

The French horse Calandagan, the best horse in the world, wins in Dubai

The best horse in the world in 2025 is French. His name is Calandagan, he is trained in Chantilly by Francis-Henri Graffard and owned by the Aga Khan Studs. This Saturday, he made his reappearance in Dubai, in the Longines Dubai Sheema Classic, a Group 1 race — the highest level in world racing — in which he had finished second last year. His last outing dated back to November, when he made history by defeating the Japanese horses on their home turf in the Japan Cup!

This Saturday, in a tactical race, in which the English horse West Wind Blows set a strong pace, Calandagan produced a finishing straight worthy of the greatest champions, catching his rival close to the post with a tremendous burst of acceleration, his jockey Mickaël Barzalona even patting him before the end of the race! This was the fifth consecutive time he has won at this level.

QUOTATIONS

Francis-Henri Graffard, trainer of Calandagan (Chantilly – France):

"I'm relieved, he is a fantastic champion. I am incredibly fortunate to train a horse of his calibre. This race was very tactical, and I was a little worried, but when he found his stride and entered the home straight, it was simply incredible to watch, and I am very lucky to have him. This is his fifth consecutive Group 1 victory. He is the best racehorse in the world, and he now enjoys an outstanding reputation.

So I felt a lot of pressure today, and we are ready to continue the season with him. He is a horse who has never let us down — he is a true champion."

Princess Zahra Aga Khan, owner and breeder of Calandagan:

"West Wind Blows gave us a fright for a moment, but when Calandagan unleashed his turn of foot, it was an incredible moment. We hope he can continue for a long time yet. He has given us wonderful emotions. I think he will race in Europe in the summer, and after that we may consider another trip to Japan, but for now we must savour this important victory."

Mickaël Barzalona, jockey of Calandagan:

"He is an incredible horse. He has his own way of doing things, but he always gives everything at the finish. You have to trust him. He is every jockey's dream. I feel so fortunate to ride him and grateful to be part of this team."