



# 61<sup>e</sup> CONCOURS HIPPIQUE INTERNATIONAL DE GENÈVE

7<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER 2022

## PRESS RELEASE

### EQUESTRIANISM'S BIGGEST STARS SET TO DESCEND ON GENEVA

Geneva, 30 November 2022 – A total of 113 riders and drivers from 21 nations will be taking part in the 61<sup>st</sup> Concours Hippique International de Genève (CHIG), to be held at Palexpo on 7-11 December. Appearing at the event's many jumping, indoor cross-country and driving competitions will be an array of Olympic, world and European champions, guaranteeing some superb entertainment.

Some 60 show jumpers – among them the leading ten riders in the world, who will go head to head in the Rolex IJRC Top 10 Final – will be gracing the 61<sup>st</sup> CHIG. Heading the field is the highest-ranked rider of them all, Swedish world champion Henrik von Eckermann, with reigning individual Olympic champion Ben Maher of Great Britain also in attendance, along with European champion Andre Thieme of Germany. Belgium's riders will be ones to watch, especially with 2022 FEI World Championship runner-up Jérôme Guery in their ranks, while France will have three riders in the Top 10 Final: Julien Epailard, Simon Delestre and Kevin Staut.

The Swiss delegation is also looking strong, comprising as it does 2019 and 2021 Rolex Grand Prix winner Martin Fuchs and Steve Guerdat, Edouard Schmitz and Pius Schwizer. Together, the quartet won the St Gallen round of the FEI Jumping Nations Cup back in June, finished second at the Spruce Meadows Masters in Calgary, and third in the FEI Jumping Nations Cup Final in Barcelona. Also flying the flag for Switzerland will be reigning national champion Bryan Balsiger, a recent FEI Jumping World Cup winner in Oslo. Germany's Daniel Deusser and Gerrit Nieberg, the winners of the last two rounds of the Rolex Grand Slam of Show Jumping, will be setting their sights in particular on Sunday's Grand Prix, as will Sweden's Peder Fredricson – a Tokyo 2020 team gold medallist and individual silver medallist – and the Netherlands' Harrie Smolders, a Rolex Grand Prix runner-up in Geneva last year. Representing USA will be Top 10 Final qualifier McLain Ward and female riders Laura Kraut and Paris Sellon.

### Under-25s also in the spotlight

Also on the bill are around 30 talented under-25 riders appearing in three events, including Saturday morning's Grand Prix Land Rover. Eleven of them are Swiss. Like their rivals, they will make a point of gaining as much experience as they can in Geneva. The same goes for the Jockey Club winners, who will be centre stage in the Credit Suisse Coupe du Jockey Club, a new team event taking place on Saturday evening and featuring stars of jumping and indoor cross-country and a team of ponies.



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### Revenge in the air for France's Laghouag?

Presented by local newspaper *La Tribune de Genève*, the indoor cross-country event has become eagerly awaited since its introduction to the card. Last year, the fans were treated to an epic tussle between home rider Robin Godel and France's Karim Laghouag, which eventually went the way of the Swiss. Will Laghouag get his revenge this time around? Or perhaps multiple world and Olympic champion Michael Jung of Germany will trump them both. A winner in Geneva in 2019, Ireland's Cathal Daniels will also hope to be in the mix, as will France's Maxime Livio and Thibault Champel, and Swiss duo Mélody Johner and Nadja Minder. Make no mistake, Palexpo will be the place to be early on Friday evening.

### All to play for in the World Cup standings

The Swiss leg of the 2022/23 FEI Driving World Cup, presented by Radio Television Suisse, takes place late on Sunday morning. Bram Chardon of the Netherlands will be back to defend the title he won last year, up against Germany's Michael Brauchle and Belgium's Dries Degrieck and Glen Geerts, respectively individual bronze and team bronze medallists at the last world championships. The field also contains Jérôme Voutaz, the only Swiss driver to qualify for the World Cup circuit. The standings are wide open and the Geneva event could have a big say in how the season pans out.

The organisers are always keen to put the horses themselves in the spotlight and celebrate the most gifted of them. In the past, the CHIG has seen the final farewells of *Nino des Buissonnets*, Steve Guerdat's Olympic horse; *Hello Sanctos*, the first and only winner to date of the Rolex Grand Slam, achieved with British rider Scott Brash; *Fine Lady*, the mare ridden by Canada's Eric Lamaze; and *Quabri de L'Isle*, victorious in Geneva in 2016 with Brazil's Pedro Veniss. This year, *Clooney 51*, the horse that put together an amazing career record with Martin Fuchs, partnering him to the individual European title and second place at the world championships, will make one final lap of the arena on Sunday, before the Rolex Grand Prix at 14:00. All in all, it promises to be an exciting and emotional celebration of equestrianism.

### Media contact

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