

GRAND PRIX DE SAINT-CLOUD

**DIMANCHE
5 JUILLET
2026**

**HIPPODROME
DE SAINT-CLOUD**

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Press Release

Sunday, July 5, 2026

Sunday, July 5, 2026 – Saint-Cloud Racecourse

Calandagan wins a second Grand Prix de Saint-Cloud

By winning a second Grand Prix de Saint-Cloud (Group 1, the highest level of competition in Thoroughbred racing) and recording his sixth Group 1 victory, the French-trained Calandagan, the world's highest-rated horse at the end of the 2025 season, lived up to all expectations to the delight of the crowd gathered at Saint-Cloud.



Under glorious sunshine, a large crowd gathered on Sunday at Saint-Cloud's Val d'Or racecourse for the feature event of the meeting. Given the quality of the field, the 2026 renewal was widely regarded as potentially one of the finest 2,400-metre contests staged in Europe this year. And Calandagan, the world's highest-rated horse of 2025, returned to win his second Grand Prix de Saint-Cloud (Gr1) with class and courage. He becomes the

first gelding ever to win the race twice, putting behind him his disappointing effort on heavy ground in the Coronation Cup (Gr1).

The race was run at a very strong pace by the Irish challenger Lambourn. The eventual winner was settled towards the rear of the field and still had a considerable amount of ground to make up at the top of the home straight. He produced his challenge in the closing stages to secure a second Grand Prix de Saint-Cloud (Gr1) for Mickaël Barzalona and Francis-Henri Graffard. It was also a seventh victory in the race for the famous Aga Khan Studs colours.

Cualificar returned to his very best form, finishing a close second after a tremendous battle. Another representative of Francis-Henri Graffard, the filly Sunly ran on well to finish third, producing one of the best performances of her career. The leading overseas runner, Lambourn, finished fifth.

Calandagan will now attempt to defend his title in the King George VI and Queen Elizabeth Stakes (Gr1), a race often regarded as the English summer equivalent of the Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe.

Official result

1st CALANDAGAN (M. Barzalona)

2e CUALIFICAR (P. C. Boudot)

3e SUNLY (C. Keane)

Time: 2:27.27 - **Margins:** Neck – ¾ length – 4 lengths.

Connections' reactions

Princess Zahra Aga Khan, on behalf of Aga Khan Studs, breeder and owner of Calandagan (1st)

"He's a horse we've learned to know well. And when he's last, you obviously start asking yourself questions. Turning for home, I have to admit it was a little stressful. But he's a horse with such strength and determination that if there's another horse in front of him, he'll do everything he possibly can to win. And that's exactly what he did."

Francis-Henri Graffard, trainer of Calandagan (1st), based in Chantilly

"We spent quite a long time discussing the tactics. But in the end I told Mickaël: 'Forget about this race. Just let him enjoy himself. He needs to regain confidence. Ride him for himself—I don't care if we get beaten.' Of course, it's quite incredible to see him so far back during the race. What a horse! He's exceptional. My other runner, Sunly, also ran an extraordinary race. The first three really pulled clear of the rest. If he comes out of the race well, Calandagan will run in the King George."

Mickaël Barzalona, rider of Calandagan (1st), based in Chantilly

"He's incredible. After Epsom, it would have been perfectly understandable if he hadn't bounced back immediately. Instead, he delivered straight away in an extremely demanding race. That certainly didn't make things easy for us. But once he gets into his rhythm... he's incredible, yes."

Louise Benard, Godolphin's representative in France, on Cualificar (2nd)

"He ran a very good race. We were hoping to see the same Cualificar we saw in last year's Prix du Jockey Club. Before the race, we weren't worried. His first two runs of the season had been perfectly respectable. We hoped he would improve for those races, and that's exactly what we saw today. He travelled well throughout and enjoyed a good trip. There was plenty of pace, which suits him, even though the race became a bit stop-start at one stage. His jockey handled that very well. We came here hoping to win, but we're all delighted to finish second behind Calandagan and so close to him. From the outside, I'd say it's reassuring. For us, it's simply confirmation of what we expected. As for what's next, Monsieur Fabre will decide. He's a horse who performs well over this distance and isn't particularly dependent on the ground."

Francis-Henri Graffard, trainer of Sunly (3rd), based in Chantilly

"She ran a terrific race. She looked magnificent in the paddock. Sunly enjoyed a perfect trip just behind the leaders and finished strongly. At one point I even thought she might win. The Prix Vermeille was already one of the options, but the Yorkshire Oaks are also a possibility. She's a very late-maturing filly. The day she was beaten in the Prix de Malleret, her jockey was riding her for the first time and circumstances were against her. She's a filly I've always held in very high regard. Today, on good ground over 2,400 metres, she fully confirmed her ability. Based on her previous form, she fully deserved her chance at this level."

The Grand Prix de Saint-Cloud, the third leg of the ARC RACES series



The feature race of the day, the Grand Prix de Saint-Cloud, is the third leg of the ARC RACES series, an eight-race circuit leading to the Qatar Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe. Winners of these qualifying races, provided they meet the race conditions, earn a Wild Card for the world's greatest middle-distance race in the autumn.