



PRESS RELEASE

WORLD-CLASS FIELD OF RIDERS READY FOR THE FIRST ROLEX SERIES EVENT OF THE YEAR, AT THE WINTER EQUESTRIAN FESTIVAL - ROLEX FINALE WEEK

Geneva, 24 March 2026 – This 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 esteemed show jumping events, and the highlight of each of them is the Rolex Grand Prix.

The Rolex US Equestrian Open Grand Prix will mark the start of the Rolex Series 2026, and takes place on Saturday, March 28, at 7.30 PM local time – under the floodlights of Wellington International's magnificent main arena. The forty best pairs from Thursday and Friday's qualifying competitions will be taking part in the \$1,000,000 CSI5* 1.60m Rolex US Equestrian Open Grand Prix, where Christian Kukuk (GER) will be defending his titles from 2025 and 2024.

A world-class field of athletes will be competing at the Winter Equestrian Festival - Rolex Finale Week. Among them are:

World no. 2 Kent Farrington (USA) – Kent Farrington is one of America's top riders. He is a former world no. 1, and has a team silver medal from the 2016 Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro and a team bronze medal from the 2014 World Equestrian Games in Caen, as well as multiple medals from the Pan American Games.

World no. 3 Ben Maher (GBR) – Ben Maher is a team gold medallist from the 2024 and 2012 Olympic Games and won the individual gold at the 2020 Olympic Games in Tokyo where he was riding Explosion W. Maher has multiple medals from the European Championships: Team gold from 2013, individual silver from

2013 and 2019, as well as team silver from 2025 and team bronze from 2011 and 2019. Maher is a former winner of the Rolex Grand Prix at the Winter Equestrian Festival - Rolex Finale Week.

World no. 4 Richard Vogel (GER) – Richard Vogel is the reigning European Champion with his phenomenal stallion United Touch S, and is also a former winner of the Rolex Grand Prix at the Winter Equestrian Festival - Rolex Finale Week. Vogel recently won the Rolex Grand Slam Major at The Dutch Masters, where he also was partnered with United Touch S.

World no. 6 Christian Kukuk (GER) – Christian Kukuk is the title defender in the Rolex US Equestrian Open Grand Prix, and also reigning Olympic Champion with his individual gold medal from the 2024 Olympic Games in Paris where he was riding Checker 47. Kukuk has a team silver and a team bronze from the Europeans in 2021 and 2025.

World no. 7 Nina Mallevaey (FRA) – With her 26 years, Nina Mallevaey is the youngest rider within the world's Top 10. Mallevaey won last year's Rolex Grand Prix at the Brussels Stephex Masters with Dynastie de Beaufour and is hence one of the title defenders in this year's Rolex Series.

World no. 9 Shane Sweetnam (IRL) – Shane Sweetnam has for years been a stalwart on the Irish team. He has won team gold and team silver at the European Championships in 2017 and 2023 respectively.

World no. 10 McLain Ward (USA) – McLain Ward is one of America's most decorated riders, with two team gold medals and three team silver medals from the Olympic Games, as well as team gold, team silver and team bronze from the World Equestrian Games. Ward also has multiple medals from the Pan American Games. He has won the Rolex Grand Prix at the Winter Equestrian Festival twice during his long and illustrious career.

Other big names on the entry list for the Winter Equestrian Festival - Rolex Finale Week include **Rodrigo Pessoa** (BRA) – 2004 Olympic Champion and 1998 World Champion, **Laura Kraut** (USA) – 2024 Olympic team silver medallist and next to Ward one of the USA's most decorated riders with multiple championship medals, as well as **Karl Cook** (USA) – 2024 Olympic team silver medallist.

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.

[MASTERLIST](#)

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 respected 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 esteemed 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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