



JUMPING INTERNATIONAL OFFICIEL DE FRANCE

CSIO***** SUPER LEAGUE

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MICHEL WINS THE DERBY

Michel Robert (Fra) won the Pays de la Loire Derby with Koro d'Or, a 9-year-old stallion, in front of Belgian riders Lejeune and Philippaerts.

A wonderful victory, with just one fault on Frédéric Cottier's slightly modified Derby course "more of a mix between a Derby – Grand Prix" which made it more accessible to horses not specialized in Derbys. "With some of the jumps, especially the oxers at the end of the course, on a par with yesterday's Samsung Super League de France with FEI" added Michel Robert.

And yet the French rider, who has had an injured shoulder – a torn ligament – for the past week, seemed unsure when he entered this demanding event which brought together only 21 competitors.

"Koro d'Or is a horse who has given us a lot more than we expected from him" stated Michel. "We got him at 7 years old and he won the competition for 7-year-old horses in Lyon, then the same one in Geneva, but I didn't think he'd go further than 1.30m classes. I didn't know how much he was going to progress, it's the horse that will tell us in time but I think he'll gradually work up to Grand Prix. I'm taking him to Madrid on Thursday. Running in this Derby is good for his future. This type of event gives horses confidence: they see that they can jump all sorts of jumps that they're not used to seeing and it makes them really confident. At home I have a lot of this type of jump to practice.

Koro is half-owned by a major racehorse dealer, Frédéric Sauque. He came to my stables through Janou Lefèbvre who told M. Sauque that he should put him in training with me... Janou, who won the 1st La Baule Derby in 1963 with Kenavo D. Everything has come round full circle."

This is Michel Robert's 2nd victory in the Derby event that he had previously won with Prospert in 1991 (equal 1st with Nelson Pessoa and Vivaldi).

After this victory, Michel Robert has not yet decided whether to enter Sunday's Grand Prix with Galet d'Auzay "I'll see how my shoulder feels. But winning the Derby and the Grand Prix were my two objectives this year."

Nathalie Fey
Press department



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