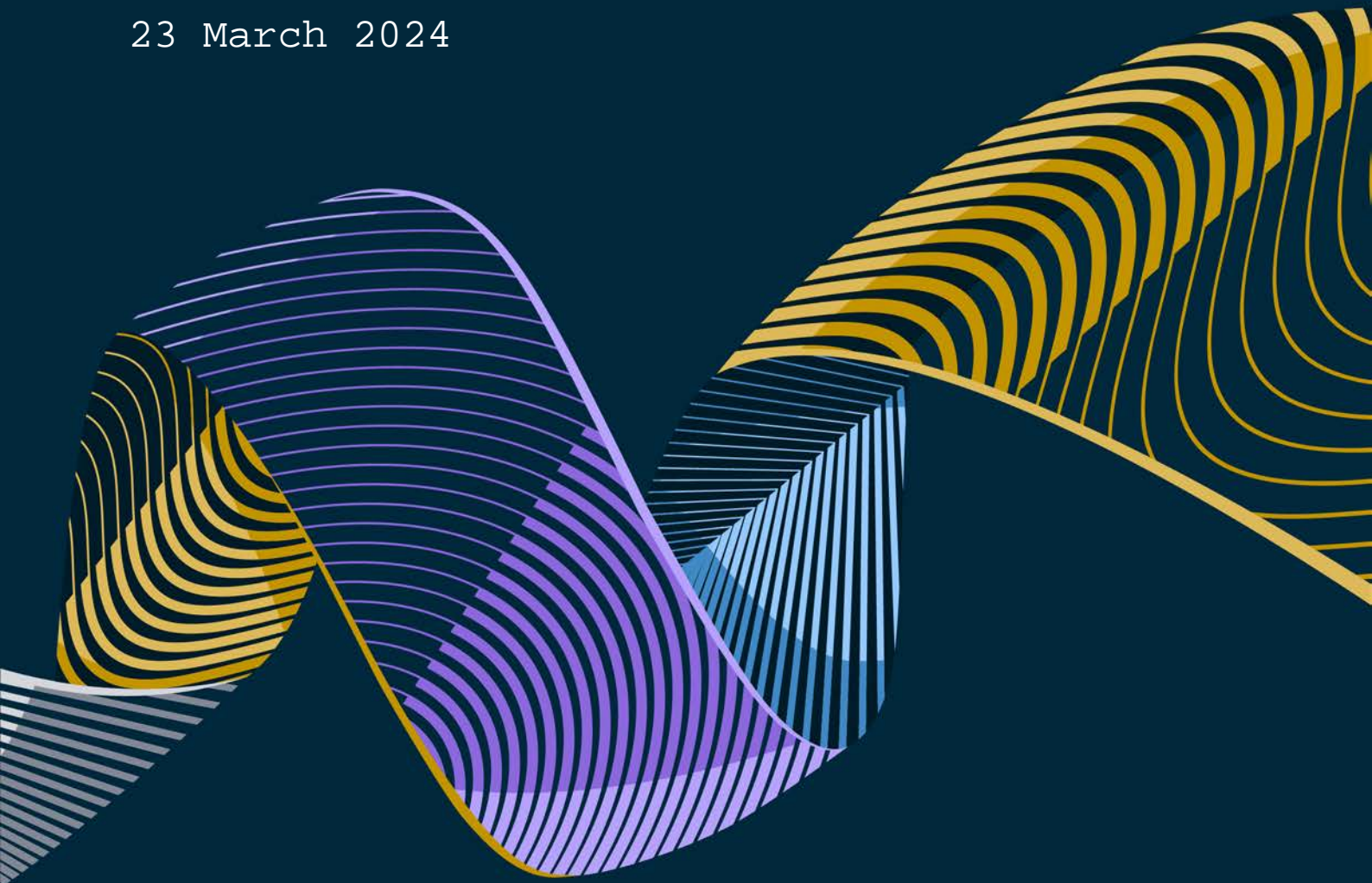




LONGINES
LEAGUE ^O_F
NATIONS™

Ocala (USA) – Press Kit

23 March 2024



Foreword

By the FEI President

On behalf of the Fédération Equestre Internationale, it is with great pleasure that I welcome you to Ocala, for the second leg of the prestigious Longines League of Nations™. This new series features a unique, unified and global format where the top ten teams compete at four qualifying events around the world, with the top eight making it through to the Final and the opportunity to secure the ultimate honour for their nation.



