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48H DE L'OBSTACLE – Auteuil

PRIX LA HAYE JOUSSELIN

Kolokico Battles Like a Gladiator



A magnificent battle unfolded over the 5,500 metres of the Prix La Haye Jousselin, which turned into a gladiatorial contest on ground made extremely testing by the rain! Kolokico, who had opened up a lead after jumping the rail ditch and fence, held off Royal Saga's challenge all the way to the line, while Lacokokeldy finished third, a length and a quarter behind.

Runner-up in last year's Grand Steeple-Chase de Paris, Kolokico had finished fifth on his latest outing in the Prix Héros XII. The step up in distance and the softer ground played to the strengths of this outstanding stayer, whose stamina seems inexhaustible.

He provided a first Prix La Haye Jousselin victory for his jockey, James Reveley, who is set to take up training at the beginning of next year and is expected to ride only very occasionally thereafter, mainly aboard horses from his own yard.

Kolokico is trained by Emmanuel Clayeux, based in Vaumas in the Allier department. This was also the trainer's first victory in this Group 1 contest.

The horse is owned by Lord Daresbury in partnership with his breeders, Jacques Cyprès and his son Nicolas, who are based in the Nièvre department. Lord Daresbury was Chairman of Aintree Racecourse from 1989 to 2014 and played a significant role in the development of the Grand National, the legendary British steeplechase.

Official Result

1st KOLOKICO (J. Reveley)

2nd ROYAL SAGA (G. Meunier)

3rd LACOKOKELDY (A. Zuliani)

Winning margins: 1¼ lengths, 1¼ lengths.

Reactions from the Connections

Emmanuel Clayeux, trainer of Kolokico (1st), Vaumas (Allier)

"He is a horse whose attitude in his morning work has changed enormously. For some time now, he has been doing the bare minimum, and we had a lot of doubts. We did not know whether he had lost his enthusiasm for work or whether we needed to change something in his preparation. Some of his gallops had reassured me, while others had been rather less encouraging. We knew today would be the moment of truth. In the end, he showed us that he was cleverer than we were, that he had been playing with our nerves a little, but that he was still the best.

"When Royal Saga came to challenge him after the final fence, I naturally thought he was going to finish second yet again. Finding another gear when challenged has not always been his strongest point. But the ground was so demanding that everyone was struggling towards the finish. Royal Saga also found it difficult to quicken. And our horse showed more fighting spirit than ever before. Ultimately, we got the job done, even though we had wondered whether we had prepared him in the right way.

"Personally, I do not have any particular dreams. My main objective is longevity. I try to maintain my yard at more or less the same level, and the big victories come when I have the horses capable of winning them. I do not set myself specific targets, because I think the more targets you set, the less effectively you work. I am still here after twenty-five or thirty years in the profession, and I hope to carry on under the same conditions, without eventually having to leave by the back door."

James Reveley, jockey of Kolokico (1st)

"It is wonderful to be able to finish on a weekend like this, especially with Emmanuel Clayeux, who has supported me throughout almost my entire career. This was one of the

few major races still missing from my record. And it is fantastic to win it with this horse, who has finished second so many times. He really deserved this victory.

"He is always capable of finding something extra when challenged, but sometimes it comes too late: another horse has already gone past him, and he cannot get back in front. Today, everything went perfectly. It really was a dream race."

Dominique Bressou, trainer of Royal Saga (2nd), Dragey (Manche)

"We thought we had a chance, but the mistake at the medium open ditch proved costly. He had jumped the rail ditch well, but on landing he hesitated slightly, and Gabin (Meunier, his jockey) had to get him going again. His season is now over, as he has no further entries. I think he will remain in training, although we have not discussed it yet."

François Nicolle, trainer of Lacokokeldy (3rd), Saint-Augustin (Charente-Maritime)

"Her connections made the right decision in choosing to run today, because the mare has produced a magnificent performance. It is incredible! Now, provided her breeder agrees, I think we should give her a proper break so that she can have a good rest. Next year, she has earned her place in the Grand Steeple-Chase de Paris. And apparently, her breeder agrees!"

Daniela Mele, trainer of Johnny Roque (4th), based in Gavray (Manche)

"He loves heavy ground! I ran him because Mr Papot told me to enter him. I didn't think he had a chance, but in the end, he was right! We've struck gold this afternoon. I'm delighted. For me, it's as good as a victory!"

François Pamart, co-trainer of Bon Garçon (5th), Kilomètre Illimité (7th) and Toscana du Berlais (pulled up), based at the Royan-La Palmyre training centre (Charente-Maritime)

"Bon Garçon ran another very good race today. It's a shame he has such a tendency to jump to his left, as that puts him at a slight disadvantage, but there is absolutely nothing to fault in his performance. The ground doesn't bother him either. He's only six and still needs to build up his stamina over longer distances.

"Kilomètre Illimité was trying this distance for the first time. He will improve with time, and things should fall into place naturally.

"They will now both have a holiday. It's difficult to race again after such a demanding effort, so we're going to give them a good rest and we'll see them again next year."

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