



WORLDCLASS HORSE SHOW
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ST. JAKOBSHALLE BASEL
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Media Release

The world's best riders meet in Basel

The world's elite riders will meet at the Longines CSI Basel from January 12th to 15th in the St. Jakobshalle. The list includes the Swiss Word Cup winner Steve Guerdat, the Dutch World- and Europe Champion Jeroen Dubbeldam as well as Christian Ahlmann, world number one from Germany and the French team that won the team Olympic gold medal.

by Georges Zehnder, head of media

The 8th Longines CSI5* Basel promises like in the past years show jumping on the highest international level. Over 30 of the 40 world's best riders are competing. That is a better line-up than at the Olympic Games or other big international events. Due to the criteria's of the qualification and the restrictions of number of riders per nation for those events, Basel has such a high quality. For the riders the tournament is once again the top event to meet. 62 athletes from 17 different countries are attending during the four days.

There are 17 classes with a prize winning money of 756'000 Swiss Francs in the program – 25'000 Swiss Francs more as in the year before and the budget is 3.5 Million Swiss Francs. Ten classes are in the CSI5* - the highest international tournament level – seven international classes are reserved for the amateur riders.

The prize winning money for the five-star competition including the special prizes is 713'000 Swiss Francs. The Longines Grand Prix on Sunday afternoon pays 330'000 Swiss Francs alone. The winner of this class will get 100'000 Swiss Francs. And will also be pleased to receive a precious watch as a prize of honour. Therefore the main class counts to the indoor Grand Prix's with the highest price winning money in the world. The main class will be in a new form. It will be with two rounds. For the final round the twelve best or all clear can qualify themselves. This new form promises more excitement and complies with the live broadcast of the Swiss Television. In the former years with two rounds and a jump-off the class had to have a brake for the course-walk before the last round started.

The top stars

The interest of the international stars was great concerning the prize winning money. And an extra incentive is the fact, that the riders can win points for the Longines Ranking (world ranking) in nine classes. This is unique for an indoor tournament.

The entries that have arrived up to now include top riders. For example from Germany the first of the world ranking Christian Ahlmann, Daniel Deusser, Marcus Ehning, Marco Kutscher and Hans-Dieter Dreher who lives only a few kilometres away from Basel. The rider that lives in Eimeldingen is a well-liked guest at Swiss tournaments and won the Grand Prix last summer at the CSIO St. Gallen.

For Great Britain the former first of the world ranking list Scott Brash, Ben Maher and the legendary John Whitaker are attending. From France the team Olympic winner Roger-Yves Bost, Pénélope Leprevost, Philippe Rozier and Kevin Staut are coming. They are accompanied by Patrice Delaveau and Simon Delestre. A strong delegation is arriving from Belgium: Niels Bruynseels, the brothers Philippaerts and Grégory Wathelet. From Sweden the winner of the Grand Prix in Basel three years ago, Rolf-Göran Bengtsson will attend and also from Portugal Luciana Diniz. She is one of the world's best female riders and won as the only one up to now the Grand Prix of Basel twice. The Irish Iren Bertram Allen and Denis Lynch are two riders that could be good for a victory.

The Swiss Elite

First in the row is Olympic and Word Cup winner Steve Guerdat followed by the members of this year's team at the Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro: Romain Duguet, Martin Fuchs and Janika Sprunger. Further top national riders are Pius Schwizer, Paul Estermann, Claudia Gisler, Christina Liebherr, Werner Muff and Niklaus Rutschi. 20 Swiss riders will be competing in the 5* classes.

Entries from about ten nations have arrived for the international amateur tour. There will be six qualification classes with a final. This will take place on Saturday afternoon and has a prize winning money of 25'000 Swiss Francs.

Cours designer Rothenberger

Like last year the German Frank Rothenberger will be in charge of the course design. He's a world-wide accredited personality and a master in his business. He's designed courses at important international events like Olympic Games, World – and European Championships as well as at World Cup Finals. Frank Rothenberger doesn't only have an excellent name as course designer; he's also a great designer of obstacles. This skill will also have an effect on the overall picture of the courses at the Longines CSI Basel. Therefore at the next event for this first time an obstacle in the form of the town hall of Basel will be in the course.