As the excitement of the next few days unfolds, we will once again be reminded of what makes Jumping one of the most remarkable of sports. Fully immersed in the action, we will witness first-hand, the fantastic bond between horse and human; the trust, communication, hard work and patience involved. It is this bond which enables impressive feats of athleticism to be achieved and the core around which the whole FEI community revolves.

It is with great anticipation that we look forward to discovering who the laureates here in Ocala will be. Our journey with the Longines League of Nations™ started out in Abu Dhabi (UAE) and will take us to St. Gallen (SUI) as well as Rotterdam (NED), before we have our eight finalists who will battle it out at the Real Club de Polo in Barcelona from 3 to 6 October for the ultimate team title in Jumping.

I would like to thank the organisers, as well as all those who have dedicated their time and support to the successful running of this event. I would also like to thank Longines, Title Sponsor and Official Timekeeper of the Longines League of Nations™ for their unwavering loyalty and willingness to drive our sport forward in an innovative way. Together, we mark a new chapter in the history of Jumping, which will allow us to continue to raise the profile, visibility and reach of equestrianism around the world.

I wish all athletes, their invaluable support teams and nations present here in Ocala the best of luck! And to the fans, I hope you will enjoy every moment of the best of what our sport has to offer.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ingmar De Vos'.

Ingmar De Vos
FEI President

Longines League of Nations™

The Longines League of Nations™ (LLN) is an exciting new chapter in the history of the Nations Cup, equestrian sport's oldest and most prestigious series which as a concept - the nation vs nation competition- has existed since 1909!

The Longines League of Nations™ represents the best of equestrian sport featuring a unified and global format, unique to the series, where the top 10 nations compete at 4 qualifiers In Abu Dhabi (UAE), Ocala (USA), St. Gallen (SUI) and Rotterdam (NED) in order to secure their spot at the Final in Barcelona (ESP), where the best 8 teams go head-to-head for the highly coveted Longines League of Nations™ Trophy!



In short, it's the best 10 teams, competing over 4 qualifiers, with the top 8 teams from the qualifiers competing in 1 Final.

Qualification of Teams

The best 10 Teams of the Longines League of Nations™ Ranking established based upon the Longines Ranking will be qualified to participate at the LLN Qualifying Events. The Qualification Ranking used for qualification for the LLN will be calculated based on the combined points of each NF's 6 best Athletes of whom at least 1 must be an Athlete under the age of 25 (U25) in the Longines Ranking.

Competition Format

The LLN Competition is run over two rounds, with identical courses. Both rounds are run according to Table A against the clock.

The starting order of the first round of the first LLN Competition of the Season will be the reverse order of the Qualification Ranking for the LLN Series; from the 2025 season onwards the winner of the LLN Final of the preceding LLN Season (if eligible to participate in the LLN Season) will go last.

For the subsequent LLN Competitions, the starting order of the first round will be the reverse order of the LLN Standings established after the previous LLN Competition.

You can check the full Longines League of Nations™ Rules [here](#)



