



PRESS RELEASE

AN HONOUR AND A PRIVILEGE – THE ROLEX SERIES 2026 GETS UNDERWAY AT THE WINTER EQUESTRIAN FESTIVAL - ROLEX FINALE WEEK

Geneva, 19 March 2026 – Next week, the Rolex Series 2026 gets underway at the Winter Equestrian Festival - Rolex Finale Week held at Wellington International in Wellington, Florida, USA. The Rolex Series unites seven of the world's most prestigious show jumping events, and the highlight of each of them is the Rolex Grand Prix.

"It's an honour and a privilege to have the lead-off be here at the Winter Equestrian Festival," Laura Kraut (60) – Team USA's leading lady rider – says. "The Rolex Series unites some of the best competitions in the world, that I try to target when I am planning my show schedule."

Launching the Rolex Series 2026 at the Winter Equestrian Festival during its flagship event Rolex Finale Week, from 24–29 March, the renowned Florida venue will be bringing together the world's top-ranked horses and riders. The event will culminate in Saturday's Rolex US Equestrian Open Grand Prix, which takes place under the floodlights of Wellington International's magnificent main arena. The forty best pairs from Thursday and Friday's qualifying competitions will be competing in the Rolex US Equestrian Open Grand Prix, set at the height of 1.60m. In 2024 and 2025, Germany's Christian Kukuk and Checker 47 – the 2024 Olympic Champions – took the titles. Will one of the host nation's riders manage to claim the victory in this year's edition?

From the Winter Equestrian Festival, the Rolex Series will move on to CSIO Roma Piazza di Siena, Italy, between 27–31 May, then to Jumping International de La Baule – Officiel de France on 11–14 June, and further on to the south of Sweden for Falsterbo Horse Show from 8–12 July. Jumping International de Dinard on the

coast of Brittany, France, is the next stop from 27 July–2 August, before RDS Dublin Horse Show in the Irish capital is host to the penultimate event between 4–9 August. The Brussels Stephex Masters in Belgium will conclude the Rolex Series between 26–30 August.

Part of the sport's history

“We're very excited to have the opportunity to be able to compete in it,” Kraut says about the athletes' perspective on the Rolex Series. “The Rolex Series unites prestigious venues that have variety, and I feel like they're part of the history of our sport – from Dublin to Dinard to La Baule...”

“The last week here at the Winter Equestrian Festival has historically always been a big event, but the sponsorship from Rolex and the Grand Prix prize money being increased to \$1,000,000 this year is bringing an added element of importance,” Kraut says about the Rolex Series' first competition of 2026. “I think myself and all my fellow competitors are really targeting that Saturday night. The crowd here is enormous and the atmosphere is so electric. It's probably one of the most exciting events of the year. Wellington International has done a great job over the last 15 years of creating a fan base and the people who come to watch understand how important the Rolex Grand Prix is.”

A true championship track

To step to the top of the podium in the Rolex US Equestrian Open Grand Prix, the athletes will first have to solve the challenges set by FEI course designer Guilherme Jorge, who is responsible for the courses during the Rolex Finale Week.

“Being part of the Rolex Series, with the Rolex US Equestrian Open Grand Prix as the last Grand Prix to conclude twelve weeks of showing at the Winter Equestrian Festival, adds a lot to the competition,” Jorge says. “I think it is a very nice feature for the Winter Equestrian Festival to be included in the Rolex Series.”

“I am expecting a top group of horses and riders, and the idea is to build a course according to the starting field and to the prize money – and even more so, to the standard of the Rolex Series. It will be a true championship track,” Jorge concludes.

Key facts of the Rolex US Equestrian Open Grand Prix

Number of starters: 40

Grand Prix qualifiers:

- CSI5* 1.55m Table A over two rounds on Thursday, 26 March – top 30 qualify for the Rolex Grand Prix
- CSI5* 1.50m Table A over one round against the clock on Friday, 27 March – top 10 qualify for the Rolex Grand Prix

Course height: 1.60m

Course designer: Guilherme Jorge

Prize money: 1 million USD

WINNERS OF THE ROLEX US EQUESTRIAN OPEN GRAND PRIX

2015 McLain Ward – HH Carlos Z (USA)

2016 Ben Maher – Saren (GBR)

2017 Sergio Alvarez Moya – Charmeur (ESP)

2018 Margie Engle – Royce (USA)

2019 McLain Ward – HH Azur (USA)

2021 Daniel Deusser – Killer Queen (GER)

2022 Ashlee Bond – Karoline of Ballmore (USA)

2023 Richard Vogel – Cepano Baloubet (GER)

2024 Christian Kukuk – Checker 47 (GER)

2025 Christian Kukuk – Checker 47 (GER)

About the Rolex Series

The Rolex Series brings together seven of the world's most prestigious show jumping events, each of them supported by Rolex. The highlight of each of these events is the Rolex Grand Prix, where the best horses and riders in the world compete for seven of the most coveted Grand Prix-titles in the sport of show jumping.

United through the Rolex Series, which was launched in 2024, these seven prestigious events all have their own distinctive qualities but also share certain common denominators. Firstly, each of the events that are part of the Rolex Series honours the heritage and traditions that so uniquely characterize the sport of show jumping. Furthermore, the venues that make up the series – many of them with a rich equestrian history – offer facilities and infrastructure which are globally renowned. The seven venues are also all especially valued for their highly

enthusiastic and knowledgeable spectators who create an unparalleled atmosphere known to make horses and riders perform at their absolute best.

Rolex Series Events 2026

Winter Equestrian Festival - Rolex Finale Week | March 24-29, 2026

CSIO Roma Piazza di Siena | May 27-31, 2026

Jumping International de La Baule - Officiel de France | June 11-14, 2026

Falsterbo Horse Show | July 8-12, 2026

Jumping International de Dinard | July 30-August 2, 2026

RDS Dublin Horse Show | August 5-9, 2026

Brussels Stephex Masters | August 26-30, 2026

PRESS CONTACT

Noémie Renard | +33 (0)7 83 07 19 18 | press@rolexseries-equestrian.com

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