the Valkenswaard United, who benefited from the double clears of Alberto Zorzi/MHS Going Global (ITA) and Marcus Ehning/Pret A tout (GER), to take the top slot here at Cannes. Close behind were the Shanghai Swans (Alexandra Thornton/HHS Figero (GBR) and Roger-Yves Bost/Pégase du Murier(FRA)) and next the Hamburg Diamonds (Jos Verlooy/Caracas (BEL) and Audrey Coulter/Capital Cornaldo (USA)). Following 6 legs of the GCL, and having accumulated 123 points, the Valkenswaard United have now overtaken the Hamburg Diamonds (119 points) and the St Tropez Pirates (103 points).

Out of a total of 55, they were finally 20 to qualify for the Grand Prix thanks to virgin scores, including home nation riders Simon Delestre and Roger-Yves Bost. The five remaining places went to competitors on 1 or 2 time-faults, and the fastest of those on four faults : Daniel Deusser (GER), Philippe Rozier (FRA) et Nayel Nassar (EGY). Disappointment however for the 2016 winner of the LGCT here at Cannes, Scott Brash (GB), who was unable to defend his title having had four poles down on Hello Forever.

The night falling on the Hespérides Stadium signalled the start of the Longines Global Champions Tour Grand Prix of Cannes - Mauritius, drawn by course designer Uliano Vezzani who promised «a course that respects the horses, thought out and requiring maximum concentration from the riders» but admitted all the same that «the second the first couple enter the arena, I become a spectator just like any other».

13 jumps including a treble in the colours of Longines, and a “palm tree” double awaited the 24 starters, as Carlos Enrique Lopez Lizarazo, who should have been last to go, decided not to ask his top mare to jump again this evening. Various faults included unexpected ones deprived some of the very best from reaching the final battle, like Jos Verlooy (BEL), Ben Maher (GBR), Patrice Delaveau (FRA) and Marcus Ehning (GER) on 8 faults, and Denis Lynch eliminated for a course error, rare at this level. They were finally 10 to reach the jump-off, to fight for the pole position against the clock over a course that turned tightly before a long last gallop in front of the full grandstands. Daniel Deusser set the pace, his round in 37’’63 delighted the audience, the pole on the last still wobbling as he crossed the finish line. But Sergio Alvarez Moya left no place for doubt with his amazing time of 35’’76, Simon Delestre tried hard, but in vain to reach it, finishing in 36’’70. A podium of true champions, they all wore smiles on their faces during the press conference that followed : « I couldn’t have ridden a better jump-off » declared the Spaniard, delighted with his talented mount with whom he has been competing for just over a year, whilst Simon couldn’t have « hoped for a better performance from Hermes Ryan, with this first good placing since his injury at the Rio Olympic Games last summer ». A positive note, concluded by the revealing of the new placings on the LGCT rankings, the top slot being held today by Harrie Smolders (NED).

Earlier in the day, 1\*CSI competitors, who rode their Grand Prix yesterday, still had three speed classes with which to finish, with a flourish, their stay on the French Riviera. On the programme : The 1.30m Bordsol Trophy, the 1.15m Ausica Nature of Crins Trophy and the 1.40m Croisette Beach Hôtel Trophy... The latter saw British rider Tess Carmichael/Atlantis PP Z (GBR), who was already 4th in the Grand Prix yesterday, dominating, signing a clear round in the time of 64’’89. She was followed by Italien Giorgio Sacco/Expensive Quality (65’’94) and Guillaume Canet/Babeche (66’’66), on whom this 36th edition of the Jumping of Cannes has certainly smiled.

« A tremendous anniversary year, 250 horses and the cream of riders welcomed to a unique location for an amazing moment of sport and emotion! » concluded François Bourey, organiser of this event for the last 35 years. The chief is already announcing a double rendezvous next year « with the twinning of the International Show Jumping of Mauritius created 20 years ago and which will be making its’ big come back in January 2018, bringing together the top 15 on the World Rankings for a “holiday” competition under the shade of the coconut palms ; and the Cannes jumping in June that will have a lot of surprises in store as the Hespérides Stadium will be undergoing work, for an even more incredible atmosphere at the 37th edition! ». Mark your calendars!

**LONGINES**



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