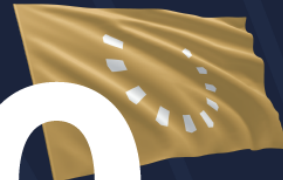
LONGINES
LEAGUE OF
NATIONS™

FEI Series

1 GLOBAL
TEAM JUMPING
SERIES



10 BEST NATIONS
IN THE WORLD



4 ATHLETES
& HORSES
PER TEAM



4
QUALIFIERS

ABU DHABI (UAE)
SUN 11 FEB 2024



OCALA, FL (USA)
SAT 23 MAR 2024



ST. GALLEN (SUI)
FRI 31 MAY 2024



ROTTERDAM (NED)
FRI 21 JUN 2024



8

BEST TEAMS
QUALIFY FOR
THE FINAL

1 FINAL

BARCELONA (ESP)
SUN 6 OCT 2024



LONGINES

FEI.org/LLN

The Venue

The North American qualifier of the Longines Leagues of Nations™ will be held at Ocala, located in central Florida, on 23 March. Ocala is home to the largest equestrian facility in the United States. As a premier equestrian and multidisciplinary venue located in Central Florida horse country, the state-of-the-art facilities include five climate-controlled indoor arenas, 18 outdoor rings, expansive stadiums with covered seating and nearly 3,000 stalls.



Dedicated to offering great sport and good fun in a family-friendly environment, World Equestrian Center - Ocala promises an unparalleled experience for exhibitors, spectators, vendors, sponsors and retailers built on three core values: Quality. Class. Distinction.

Discover more about the venue [here](#)

Participating Nations



<u>Shane</u> <u>SWEETNAM</u>	<u>Daniel</u> <u>COYLE</u>	<u>Cian</u> <u>O'CONNOR</u>	<u>Darragh</u> <u>KENNY</u>
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<u>Kent</u> <u>FARRINGTON</u>	<u>Laura</u> <u>KRAUT</u>	<u>Aaron</u> <u>VALE</u>	<u>McLain</u> <u>WARD</u>
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<u>Simon</u> <u>DELESTRE</u>	<u>Olivier</u> <u>PERREAU</u>	<u>Olivier</u> <u>ROBERT</u>	<u>Kevin</u> <u>STAUT</u>
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<u>Christian</u> <u>KUKUK</u>	<u>Andre</u> <u>THIEME</u>	<u>Richard</u> <u>VOGEL</u>	<u>David</u> <u>WILL</u>
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<u>Martin</u> <u>FUCHS</u>	<u>Steve</u> <u>GUERDAT</u>	<u>Pius</u> <u>SCHWIZER</u>	<u>Janika</u> <u>SPRUNGER</u>
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<u>Harry</u> <u>CHARLES</u>	<u>Tim</u> <u>GREDLEY</u>	<u>Ben</u> <u>MAHER</u>	<u>Jessica</u> <u>MENDOZA</u>
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<u>Willem</u> <u>GREVE</u>	<u>Harrie</u> <u>SMOLDERS</u>	<u>Maikel Van</u> <u>Der VLEUTEN</u>	<u>Jur</u> <u>VRIELING</u>
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<u>Niels</u> <u>BRUYNSEELS</u>	<u>Pieter</u> <u>DEVOS</u>	<u>Nicola</u> <u>PHILIPPAERTS</u>	<u>Gregory</u> <u>WATHELET</u>
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<u>Petronella</u> <u>ANDERSSON</u>	<u>Peder</u> <u>FREDRICSON</u>	<u>Amanda</u> <u>LANDEBLAD</u>	<u>Henrik Von</u> <u>ECKERMANN</u>
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<u>Yuri</u> <u>MANSUR</u>	<u>Marlon MODOLO</u> <u>ZANOTELLI</u>	<u>Rodrigo</u> <u>PESSOA</u>	<u>Cassio</u> <u>RIVETTI</u>
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Longines League of Nations™ Standings

	UAE Abu Dhabi 08 - 11 Feb 2024	USA Ocala, FL (WEC) 19 - 23 Mar 2024	SUI St Gallen 30 May - 02 Jun 2024	NED Rotterdam 20 - 23 Jun 2024
1 Germany	Rank 1 Pts. 100	Rank Pts.	Rank Pts.	Rank Pts.
2 Ireland	Rank 2 Pts. 90	Rank Pts.	Rank Pts.	Rank Pts.
3 Sweden	Rank 3 Pts. 80	Rank Pts.	Rank Pts.	Rank Pts.
4 Brazil	Rank 4 Pts. 70	Rank Pts.	Rank Pts.	Rank Pts.
5 Switzerland	Rank 5 Pts. 60	Rank Pts.	Rank Pts.	Rank Pts.
6 United States of America	Rank 6 Pts. 55	Rank Pts.	Rank Pts.	Rank Pts.
7 Great Britain	Rank 7 Pts. 50	Rank Pts.	Rank Pts.	Rank Pts.
8 Netherlands	Rank 8 Pts. 45	Rank Pts.	Rank Pts.	Rank Pts.
9 France	Rank 9 Pts. 40	Rank Pts.	Rank Pts.	Rank Pts.
10 Belgium	Rank 10 Pts. 35	Rank Pts.	Rank Pts.	Rank Pts.

