



Longines Masters of Paris 2015: an edition filled with great entertainment and emotion

Once more the Longines Masters of Paris has lived up to its reputation as an exceptional sports event in which sport joins forces with sporting arts and artists, where different universes come together in the same enthusiasm.

This year Swiss watchmakers Longines became the title sponsor of the European leg of this intercontinental series, creating a new brand - the "Longines Master" - and a new visual identity. So the public who came to Paris to see the prestigious events of the competition were thus able to discover a new setting subtly set off by clever lighting. Between the classes the arena was dressed in stylized, colorful lights; the tables of the Masters Club were decorated by discreet origami lamps from the IN-EI Issey MIYAKE collection for Artemide while other sculptures from the collection majestically illuminated the Bar Lounge.

Around the paddock sculptures from the most prized French artist in the world, Richard Orlinski, were exhibited to celebrate his official entry into the Longines Masters family as artistic ambassador. For the three prizes awarded on Sunday he had created a trophy in the shape of a scaled-down model of his silver prancing horse, exhibited for the first time last year at the Longines Masters of Los Angeles.

Once again this year the Village Prestige offered the very best in saddlery and fashion. The House of Gucci, a faithful partner of the event from the beginning, presented its Cruise collection for men and women along with its capsule collections GG Blooms and GG Caleido. The designer Jean-Baptiste Rautureau made his return to the Longines Masters of Paris with his eponymous brand of shoes for men and his women's shoe label, Free Lance. The Italian women's equestrian fashion label MIASUKI made a noted entrance on the first evening, launching its online store by offering the public a fashion show of 40 outfits on an elevated catwalk that ran right around the paddock. For the first time, Hermès Sellerie took a stand in the Village Prestige as did Longines with more than 100 models on display including the official watch of the Longines Masters of Paris, DolceVita.

The 2015 edition was marked by many amazing moments. Just three weeks after the attacks which plunged France and the City of Light in particular into mourning, French riders elected to wear their French team jackets in all classes, adding a #PrayForParis badge pinned to their collars. For the Longines Speed Challenge, all joined in a tribute to France before the beginning of the event as the riders entered the arena by nationality to listen to a message of peace addressed to the world. On Saturday night, the Gucci Gold Cup saw the French riders distinguish themselves. The podium included two: Simon Delestre and Patrice Delaveau for whom 6,000 spectators improvised the French national anthem as the cup was presented.

Later, the Style & Competition for AMADE drew a packed crowd as it always does with the public impatient to see the fancy dress adopted by the greatest riders on the planet and celebrity figures. They soon discovered a cinematic and musical casting with, in particular, Guillaume Canet and Edwina Tops Alexander as the Blues Brothers, Vincent Bartin as Tina Turner and Bernardo Alves as Michael Jackson and Rik Hemeryck and Marie Deroubaix as Shrek and Fiona. Music and film were also very much present in the jury with top model and actress Julie Orton, DJ/Producer Jean Roch and actress Carole Bianic. Other personalities from the entertainment world applauded this unique show from the tribunes of the Masters Club. Among them were Élodie Fontan and Philippe Lacheau, currently promoting their film *Babysitting 2*, but also Anthony Delon, Nicolas Canteloup and the





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American actor Gary Dourdan (The Experts Las Vegas) visibly moved by Eden Leprévost aged just 11 disguised as Princess Leia battling her mother, Pénélope, in a Darth Vader costume. "Her delicacy and determination moved me," said Dourdan. "I felt she and her mother offered the best performance of the evening." That opinion was shared by the many children who watched the event with stars in their eyes. The following day, as they returned with their families, they were captivated by a new class: an event featuring Haras de Jarde ponies in which a dozen budding young riders competed to the delight of the public.

Dourdan was also back the next day to enjoy the ultimate class in the competition: the Longines Grand Prix. "This is the first time I have attended an indoor show-jumping event and I'm won over. Today I was impressed by Billy Twomey's performance with his 18-year-old mare, Tinka's Serenade and the grace and lightness with which she took the jumps. It was like she was flying!" he said, still very concentrated even after the end of the class.

In the end, the Longines Grand Prix was won by France's Delaveau. During this class and each time a French rider managed to clear the triple (a combination of three jumps), the Swiss watchmaker Longines offered a meal to the charity JustWorld International as part of its "Clear the Jump" initiative.

Another highlight of the event, with the emphasis very much on beauty, came on Friday when the famous Lido de Paris cabaret put up a prize for the first time, becoming an official entertainment partner of the Longines Masters of Paris. Its wonderful dancers, the Bluebell Girls, popped in to mark the occasion wearing their precious costumes from their "Paris Merveilles" revue. Studied with Swarovski crystals and adorned by blue peacock feathers, they were created by the stylist Nicolas Vaudelet. Vaudelet also came up with three original costumes for the event's 'ring master', the flamboyant Pedro Sebulka. Today he was sporting tails with a tennis stripe teamed with an incredible hat in the shape of a knight from a chessboard.

And because no party would be complete without it, music accompanied us for the four days with an ambient playlist put together especially for the Longines Masters of Paris. Piano pieces were played live, there was a concert from the famous trio LEJ who delighted a packed public on the first night with their covers and Jérémy Charlier provided a DJ set as did DJ Wicky from the VIP Room, the guest star for Saturday night - the pair of them packing the dance floor of the Bar Lounge late into the night.

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