



## International Show Jumping of France – La Baule 2008

Press release, May 8<sup>th</sup>

### The International Show Jumping of La Baule begins !

During the morning of the 8<sup>th</sup> of May, the first Samsung Super League with FEI of the season opened for competition at the renowned equestrian stadium, François-Andre, at La Baule.

The next four days of contests will provide exciting anticipation for determining 2008 Olympics Teams for Hong Kong as well as world rankings.

It was at precisely 8:15 a.m. in La Baule, when the Jumping International of France was kicked off. The first day provided 4 exciting classes, including the Trophy Ministère de l'Agriculture, a qualification class for the Grand Prix Longines – City of La Baule on Sunday. This year's Grand Prix qualification is determined by the following priorities :

- The top 24 individual ranking couples from the first round of the Samsung Super League FEI
- The winners of the 5\* Jumping Events during the last 12 months
- The remaining spots will be filled from the individual ranking order from the class, Trophy of the Ministère de l'Agriculture

The Trophy of the Ministère de l'Agriculture is comprised of 13 jumps with a maximum height of 1.50 meters. The fastest clear round earning 1<sup>st</sup> place was the young and talented 25 year-old Swiss rider, Jane Richard, coupled with **Kazop d'Ysieux**. And just 1.35 seconds slower, for a brilliant second place, was Great Britain's Nick Skelton (first participation in La Baule) and **Arko III**. Nick Skelton's equestrian many accolades include his 10<sup>th</sup> individual ranking in the 2004 Olympics and his team participation for 6<sup>th</sup> place in the 2003 European Championships. And the 3<sup>rd</sup> to rise to the podium was the n° 6 world-ranked Canadian rider, Eric Lamaze with **Hickstead** for a time of 80.22 seconds.

### FRANCE WELL REPRESENTED

With the Olympics taking place in just 3 months, it is evident that the National coaches will evaluate their riders's performance at La Baule during the next four days to determine the best possible team for the 2008 Olympics.

The French team, competing as host nation due to its relegation to the 2<sup>nd</sup> League, is highly motivated to demonstrate their world class abilities. Today's results reflect just that France's champion, Pénélope Leprevost not only placed 5<sup>th</sup> in the Grand Prix de l'Agriculture, she was 2<sup>nd</sup> in the first two classes, Trophy Echo de la Presqu'Ile with **Jubilée d'OUILLY** and 2<sup>nd</sup> with **Karatina** in the Trophy Ouest France.

Also, France's Patrice Delaveau, Roger-Yves Bost, Michel Hecart, Olivier Robert all had clear rounds and respectively placed 9<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup>. La Baule offers France, 7 opportunities (7 out of 14 classes) to enhance their world ranking status.





## International Show Jumping of France – La Baule 2008

### THE SAMSUNG SUPER LEAGUE WITH FEI : the rules will evolve in 2009 Friday at 13:40

For the 2008 season, the Samsung Super League with FEI, will be composed of 8 events with 8 competing nations. The team that accumulates the fewest penalties (the best 3 riders out of 4) will be declared the winner.

In 2009, the Super League point system will remain the same however there will be 10 competing nations (instead of 8) in the first round of each event and the top six will go on to compete in the second round (instead of all 8 teams). The winning team will be determined over the course of 6 venues rather than 8.

These new rules provide for 3 additional nations to participate in the Super League. At the end of the 2008 season, there will be 7 qualifying nations as before and the additional 3 nations for the 2009 series will be determined from the individual Rolex World Rankings.

The 2009 Super League will no longer allow an “invited nation” status. *“The 2009 Nations Cup’s respective teams will be composed of the 4 best-rank world riders”* says France’s National Trainer, Gilles Bertrand de Balanda. Mr. de Balanda, himself, is a double winner at La Baule (winning the Grand Prix in 1999 and 2005) and the Derby (in 1995 and 1994).

*“There is no doubt that the sport has its challenges. Unfortunately our inconsistent performance resulted in a disappointing final ranking in 2008. Step by step we are building the future and we are determined to once again attain top world status. These new rules are very encouraging for Equestrian sport and will provide more opportunities to succeed. We already have 4 top riders in mind!”*

