

SPORT  
E SALUTE



CONI

PIAZZA di SIENA  
89<sup>th</sup> CSIO ROMA 2022

# POWERFUL ELEGANCE

MAY 26-29 - ROME



INTESA SANPAOLO



**Press Release no. 5 - May 27<sup>th</sup> 2022**

## **EXCITEMENT AT BOILING POINT AHEAD OF INTESA SANPAOLO NATIONS CUP FANTASTIC FRENCH PIP BELGIUM IN INTESA SANPAOLO NATIONS CUP THRILLER**



Kevin Staut riding Visconti du Telman - ph. Sport e Salute / S.Ferraro

For the 20th time in the long and distinguished history of Nations Cup jumping at CSIO Rome, Team France came out on top today. On an afternoon packed with excitement Les Bleus pinned last year's winners from Belgium into runner-up spot while The Netherlands and USA finished third and fourth.

[WWW.PIAZZADISIENA.IT](http://WWW.PIAZZADISIENA.IT)

Press Office: EQUI-EQUIPE

+39.331.4603432 / +39.06.45495394 / [press@piazzaadisiena.it](mailto:press@piazzaadisiena.it)



PIAZZA di SIENA

With the only zero score of the competition it was a clear-cut affair for the victors in the end, but it came down to one last nail-biting round from last-man-in, Kevin Staut, to decide the result.

A single mistake from the Rio 2016 Olympic Games team gold medallist would see his side go into a third-round jump-off against Belgium who completed their day with just four faults on the board. But Staut was in no mood for mistakes, and with the coolest of cool rides with Visconti du Telman he clinched it.

### Short weeks

Just a few short weeks ago a French team that included three of the same riders - Staut, Penelope Leprevost and Simone Delestre - finished second on home ground at La Baule where Belgium reigned supreme. That also came to a very close finish, so today's result was all the sweeter.

As Chef d'Equipe Henk Nooren said afterwards there is always something quite unique about Nations Cup competitions. "I think no matter how much we love the Grand Prix, as a team and as a country there is nothing nicer than a Nations Cup. This is what you also as riders live for. Two weeks ago in La Baule it also came down to the last horse to jump and today again the spectators also felt the tension and excitement, so sport had a good day here and we had an excellent day!", said the Dutchman who managed the French team from 2009 to 2012 and then returned in 2019 with a contract that takes him through to the Paris 2024 Olympics.

### Whip hand

The winners already had the whip hand with the only clean sheet at the end of the first round and the only French faults were posted by Leprevost and the stallion Gfe Excalibut de La Tour Vidal who left a single fence on the ground each time out. Belgium, USA and The Netherlands carried four faults into round two while Germany, Great Britain, Ireland and Canada and Spain had all racked up eight.



From left to right: Roberto Gabrielli (Intesa Sanpaolo). Giovanni Malago' (CONI - President), Marco Di Paola (FISE - President), Henk Nooren (France Chef d'Equipe), Vito Cozzoli (Sport e Salute - AD). ph. Sport e Salute / S. Ferraro

But with only the top eight nations permitted to jump again the Spanish missed the cut with the slowest combined time for their three counting team members while Team Italy, already on 12 faults, were only permitted to return as hosts.

While the Dutch and Americans moved their scorelines up to eight faults apiece it was left to the Belgians to keep the pressure on the leading French, and with clears from Nicola Philippaerts (Katanga VH Dingshof), Jerome Guery (Quel Homme de Hus) and Gregory Wathélet (Nevados S) they could drop the eight faults collected by Pieter Clemens and Akarad Hero Z to stand their ground.

[WWW.PIAZZADISIENA.IT](http://WWW.PIAZZADISIENA.IT)

Press Office: EQUI-EQUIPE

+39.331.4603432 / +39.06.45495394 / [press@piazadisiena.it](mailto:press@piazadisiena.it)



PIAZZA di SIENA

But, despite a mistake from Lprevost at the water-tray vertical three fences from home, Simone Delestre and the aptly-name Cayman Jolly Jumper, Roger Yves Bost and the stallion Cassius Clay VDV Z and Staut with his 13-year-old mare Visconti du Telman left all the poles in place with definitive style.

Staut was really happy that he was the one to seal it.

### **So happy**

"I'm so happy for the team. It's been a tough cycle, I was a bit down with the horses but now I have a good team around me and it's looking great so it's an unbelievable feeling when you can go in as the last and have the possibility to make the team win and to then celebrate with all the riders! Already in La Baule we had the possibility to get a great result, we finished second and then here winning with this pressure, with this atmosphere that's really, really great!", he said. His mare's owner and breeder was on site to enjoy this big moment. He explained that a lack of horse-power due to injuries last year meant he asked Visconti du Telman to really step up her game and it seems she revelled in the opportunity.

"She improved a lot, although I didn't expect her to do that so quickly at this level, she jumped two Nations Cups and the European Championships last year, and she got huge experience. I also am riding her better and that helps, she has a lot of scope, a lot of quality, maybe it was a bit too quick for her last year but now she is reaching the top level", said the 41-year-rider as he sat beside two of the team-members who shared that Olympic gold medal winning podium in Brazil six years ago.

Bost and Lprevost were also on that team and 56-year-old Bost has been back to his very best at Piazza di Siena this week.

### **Very exciting**

With Delestre called away, Nooren talked about the very exciting new partnership the rider has established with Cayman Jolly Jumper who provided thrill-a-minute entertainment throughout his two brilliant rounds this afternoon. "He's just a pony, La Baule was the first time we used him in the Nations Cup and everybody was wondering what I was doing because if you see him warming it's quite something!", he said of the excitable little 12-year-old gelding who is clearly, however, going to be a great asset to the French side.

Nations Cup jumping has been taking place at CSIO Rome since 1926 and the French scored the first of their victories in 1927 and their last in 2010. Like the rest of the world, Piazza di Siena has seen some changes over the years including turning the hallowed grass arena into an all-weather surface. But it has been returned to its former glory and looks wonderful this year.

"For a couple of years for sure the sand was nice here, but the most beautiful rings we still have in the world are on grass - the ground is perfect, and the surroundings too - with your team and with your sponsors it becomes nicer and nicer all the time here", said Nooren before heading off with his crew to celebrate claiming one of the most coveted team titles in the world as winners of the Intesa SanPaolo Nations Cup 2022.

**WWW.PIAZZADISIENA.IT**

Press Office: EQUI-EQUIPE

+39.331.4603432 / +39.06.45495394 / [press@piazadisiena.it](mailto:press@piazadisiena.it)



**PIAZZA di SIENA**