LLN Ocala Preview

World-class line-up for Longines League of Nations™ second leg in Ocala

by Louise Parkes



A glittering cast of athletes, including eight of the top ten and fifteen of the top twenty riders in the latest world rankings, will line out for round two of the inaugural Longines League of Nations™ in Ocala, USA in just over two weeks' time.

With the Paris 2024 Olympic Games looming ever larger on the horizon, this leg looks set to be a serious test of horse-and-rider combinations vying for selection. And the quality of the field which is filled with Olympic, World and Regional champions, promises a spectacular day of sport.

The top-10 ranked countries in the world are competing in this brand new four-leg series which will culminate in the Longines League of Nations™ 2024 Final in Barcelona, Spain in early October, and Germany

took the early lead when claiming the maximum 100 points for their first-leg victory in Abu Dhabi (UAE) last month.

Chef d'Equipe, Otto Becker, sends out two members of that winning side, Christian Kukuk and David Will this time joined by 2021 European individual gold and team silver medallist Andre Thieme along with the very much on-form Richard Vogel who, partnering United Touch S, won the CSI5* Grand Prix in nearby Wellington, Florida ten days ago. Team Germany will be hoping to make it two-in-a-row this time out and could prove difficult to beat.

Pipped at the post

However Team Ireland were ranked first as the series began, based on points accumulated by their top six athletes including one U25 athlete prior to the start of the series, and were only just pipped at the post in the final stages in Abu Dhabi when the three-rider rule for the second round came into play. It made a crucial difference, with any mistake proving very costly indeed.

Irish tails are up following their impressive Nations Cup win in Wellington last Sunday and Michael Blake has selected two members of that winning side, Olympic bronze medallist Cian O'Connor and world number 16, Darragh Kenny. Joining these two in Ocala will be Shane Sweetnam and world number 14 Daniel Coyle who has been blazing a trail in the Longines FEI Jumping World Cup™ circuit. The Irish never like to be beaten, and all four riders will be out to impress with Paris very much on their minds.

Sweden finished third in Abu Dhabi, and world number one Henrik von Eckermann who produced one of just four double-clear rounds that day will compete again, as will four-time Olympian and 2017 European champion Peder Fredricson. Amanda Landeblad, who with For Killy finished third in the King George V Gold Cup at Hickstead (GBR) last summer and fifth at the last qualifier of the Longines FEI Jumping World Cup™ Western European League on home ground in Gothenburg (SWE) ten days ago, joins the team this time around alongside young-horse specialist Petronella Andersson.

There are also two changes to the Brazilian side, Yuri Mansur and Marlon Zanotelli this time joined by 2004 Olympic champion and three-time FEI World Cup™ title-holder Rodrigo Pessoa and double-Olympian Cassio Rivetti.

Big guns

The Swiss are sending out their big guns. World number three and reigning European champion Steve Guerdat who has individual Olympic gold and three FEI World Cup™ victories under his belt, and world number six and former European and World Cup title-holder Martin Fuchs will be supported by Janika Sprunger who produced another of those precious double-clear performances in the first leg in Abu Dhabi. Backed up by the super-experienced double-Olympian Pius Schwizer, Peter van der Waaij's foursome will be determined to finish higher than fifth this time out.

