

QATAR PRIX DE L'ARC DE TRIOMPHE

LES MEILLEURS CHEVAUX AU MONDE

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Press Release

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QATAR PRIX DE L'ARC DE TRIOMPHE

WEEKEND QATAR PRIX JEAN-LUC LAGARDÈRE

**Amusingly pulls off the feat of beating
the colts and gives France its first Group
1 victory of the weekend**



The filly Amusingly produced a dazzling display of class to win the Qatar Prix Jean-Luc Lagardère, a Group 1 – the highest level of horseracing – open to two-year-old colts and fillies.

The only filly in the field, Amusingly was still last entering the home straight. Switched out by her jockey, Colin Keane, she then asserted her superiority over the opposition in

authoritative fashion. She finished one and a quarter lengths ahead of Ireland's Folsom Blues. Another Irish runner, Man's Best Friend, completed the podium in third, a further one and three-quarter lengths behind.

You have to go back to 2017, when the race was held at Chantilly due to renovation work at ParisLongchamp, and the victory of Happily to find the last filly to win the race. Looking solely at editions staged at ParisLongchamp, the wait goes back forty years: the last filly to win there was Danishkada, in 1986.

Amusingly is trained by Francis-Henri Graffard. The Chantilly-based trainer was recording his first victory in the race. Amusingly was bred by Juddmonte, whose colours she also carries. This is the fourth victory for the Juddmonte silks in the race, following those of the colts Tenby (1992), American Post (2003) and Full Mast (2014).

Amusingly therefore gives the French training ranks their first Group 1 victory of the weekend for thoroughbreds.

Technical result

QATAR PRIX JEAN-LUC LAGARDÈRE

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1st AMUSINGLY (C. Keane)

2nd FOLSOM BLUES (M. Barzalona)

3rd MAN'S BEST FRIEND (R.-L. Moore)

Time: 1'19"40. Margins: 1 1/4 – 1 3/4 – SHORT HEAD

Connections' reactions

Francis-Henri Graffard, trainer of Amusingly (1st), Chantilly (Oise)

"It was a big responsibility to supplement Amusingly for the Lagardère. But I think it is the trainer's role to take that kind of risk. Often, you are a little bit on your own when making this type of decision. That is what I like about my job. Because if it doesn't work, I have to think about how I can improve or work out where the problem lies. If it works out like it did today, then you savour the moment."

"Honestly, I did it on instinct. I really thought she had the speed for this distance. I was genuinely afraid that I might have got it wrong. Last night, I was really frustrated not to have won with Sunly, so I wanted to break the ice! This is a great victory today!"

"My mistake was thinking she was going to be my Marcel Boussac filly, when in fact she wasn't, but fortunately we were able to put that right. Honestly, I don't know what her programme will be from here. Next year, we could consider races such as the Commonwealth Cup, but we also need to look at the programme and find the races that suit her best, even if that means racing over a straight course."

Colin Keane, jockey of Amusingly (1st)

"The decision to drop her back in trip was a collective one. Last time, we simply felt that the final 100 metres were a bit too much for her. She is a filly with a lot of class and a lot of speed. In the Prix d'Aumale, she probably pulled a little too hard that day. She was

much more relaxed today. She went to post in a much more relaxed manner. She was less fresh and less tense than last time."

Joseph O'Brien, trainer of Folsom Blues (2nd), Ireland

"It was another very good performance from Folsom Blues. The winner looks really special. Folsom Blues ran remarkably well and he is a very exciting horse for the future. Obviously, he was coming back fairly quickly after his last run, but I have no excuses to make. I am really very pleased with his performance. I think the filly benefited from a really favourable race setup.

"We were hoping another runner would take us a little further into the race. So we really contributed to giving her a good trip, but she looks like a very special filly. And as for our horse, we know he is a special colt too. That is exactly what these Group 1 races for two-year-olds are all about: seeing the best horses take each other on.

"He is a horse for sprinting or the mile. We will probably consider the Classic route and then decide whether we stay at a mile or come back to sprinting. But he is a 'fast' horse who could stay 1,600 metres.

"Regarding the decision not to wait for the Dewhurst in a few days' time, we felt he was in good form at home and that the conditions and configuration of this race suited him. I am pleased that we made that choice."

Aidan O'Brien, trainer of Man's Best Friend (3rd), Ireland

"I think Man's Best Friend produced the best performance of his career. He ran a really good race and this opens up a new scenario for next season. We will see over the coming days whether his two-year-old campaign ends here, but from what he has shown us, I think he will be stepped up in trip during his three-year-old season. He could have a good career as a miler."