



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

6<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER 2023

## PRESS RELEASE

### THE GENEVA PUBLIC'S DARLING ENCHANTS THE PALEXPO

Geneva, 8 December 2023 – The grandstands were packed to the rafters to watch this exceptional and prestigious competition of the Concours Hippique International de Genève. And for good reason, as the world's best riders, the crème de la crème of the elite, always give their best at the Rolex Top Ten IRJC Final.

What a spectacle! Once again, this showcase competition lived up to its promise of combining great sport with emotion, tact and adrenaline, power and ease. This year the competitors started in reverse order of the world rankings: Shane Sweetnam from Ireland with his grey horse James Kann Cruz, Harrie Smolders from the Netherlands with his trusty Monaco, Max Kühner from Austria with EIC Up Too Jacco Bleu, Simon Delestre from France with Dexter Fontenis Z and Julien Épaillard with Dubaï du Cedre, Switzerland's Steve Guerdat with Venard de Cerisy and Martin Fuchs with Conner Jei, America's Kent Farrington with Greta, Britain's Ben Maher with Faltic HB and, finally, Sweden's Henrick von Eckermann, the world number one and defending champion, with his incredible King Edward. Ireland's Sweetnam benefited from McLain Ward's withdrawal, as one of the American's horses was in quarantine after the Pan American Championships.

The first round already demanded everything from the riders, as only three pairs got through without faults: the starting rider from Ireland, the home crowd favourite Steve Guerdat and the defending champion from Sweden, who was determined to defend his crown with his King. In the second round, the riders started in reverse order of the provisional standings. This added to the tension and pressure. The challenge was to be sensitive, take risks when necessary and keep a cool head at the same time. The riders gave it their all, much to the delight of the crowd, who held their breath until the final obstacle to cheer Steve Guerdat's second and only double clear, which meant victory. The reigning European Champion set a new record and made history with his third victory at the Rolex IJRC Top Ten Final. Bravo champion!

"I am very happy about this victory. My horse jumped very well. I didn't ride so well in the second part of the jump-off, but Venard was right there. It's always a special feeling to win here. I love to present my horses at their best in Geneva and we are always supported by a great crowd. I would also like to thank the owner of Venard and Dynamix for giving me the opportunity to ride such phenomenal horses» he said in front of Alban Poudret's microphone.

#### Media contact

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