American Chef d'Equipe, Robert Ridland, is also fielding a heavyweight crew for this leg on home soil. Laura Kraut, McLain Ward and Kent Farrington have collected numerous Olympic medals between them during their spectacular careers, and Aaron Vale, who has been enjoying a sensational run of form in Ocala over the last month and who was very impressive in Abu Dhabi, rounds up the host-nation selection. They will be under no illusion about what is expected of them in a fortnight's time.

The British too are stacking up their odds, with reigning Olympic champion and world number two Ben Maher called into action along with world number 13 and Tokyo Olympian Harry Charles. Di Lampard's side will also include Tim Gredley and Jessica Mendoza as they attempt to improve on a seventh-place finish in leg one.

Heavy hitters

Jur Vrieling is the only remaining member of the Dutch side that lined out in the first leg as Jos Lansink brings in his heavy-hitters Harrie Smolders, Willem Greve and Maikel van der Vleuten. The Netherlands didn't make it into the top eight teams going through to the second round in Abu Dhabi. They will definitely want to rectify that situation this time around.

The French side also missed out, but Henk Nooren has put his faith in Olivier Perreau, Olivier Robert and Kevin Staut once again, while Simon Delestre is also called up for the American fixture. Four months ahead of the Olympic Games on their home turf they will surely be hoping for a better result when they travel across the Atlantic.

Meanwhile the Tokyo 2020 Olympic bronze medallists from Belgium will be determined do better than finishing in last place. Hampered by elimination for their team pathfinder they finished with 16 first-round faults in Abu Dhabi as did the French who, however, had quicker combined times to nudge Belgium to the bottom of the scoreboard. Chef d'Equipe Peter Weinberg has called up Niels Bruynseels, Pieter Devos and Nicola Philippaerts to join Gregory Wathelet in Ocala as they attempt to challenge more successfully this time out.

The second leg of the Longines League of Nations™ takes place in Ocala on Saturday 23 March 2024 as history continues to be written, so don't miss a hoofbeat....

What happened in Abu Dhabi?

Germans clinch victory at thrilling series-opener in Abu Dhabi

by Louise Parkes



The brand new Longines League of Nations™ series got off to a flying start today with a nail-biting contest in which Team Germany won through at the Al Forsan International Sports Resort in Abu Dhabi in the United Arab Emirates.

It could hardly have been scripted better, with the result depending on the very last ride of the day when a single error by Mark McAuley and GRS Lady Amaro prevented a jump-off between the winners and Team Ireland who led from the outset but who had to settle for runner-up spot ahead of Sweden in third place.

Germany finished on an eight-fault scoreline while Ireland completed with 12, and the Swedes were rewarded for their quicker times to fill third spot when sharing a 20-fault final scoreline with Brazil.

Christian Kukuk (Mumbai), Jörne Sprehe (Sprehe Hot Easy), David Will (My Prins van Dorperheide) and Christian Ahlmann (Blueberry) posted today's historic German victory, and their Chef d'Equipe Otto Becker

said "it's a super start in the Olympic season, and I'm very happy and proud of my four riders!"

Full attention

Olympic course designer, Spain's Santiago Varela, set them a technical 12-fence track that required the full attention of both riders and horses every inch of the way. Bizarrely, the opening oxer proved one of the big bogeys, lowered by four horse-and-rider combinations in the first round and another four in round two, but it was the line from the oxer at fence five to the open water at six and on to a double of verticals at fence seven that proved the undoing of most.

As world number one Henrik von Eckermann said after his pathfinding round for Sweden with Iliana, this stretch of the track was the most challenging. However he was one of four to complete double-clear runs today, the other three posted by his wife, Switzerland's Janika Sprunger with the talented 10-year-old mare Orelie, Irish pathfinder Richard Howley with Equine America Consulente de Prelet Z and Germany's Jörne Sprehe with Sprehe Hot Easy.

As the number-one ranked team in the world the Irish had the best of the draw and so were last to go in the first round. And they made the most of that advantage when clears from McAuley, Howley and Mikey Pender (HHS Calais) left them on a zero scoreline at the halfway stage ahead of Sweden and Germany on four, Switzerland and Brazil on eight, the UAE - who were not counting points but were competing as host nation - on 11 faults, and Great Britain and USA on 12 apiece.

