



ST MARK'S BASILICA COOLMORE PRIX SAINT-ALARY MOVED TO DIFFERENT DATE IN 2023

Since the reopening of ParisLongchamp in 2018, the St Mark's Basilica Coolmore Prix Saint-Alary, a Group 1 race for three-year-old fillies, has been run, as has long been custom, on the last Sunday of May, three weeks before the Prix de Diane Longines.

However, that date will change in 2023 after the European Pattern Committee validated France Galop's proposal to bring the race forward by two weeks. It will now be incorporated into the Emirates Poules d'Essai meeting, which takes place on Sunday, 14 May 2023 at ParisLongchamp.

There are several reasons for this date change:

- By running it five weeks before the Prix de Diane Longines, it reinforces its ambition to become a major prep race for the fillies' classic.
- It will gain more exposure by being included on a card that already features two classic races (Emirates Poule d'Essai des Poulains & Emirates Poule d'Essai des Pouliches) that are closely followed around the world and that consistently attract French and international runners.
- The two extra weeks between the Prix Saint-Alary and the Prix de Diane (which takes place on Sunday, 18 June at Chantilly) will allow it to become a major prep race for the fillies' classic and hence secure the rating of the "Saint-Alary", whose Group 1 status is currently under threat.

A Group 1 race at risk of downgrade

The European Pattern Committee (EPC) controls the classification of black type races in Europe, in order to uphold the quality of the fields. The last three years, the average rating (based on the highest handicap rating during the year of the first four home) for the Prix Saint-Alary was 108,9 (Handicap rating 49,3) while the required rating is 110 (Handicap rating 49,9).

Thus, as the last three renewals were below the required rating of a Group 1 race for three-year-old fillies, the "Saint-Alary" is under threat to be downgraded (following a majority vote by the EPC members) in 2024.

It is in this context and with the aim to secure a higher rating that the France Galop teams wanted to change the date and to develop its role as a major prep race for the Prix de Diane Longines.

A central position in the programme

As the St Mark's Basilica Coolmore Prix Saint-Alary has been brought forward by two weeks, the racing programme for three-year-old fillies has been adapted accordingly. Thus, the Prix Saint-Alary has been "saved" from any competing Group races in France and over similar distances during the month of May.

Two major roads lead to the Prix Saint-Alary:

- The Prix Vanteaux (Gr 3 over 1800m), which takes place on the first day of the season at ParisLongchamp on Sunday, 9 April 2023
- The Prix Pénélope (Gr 3 over 2100m) on 1 April and the Prix Cléopâtre (Gr 3 over 2100m) on 21 April. Both races take place at the Saint-Cloud racecourse.

A date that has proved popular in the past

During the refurbishment of ParisLongchamp, the 2016 and 2017 renewals of the Prix Saint-Alary had already featured on the Emirates Poules d'Essai card at Deauville.

It proved a success in terms of runners: 9 in 2016, 11 in 2017. The rating for these two events was also higher: 111,3 in 2016 and 111 in 2017 (110 is required).

France Galop Press Contact :

Hélène Dupuy – Email : hdupuy@france-galop.com – Tel. : 04 49 10 22 10