



# THE GLOBAL CHAMPIONS TOUR OF MONACO

Monte Carlo, June 2010

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BETS WERE ON? NO, BETS WERE WITHDRAWN. IT WAS HARD TO WIN AS THE GLOBAL CHAMPIONS TOUR (GCT) CONTINUED ON WITH ITS SERIES OF COMPETITIONS DURING A THREE DAY SHOW JUMPING EVENT IN MONACO.

FROM JUNE 24<sup>TH</sup> TILL THE 26<sup>TH</sup>, THE COMPETITIONS WERE NEATLY FROSTED WITH HIGHLY DISTINGUISHED RIDERS COMPETING FOR SUCCESS ON A TIGHT COURSE PERFECTLY DESIGNED AND METICULOUSLY PREPARED BY INTERNATIONAL COURSE DESIGNER, GERMANY'S FRANK ROTHENBERGER WHOM HAD ALL THE TOP 30 WORLD-RANKED RIDERS AGREE ON ONE FACT, "THAT SHOW RING WAS AWFULLY TIGHT AND THOSE COURSES WERE ROUGHLY TECHNICAL".

LOCATED ON A REFRESHING AND RELAXING SETTING ALONGSIDE PORT HERCULE, AND SITUATED AT THE FOOT OF THE ROCHER'S STEEP ROCK RAMPARTS, WITH FACILITIES OF THE HIGHEST STANDARD, THE RIDING ARENA PRESENTED THE TOP RIDERS ON THE BEST MOUNTS, WITH THE SEA AND WORLD'S MOST BEAUTIFUL YACHTS ON ONE SIDE, AND THE PRINCE'S PALACE ON THE OTHER.

WITH THE FOOTBALL WORLD CUP GAMES SHOWING ON THE SCREENS IN THE RIDER'S LOUNGE, THE FIRST TWO DAYS OF THE COMPETITION MOVED ON SUBTLY WITH SWITZERLAND'S STEVE GUERDAT RIDING TRESOR AND WINNING THE 150CM ROUND OF THE FIRST DAY AND THE ALL NEW MOTHER, GERMANY'S MEREDITH MICHAELS-BEERBAUM RIDING CHECKMATE 4 AND WINNING THE 150CM ROUND OF THE SECOND DAY. THE FINAL DAY OF THE COMPETITIONS BROUGHT ABOUT THE FIVE STAR GRAND PRIX WITH 44 TOP RIDERS COMPETING IN TWO ROUNDS AND ONE JUMP OFF TO 160CM FENCES MAKING IT HARD TO PICK A WINNER.



▲ HRH Princess Caroline of Monaco & Jan Tops

## JAN TOPS, NETHERLANDS

*President of the GCT:*

**On organisation:** "Monaco already has a show jumping event and we thought of bringing the GCT here five years ago. I personally think we have matured after all these years and at the moment, it looks good!"

**On win expectations:** "It's such a thin fine line. Anyone can win since all the best are here. Even amateurs, why those can also win. We have seen that in Estoril in 2009. I have to say this is the beauty of the GCT; we expect the

unexpected."

**On sponsors:** "Every event has its own sponsors. It's important for us that the conditions and the prize money meet the requirements. Here in Monaco we have Massimo Dutti, Libya Sahara Gate, Triumph Project, Eurosport and Jaeger-Le Coultre as sponsors which give the event its own character. The arena here is small, it has a special atmosphere by the harbour and I'd like to keep it as such!"



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**STEVE GUERDAT, SWITZERLAND**  
*Day 1 winner of Prix Jumping  
International de Monte Carlo, 150cm:*

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**On Monaco:** "I try to compete at all GCT events everytime I have the chance. I've been coming to Monaco for the past five years which is pretty amazing given it's in the middle of the city, everything is tiny and tight, it's much like a holiday and I think it's a good opportunity for sponsors to be relaxing whilst seeing their horses jump."

**On levels of competition:** "The horses need to be able to jump such a tight course and it just happens that in any show, any horse can knock down a certain amount of fences. Concentration is important."

**THE EVENT** saw competitions from Arab countries represented by Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon and Qatar.

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**GHASSAN KASSAR, JORDAN:**

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**On challenges:** "This is my first time here. I did not really face many challenges while competing; fences are fences. The arena is just too tight and there isn't enough time to pick up the pace. It's good to be here in Europe since during the summer season, we as Arabs do not compete much due to the heat in our region. I

had four faults only today during the Grand Prix of the 130cm course and I am happy with that since my nine year old horse Top Quality is still gaining some experience."

**On levels of competition:** "The invitational show, 130cm classes, had some good competitions. Some riders did better than others. At the end of the day, we all need experienced horses."

