



Press Release

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La Baule sets the scene for a clash of titans

The field of the CSI5* has been unveiled with one week to go until the first horses trot into the arena of the Jumping International de La Baule - Officiel de France (6–9 June). The best riders on Earth, who never fail to show up for the event, will once again descend on the François André Stadium. Many of the riders on the start list will be representing one of the nine teams registered for the prestigious Barrière Nations Cup, and every single one of them will be eager to produce a stellar performance over the four-day event, with the Rolex Grand Prix de la Ville de La Baule as the icing on the cake.



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The course is ready, the seats are waiting for the crowds and the stands that make up the various villages have set up shop in the aisles of the François André Stadium. Just a week from now, the riders and their horses will storm into the arena, determined to shine in an event close to their hearts. The 2024 edition boasts a star-studded field, with a whole constellation of world, European, North American and South American champions, as well as Olympic gold medallists.

Several action-packed moments stand out from the programme between Thursday and Sunday. On Friday, the Barrière Nations Cup will put 36 combinations representing nine nations to the test, with the top eight progressing to the second round. It will be a golden opportunity for all the *chefs d'équipe* to make the last few tweaks before the Olympic event in Versailles next summer.

France, which last finished top of the class in 2017, will be eager to shine on home turf again. The national coach, Henk Nooren, and the federal team have selected Roger-Yves Bost (Delph de Denat HDC), Simon Delestre (I Amelusina R 51), Olivier Robert (Iglesias DV), Jeanne Sadran (Dexter de Kerglenn) and Kevin Staut (Visconti du Telman) to represent the Blue Jackets. "La Baule is one of the most special events of the season because it features the Nations Cup", pointed out Kevin Staut. "The competition has stayed true to its identity. The crowd includes diehard fans who come every single day, but also others who take their pick depending on what they like best. It's brilliant. Historic events such as this one bring our sport to a whole new level." The French *chef d'équipe* will also be watching the 13 individual entrants from up close: Nicolas Delmotte, Marie Demonte, Marc Dilasser, Olivier Perreau, Nicolas Layec, Julien Gonin, François-Xavier Boudant, Edward Levy, Pierre-Marie Friant, Mégane Moissonier, the 2016 Olympic gold medallist in the team event Philippe Rozier, the French champion Cédric Hurel and Philippe Léoni.



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The reigning champions and 2018 winners, **Brazil**, will be relying on Luiz Felipe de Azevedo Filho, Luciana Diniz, Luciana Lossio, Yuri Mansur Santiago Lambre to mount a successful title defence.

Sweden, the current world champions and Olympic gold medallists, never perform better than when faced with a real challenge. The Swedes will be hoping to add their names to the honour roll for the first time with Angelica Augustsson Zanotelli, Peder Fredricson, Amanda Landeblad, Petronella Andersson and Linda Heed.

Meanwhile, **Switzerland**, who triumphed in 2019 and 2021, will be fielding a fiercely competitive team in the shape of Steve Guerdat (world no. 3), Martin Fuchs (no. 5), Pius Schwizer, Edouard Schmitz and Alain Jufer. "It's one of the best events of the season, no doubt about that", said Guerdat, an Olympic gold medallist in 2012. "It has an extraordinary course and a fantastic stadium with an atmosphere that blows you away. The event features my three favourite competitions: the Grand Prix, the Nations Cup and the Derby. It has also managed to change with the times without sacrificing its tradition. It's the whole package."

Despite being one of the major powers of the sport for many decades, **Germany** have not won in Loire-Atlantique since 2007. *Die Mannschaft* will be counting on Marcus Ehning, Kendra Clarica Brinkop, the recent victor of the Grand Prix 4* in Bourg-en-Bresse, Jörne Sprehe, Philipp Weishaupt and David Will to end their drought.

The **United States**, whose last success in La Baule dates back to 2005, are bringing some serious firepower to bear in Loire-Atlantique, with Kent Farrington (no. 6) and McLain Ward (no. 9) leading the charge and Karl Cook, recent winner of the Rolex Grand Prix de Rome, Lillie Keenan and Aaron Vale bringing up the rear. The Americans came up second in their latest appearance, back in 2016.

Belgium have emerged victorious from La Baule four times (1999, 2008, 2012 and 2022) and will be banking on Olivier and Nicola Philippaerts (no. 15), Jérôme Guéry, Wilm Vermeir and Grégory Wathelet.

Spain, back on the shores of the Atlantic for the first time since 2018, have clinched a single edition, 2002. The top 100 riders Eduardo Álvarez Aznar and Mariano Martínez Bastida will be among those flying the flag for the Spanish Armada in La Baule.

Austria, who have been building on their bronze medal at the last European Championship, will also be in the mix with Max Kühner, who cracked the world top 10 a few months ago.

International riders who have signed up as individual entrants include the Irishman Shane Sweetnam (no. 12), the Briton Lily Attwood, the Liechtensteiner Jennifer Hochstadter, the Italians Lorenzo de Luca and Gampiero Garofalo, the Norwegian Victoria Gulliksen, the Mexican Federico Fernández, the Dutchman Lars Kersten and the Colombians Roberto Terán and René López.

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