The Netherlands, France and Belgium lost out when only these top eight teams went through to the second round, and with only three riders per nation this time out and every score counting the intensity increased at a rapid rate. It was fast, furious and mistakes would prove very costly indeed.

The Americans completed with 28 faults on the board, the British finished with 36 and the UAE racked up an additional 35 to drop out of contention on a final total of 46. With just 12 to add Team Brazil finished with 20 and double-faults from both Elian Baumann (Little Lumpi E) and Barbara Schnieper (Canice) settled the Swiss tally at 24. But meanwhile the Germans were piling on the pressure.

Extra stride

Kukuk's only mistake with Mumbai in the first round was at the troublesome double at fence seven, but putting in an extra stride this time it came up just right and the pair sailed on home for an effortless clear. So when Sprehe produced a second sensational run with her 12-year-old mare Hot Easy then Team Germany was clearly threatening because Von Eckermann's second clear was followed by a 12-fault result from Peder Fredricson and Alcapone des Carmille, so the Olympic, World and European champions from Sweden were losing their grip.

Meanwhile although the Irish got off to the perfect start with Howley's second clear, mistakes from Mikey Pender and HHS Calais at the oxer at three and again at the final oxer left them vulnerable.

It all came down to the final two into the ring, Germany's David Will levelling the score with Ireland at eight faults each when clipping the penultimate oxer. So a jump-off was in prospect if Ireland's McAuley could leave all the timber intact. But that difficult distance from the open water to the first of the double of verticals proved the Irishman's undoing in an otherwise foot-perfect last-to-go run with the mare who made it all look so elementary first time out. The pendulum had swung, and the one-fence advantage went in favour of the Germans at the end of the day.

Delighted

Jörne Sprehe was delighted with the win. "It's a really good feeling, Easy was jumping amazing and I'm very proud of her. For me she is the best horse ever!" she said.

Christian Kukuk was also well pleased with Mumbai's performance. "It's actually the first 5* show for him since the Europeans and he always needs a few rounds to get back in the rhythm, especially at this level that is normal, but I had a good feeling and I said after having one down in the first round I'm very excited for the second round. It was very good for him, in the second round he showed all his potential and I think our team should be very proud today"

David Will said, "I'm thrilled with the whole team, especially Jörne with her double-clear, she was exceptionally good today. I'm very happy with my horse, he jumped great. In the first round it was a bit my mistake, I didn't wait enough going to the last fence and we had that down. In the second round he jumped even better which proves his quality. And I was maybe thinking a bit too much about my fault at the last fence in the first round and then I had a light fault at the second-last, but overall my horse was class!"

And asked if he was unhappy about not being called up for the second round, Christian Ahlmann said, "No! I was really happy with my round and it was the first time she jumped a proper 1.60m course with me so I didn't know exactly what was going to happen today. So we had a super round, everything worked like it should and I'm really happy with that!"

Disappointment

For Irish Chef d'Equipe Michael Blake there was a little disappointment "because at half-time we looked like we could snatch it. But overall if you told me this morning we were going to be second, against the strong teams that were there, I would have been happy overall. In the end it didn't go our way, but that's the sport!" he said.

As Howley pointed out today's second-place finish is still good news. "This puts us in a great position moving forward, today was top-level sport, a difficult course with very strong teams here so I think it was

a great result. If we had one fence less we were in a jump-off for first place so we weren't far away!", he said.

Today's result see Germany top of the Longines League of Nations™ leaderboard having earned the maximum 100 points, with Ireland in second with 90 and Sweden third with 80. All teams picked up points today except for UAE who are not eligible.

Speaking on behalf of the Organising Committee Mohamed Al Nakhi congratulated the German winners and described the excitement. "We saw some great sport, a new format, we weren't sure how it would turn out and you could see the result flipping right there at the end between Ireland and Germany. We thought we would have a jump-off, it didn't turn out that way but I think it was great sport!"

