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YESTERDAY IN BORDEAUX...

Devoucoux Indoor Derby: French Karim Laghouag takes revenge

The very popular Devoucoux Indoor Derby, a “crossover” between a crosscountry course and a show jumping course, is undoubtedly Friday’s highlight at the International Jumping of Bordeaux. Deprived of a fourth victory last year by the Individual Olympic Champion, German Michael Jung, French Karim Laghouag had his revenge taking his fourth victory on Friday evening.

The South West region of France definitely is an eventing country, not only because it is where some of the best competitions, like the 5* of Pau, take place but also because it is where some of the finest French horses of the discipline are bred. This is certainly why the Bordeaux public massively joins each edition of this derby. The 2020 edition was no exception to the rule and it was in an exhilarating atmosphere in front of 7,500 spectators that this original class took place.



On a course of approximately one kilometer, punctuated with 22 fences, some of the world’s best athletes of the discipline including four Olympic champions, three French and the Rio individual gold medallist, Michael Jung, were at the start. It was among these four that one had to look for the winner and more precisely between the French Laghouag and the German Jung. The first rode this course very neatly with his incredible Punch de l’Esque, a wonderful little explosive 17-year-old. “Punch is a horse that I have had for a long

time. He arrived at mine aged four, today he is 17. Once again, he gave me a nice victory. He is in top form; we saw the vets who told me he was stainless. He is very good, he loves the atmosphere, he is more and more calm and he has gained more serenity and experience in this type of class.” Their very quick round would put pressure on the German. “Michael Jung almost got me though. He was fast, but was forced out of his comfort zone, which was my goal. I did not want to take all the risks so as not to drop a fence therefore Michael was forced to take risks, which cost him a fault.” A good strategy as at the end of the course, having to accelerate, the German slightly pushed Highlighter to knock down a fence. With four points Jung was relegated to fourth place, offering the public a fully French podium that reflected yesterday’s spirit where every single class, derby or jumping, has been won by “les Bleus”!

Prix FFE Generali, - Int. jumping competition against the clock (1,50 m)

Epailard's turn: nothing stops the French riders!

In the first part of yesterday's evening, the Prix Generali was a dress rehearsal for tomorrow's Longines FEI World Cup Grand Prix. Though it is not really a qualifying class, the pairs must finish their course if they intended to start on Saturday evening. Some have used this course to prepare for today's class, which will be of great importance for some: it is one of the last chances to win a place for the final in Las Vegas. Thus certain courses were ridden at a slower pace allowing the riders to make their final adjustments.



Others were looking for a victory, as did Frenchman Julien Epailard who is already qualified for the WC final of Las Vegas and who, in a quite impressive pace, took victory from the double gold medallist of the Panamerican Games, Brazil's Marlon Modolo Zanotelli. With his 12-year-old German mare Queeletta, Epailard was over two seconds faster than the Brazilian world number 15 who was riding the 12-year-old Icarus. One of the public's favourite riders, German Marcus Ehning, tried as well to beat the clock but finished 35 hundredth of seconds behind Zanotelli with his

beautiful Comme Il Faut. A true moment of sport as another champion, the great (and 2,03 m tall!) basketball player Boris Diaw, NBA Champion and European Champion 2013 with the French team, handed them over their prizes. After taking the first six places in the Horse & Sport Prix earlier that day, this French victory marked a great day for the French riders.

SATURDAY IN BORDEAUX...

Clearly, the **Longines FEI World Cup Grand Prix, at 8:30 p.m.**, will be the highlight or beacon of the day, with a great focus on Bordeaux rider Olivier Robert as this is his last chance to win his ticket to Las Vegas. One World Cup will chase the other with, afterwards (**11:15 p.m.**), **the first round of the Driving World Cup final**. A Dutch-Australian duel that promises to be exciting. In the afternoon, after the first 5 * class (Horse Immo Prize at 4:15 p.m.), the **Ponies Grand Prix Horse Republic (6:10 p.m.)** should not be missed, a course at 1m35 for these little ponies that are not taller than 1.48 m!

www.jumping-bordeaux.com

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Photos Karim Laghouag: <https://we.tl/t-Cnft9Zasqj>

Photos Julien Epailard: <https://we.tl/t-HYzi4GIT1A>

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