**ON TO THE FINAL**, the two time GCT Monaco winner, the USA's Richard Spooner riding Cristallo minimised his chances to win a third title when he didn't qualify for the second round. With Spooner out, the first round saw only 14 riders clearing within the time allowed and with four more at only one fault. The latter started off the second round but lady luck was not on their side when they knocked down more fences.

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**ALVARO DE MIRANDA, BRAZIL:**

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**On the show jumping:** "The competition is amazing with all the best riders here performing in a special place. It's the summer season and we are competing right next to the sea. We jump all year long in big arenas and then we find ourselves in a tight one like the one you see."

**On preparations:** "I think all riders are prepared for a tough final and cannot risk not being prepared! We all have to be at our best and all the best are here. Did you see the start list? It's hard to point a finger at a winner. I think this is amazing for the sport."

**FROM ALL 14**, eye brows were raised when the 60 second jump off presented six riders: Sweden's Rolf-Goran Bengtsson riding Ninja La Silla, Spain's Sergio Alvares Moya riding his new stallion Action-Breaker, Belgium's Jos Lansink riding Cavalor Valentina, Ireland's Jessica Kurten riding Castle Forbes Libertina, Germany's Meredith Michaels-Beerbaum riding Shutterfly, and finally Brazil's Bernardo Alves riding Bridgit.

The all composed Olympic medallist Bengtsson and the young Moya, both jumping flawlessly in both rounds, decided to continue carefully in the second round but took some twisty turns to save time except were not

▼ De Miranda Prix Monte Carlo SBM, 150cm  
2nd place winner





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### ROLF GORAN-BENGTSSON, SWEDEN:

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"It's always tough when one goes out first; you don't really know what to do. You either go fast but knock down a fence, or go slow but not make the time. My tactics were not to overdo the course and stay clear, but I'm afraid I was a little too careful at one turn. After two big rounds, we saw two double clears which says something about the technicality of the course."

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### SERGIO ALVAREZ MOYA, SPAIN:

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"I was not the fastest. This is a new horse so I'm happy to have such a result. I am very lucky to be riding with such a selection of top riders on such top horses."



▲ Goran-Bengtsson, Prix du Prince Albert II de Monaco International Jumping Competition 160cm 4th place winner

▼ Moya, Prix du Prince Albert II de Monaco International Jumping Competition 160cm 5th place winner







© GCT

▲ *Lansink stayed careful & came in 3rd at the Grand Prix*

Lansink and Cavalor who seriously make the crowd pause as they come in with their warrior-like aura - also decided to stay careful and try to jump clear without going for time - cleared in 40.21 seconds.

Now, the crowds just love her; that Kurten who always pumps up adrenaline levels, went in fast to make the Looney Toons Speedy Gonzalez seem overrated. She and Castle Forbes set the bets on them when they cleared in 35.29 seconds.

Two more riders had to push their horses hard to beat that time.

The world's favourite Michaels-Beerbaum and Shutterfly made crowds withdraw their bets when they immediately speeded in. With only one fraction of a second short (35.30 seconds), Shutterfly knocked down the last fence just to the crowd's dismay.

He was absolutely forgotten.



© GCT

▲ *Michaels-Beerbaum knocked down the last fence*


Last to come in was Alves and Bridgit. The man must have whispered to Bridgit the most romantic words to ensure that she believes they could both win. It worked. They jumped impeccably in 35.27 seconds and won the 2010 Prix Du Albert just to the surprise of Alves himself as he immediately looked at his entourage to ask if he had beaten Kurten's time.

**JESSICA KURTEN, IRELAND**  
*Prix du Prince Albert II de Monaco International Jumping Competition 160cm 2nd place winner:*

"I have to admit that after my error in Cannes which was completely my fault, I remembered what my father always told me, "you cannot gallop into every fence. Sometimes you will make it and sometimes, more often, you won't." Although I was more careful this week, and as I jumped the

last, I knew I would be second even though I was expecting Meredith to be the one to beat me! As for Bernardo's horse, I have been trying to get her from him for the last year, and he wouldn't sell her to me before today, so I think my chances now have become slimmer!"

**BERNARDO ALVES, BRAZIL:**

"Today was the third time my horse has seen a course this big; I didn't know how she would react but she jumped well this week and I had a good feeling about her. I think this is the best horse I have ever ridden; she is fast, careful and has everything you need! I must say the public in Monaco helped me plenty; as I came to the last, they were cheering and whistling so I knew I must keep going and trust my horse to jump the last." 



Brazil's Bernardo Alves & Bridgit,  
winners of Prix du Prince Albert II  
de Monaco International Jumping  
Competition

