



62^e CONCOURS HIPPIQUE INTERNATIONAL DE GENÈVE

6th to 10th DECEMBER 2023

PRESS RELEASE

RICHARD VOGEL UNBEATABLE AT THE ROLEX GRAND PRIX !

Geneva, 10 December 2023 – There was one thing everyone could agree on this afternoon: Richard Vogel and United Touch S were unbeatable at today's Rolex Grand Prix. The 26-year-old won his first major title in a very special way.

Breathtaking, brilliant, from another planet – there are many more words to describe the performance of the German and his fabulous stallion United Touch S. They were the best in every way this afternoon. Firstly, in an extremely demanding first round with a very tight time (73 seconds), a flowing but difficult course with many changes of rhythm. Gérard Lachat and his team had come up with a very nice test. It took until the 15th driver on the grid to see the first clear lap. Hans-Dieter Dreher stayed clear, but was penalised with a time penalty of 32 hundredths.

There was thunderous applause when Richard Vogel and United Touch S cleared the last obstacle in time. Perhaps the German felt that this was his day, for he even allowed himself the luxury of an implied lap of honour, pointing his finger at his crack. Shortly afterwards, Steve Guerdat did the same, securing the jump-off for his home crowd with an equally flawless ride. In the end, seven riders managed to clear, and it was already sure that there would be a new challenger for the Rolex Grand Slam of Show Jumping as reigning champion Martin Fuchs was unlucky at the penultimate fence with Leone Jei and did not make it to the jump-off.

Richard Vogel was the first rider into the jump-off, and he made it a thriller from the start: the pair literally flew over the course at incredible speed, needing just six canter jumps to reach the final fence where others needed eight! United Touch S took the jump-off with almost magical ease. "I can't even put into words the gratitude and respect I feel for my incredible stallion today," said the German at the post Rolex Grand Prix press conference. Fellow runners-up Mark McAuley (2nd), Christian Kukuk (3rd) and Steve Guerdat (4th) all agreed: "This was a great moment in equestrian sport." And they compared it to McLain Ward's win last year. "The last thing I did before going to bed last night was to watch McLain and Azur's jump-off again in Geneva," smiled Richard Vogel. A good omen? Definitely, as it turned out today!



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The triumph of Bram Chardon

As the first main competition on the final day of the CHI Geneva, the Geneva leg of the FEI Driving World Cup lived up to its promise, offering great sport and a fantastic atmosphere. The drivers demonstrated their skill and speed at breakneck speeds, as four-in-hand driving, the supreme discipline, remains a particularly impressive spectacle, an incredible blend of power and finesse.

Punctually at 11.30am, the first team took to the track in front of a packed grandstand. The riders gave it their all to secure a place in the top three. Unsurprisingly, Koos De Ronde, Dries Degrieck and Bram Chardon again qualified for the decisive final round. Dutchman Koos De Ronde had to put all his eggs in one basket and was relegated to third place on the podium after a series of mistakes. Ahead of him was Dries Degrieck, who was narrowly beaten by Bram Chardon. The Dutchman, who seems to be at home on the Geneva circuit, rode to his third win with almost unbelievable ease and gave the crowd an incredibly confident performance. Bravo, well done!

An absolute record number of visitors

"The CHI Geneva was sold out for three of the five sessions and we welcomed over 45,000 spectators over the five days. This is an absolute record, especially as the sessions on Friday, Saturday night and today were sold out before the show even started. We are naturally very proud and look forward to welcoming even more of you to Palexpo next year, from 11 to 15 December 2024, to experience equestrian sport at the highest level", concluded Sophie Mottu Morel, Director of the CHI Geneva.

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