



**QATAR
PRIX**

**DU JOCKEY
CLUB**

DIMANCHE
31 MAI



HIPPODROME DE CHANTILLY

ENTRÉE
À PARTIR

5€

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-12
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Press release

Thursday, 28 May 2026

Qatar Prix du Jockey Club

The three contenders from Irish trainer Aidan O'Brien as he bids to retain his title



On Thursday, France Galop concluded its series of press conferences dedicated to the 2026 edition of the Qatar Prix du Jockey Club (Group 1, the highest international level). This major classic race in world Flat racing, first run in 1833, will take place on Sunday, 31 May 2026, at Chantilly Racecourse.

Run over 2,100 metres, this prestigious race is open to three-year-old colts and fillies. It offers €1.5 million in prize money.

The final media session notably highlighted the credentials of the Irish colts Constitution River, Hawk Mountain and Montreal, in the presence of their trainer Aidan O'Brien.

Bred in France at Haras du Cadran on behalf of LG Bloodstock (Gérard Laboureau) and purchased for €400,000 at the Arqana sales in Deauville, Constitution River, who will be ridden by Ryan Moore, will be among the favourites, on the strength of his three wins from four starts, including his latest victory in the Dee Stakes (L), a traditional trial for the Epsom Derby, the English counterpart to the Qatar Prix du Jockey Club.

Hawk Mountain, who will be ridden by Christophe Soumillon, comes into the race off a win in the Prix de Guiche (Group 3), having already shown top-level ability at two. The Prix de Guiche has produced several winners of the Qatar Prix du Jockey Club, including, most recently, Vadeni in 2022 and Almanzor in 2016.

Finally, Montreal, partnered by Wayne Lordan, finished second in the Prix de Suresnes (Listed), won by another leading Qatar Prix du Jockey Club contender, Dolmalan.

Aidan O'Brien seeks to retain his title

The son of Irish farmers, Aidan O'Brien set up as a trainer at the age of twenty-three. He saddled his first runner on 7 June 1993 — and the horse won. He went on to dominate Irish National Hunt racing and won the Champion Trainer title on several occasions. In 1996, he was approached by John Magnier to succeed Vincent O'Brien [his namesake, with no family relation] at Ballydoyle, Europe's largest private training centre, located in Ireland. He thus became the trainer for Coolmore, the international superpower spanning Ireland, the United States and Australia, renowned as a true factory for champions and future stallions.

Aidan O'Brien has recorded nearly 450 Group 1 victories on the Flat, across nine countries, four continents and both hemispheres. He has won the title of leading Flat trainer in Ireland 28 times, as he begins his 34th season. He has won the Qatar Prix du Jockey Club twice: in 2021 with St Mark's Basilica, and last year with Camille Pissarro.

On Constitution River

"During the final race of his two-year-old season, he suffered a small crack. It was not serious, but we simply felt that he needed to be given time. That is why he did not run between August 2025 and May 2026. As for his comeback race, we felt Chester was the ideal place, because after that he would have had the option of going either to Epsom or to Chantilly.

"At two, he only raced over 1,400 metres. He seemed to stay the 2,100 metres well at Chester, but it is a very flat track, with turns all the time. He also has not run on a right-handed track, so that represents an additional challenge.

"Looking ahead, it is quite possible that he could stay 2,400 metres. We will find that out later, but we think Sunday is already a sufficient test, a further step for him, to see what he is capable of doing.

"He has drawn stall 15, out of 16 runners. Chantilly is a very tactical track. I don't know whether any other Jockey Club winners have come from such a wide draw! But that is how it is. Had he been drawn low, he might have found himself boxed in. It will probably be a little more difficult, perhaps, tactically for Ryan. When the stalls open, he will no doubt have to make a lot of quick decisions about what he is going to do."

On Hawk Mountain

"Hawk Mountain has always been aimed at the Qatar Prix du Jockey Club. He won his two races at the Curragh very easily at two, including a Group 2, before winning the Futurity Trophy (Group 1) at Doncaster. So we have always had a very high opinion of him, really. He was entered in the Craven Stakes for his return, but we decided to wait with him. In the end, he went to Chantilly to run in the Prix de Guiche (Group 3). Christophe Soumillon was very happy with him. He simply said that he still found him very babyish. We had put cheekpieces on him. And when he got to the front, he simply lifted his head and wandered a little. So Christophe advised trying a pair of blinkers, and that is what we are going to do.

"He has a slightly more favourable draw (11) than Constitution River. Christophe Soumillon will decide what he wants to do. He knows the horse and has ridden him on this track, and we always think that is a big advantage."

On Montreal

"We were delighted with his run in the Prix de Suresnes (Listed), where he was beaten only a head by Dolmalan. He had run only twice at two.

"He had an easy race on his debut, then won easily the next time.

"We are looking forward to seeing him too. He has drawn stall 8. Wayne Lordan will decide what he should do. He is straightforward and has already run on the track, which we always consider to be a major advantage."

On the Jockey Club distance

"Now, there is the Irish Derby over a very demanding 2,400 metres, the Epsom Derby over 2,400 metres, and the Qatar Prix du Jockey Club over 2,100 metres. That clearly gives everyone an option. I think the Qatar Prix du Jockey Club is a race that has worked very well for breeders and for the horses who take part in it. It is a very prestigious race. And its profile has probably become stronger now, while we had two other derbies over 2,400 metres. To win over 2,100 metres at Chantilly, you generally need a horse with a lot of speed. We try to place the horses according to their aptitude, and this Jockey Club over 2,100 metres really gives us an additional option."

On the choice of Chantilly trials

"We try to find the best possible preparations. That is why Constitution River went to Chester, to keep all options open. The other two were able to discover the layout at Chantilly. It is not our usual approach, but we always try to adjust things, to change them, to improve them, and we will see what works for us and what does not."

On the instructions given to the jockeys

"Before the race, we talk about many different scenarios. When the stalls open, if one of those scenarios does not work, the jockeys have to change. So we leave them free: we are always happy for them to change their minds or do what they feel is necessary."



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