Next stop for the series is Ocala (USA) in March, with the two remaining legs taking place in June at St Gallen (SUI) and Rotterdam (NED) after which the top eight of the ten competing nations will make the cut to the very first Longines League of Nations™ Final in Barcelona (ESP) in October.

Don't miss a hoofbeat...



LONGINES
LEAGUE OF
NATIONS™

The Longines League of Nations™ Trophy



Find out more about the Longines League of Nations™ Trophy [here](#)

The Longines League of Nations™ Anthem



The Series anthem has been written by Portuguese composer Rui Ribeiro, who has made a name for himself in the world of classical crossover music with his compositions that are often based on the sounds of nature.

Ribeiro's anthem for the equestrian Series primarily revolves around a horse's footfall, which refers to the pattern in which a horse moves its feet when it walks, trots, canters and gallops.

With a duration of 5 minutes and 11 seconds, the anthem will serve as a basis for shorter adaptations which will accompany TV and web spots. Parts of the anthem will also be used in-venue to highlight different aspects of sports presentation and will be produced by

Ricardo Ferreira who co-owns Lisbon based BLIM Records with Ribeiro.

Listen to the full anthem [here](#)

[Listening guide to the Longines League of Nations™ anthem](#)

New FEI Online Pressroom

The FEI has the pleasure of announcing that the new FEI Online Pressroom is now available.

This innovative platform offers comprehensive resources, all in one convenient place, to help with remote journalistic coverage of all qualifiers and the grand final of the Longines League of Nations™ series 2024.

Features include:

- **Competition Livestream:** Watch every Longines League of Nations™ qualifier live, as well as the grand Final with an embedded FEITV player.
- **Press Conference Livestream:** Watch livestreamed post-competition press conferences, where you can submit questions directly to the participants.
- **Key Documents:** Find essential documents such as course plans, starting lists, etc. conveniently located in one place and downloadable as PDFs.
- **Participant Biographies:** Access detailed information about all participating athletes in each qualifier.
- **Full Results and Standings:** Stay informed with competition results and the latest standings in the series.
- **Photo & Video Resources:** Discover a collection of high-quality images for use in your reports and coverage of the Longines League of Nations™.

In order to be eligible for access, each applicant must be a reporter, photographer, editor, or influencer for a recognised news outlet, news service, newspaper, website, radio, or television station. You can register for the FEI Online Pressroom [here](#). Please, follow these steps (In case you already have an FEI ID, you can directly go to Step 3):

1. Fill up the self-registration form. Please, be sure you register under the "Press" category.
2. You will receive your FEI ID.
3. Once you have received your FEI ID, you need to send an email to usersupport@fei.org with your FEI ID and the Media Outlet you work for.
4. After reviewing your details, you will receive a confirmation email to access the FEI Online Pressroom.

Once you have been granted access, this will be for all Longines League of Nations Qualifiers and Final. In case you encounter any issues, please send an email to usersupport@fei.org

FEI Online resources

Keep up to date with the latest news from the Longines League of Nations™ leg in Ocala (USA) [here](#).

Schedules and results will be available [here](#).

You can register for the FEI Online Pressroom [here](#)

The League of Nations™ qualifier in Ocala (USA) will be broadcast live on [FEI TV](#), the FEI's official broadcasting platform.

Free images for editorial purposes are available from the [FEI Flickr account](#) in the photostream and in the dedicated [album](#)

Biographies from the main participants are available [here](#).

You can find the Longines League of Nations™ on [Facebook](#), [X](#), [Instagram](#), [TikTok](#) and [YouTube](#).

The "*Non-Rights Holders' Guidelines for publishing on Social Media at FEI-named events*" have been updated and are available [here](#)

Join the action on Social Media by using the hashtags #LonginesLeagueOfNations #LLN and #Jumping

Get all the info about the Longines League of Nations™, including venues, rules, participating teams, etc on the [Longines League of Nations™ Hub](#)

Find historical info from past editions of the Longines FEI Jumping Nations Cup™ [here](#)

FEI & Ocala (USA) OC

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* All images by FEI/ Martin Dokoupil/ Liz Gregg