



QATAR PRIX DE L'ARC DE TRIOMPHE LE SPECTACLE TRIOMPHE TOUJOURS

30 SEPTEMBRE - 1^{ER} OCTOBRE

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Press release

28th September 2023

QATAR PRIX DE L'ARC DE TRIOMPHE

What the trainers are saying and the draw, in tabulated form, of the 15 runners which are expected to come under starter's orders

The world's best horses will be on display at ParisLongchamp racecourse on Sunday 1 October in the Qatar Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe, a Group 1 race which is the pinnacle of excellence in world horse racing. The Qatar Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe, which celebrates its 102nd birthday this year, is quite simply the greatest race in the world for English thoroughbreds. Since 2015, the International Federation of Horse Racing Authorities, in tandem with Longines, designate the world's top race annually: and the Qatar Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe has come up trumps five times in eight years!

Yet again, given that it has attracted runners from France, Britain, Ireland, Germany and Japan, the Qatar Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe will showcase the very best of what the international horse racing scene has to offer.

Won last year by the 5-year-old mare Alpinista, who has since been retired to the paddocks, this year's Qatar Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe promises to be particularly open. Expected to head the betting are a 3-year-old colt trained in France (Deauville), Ace Impact, and the respective 6-y-old and 4-y-old British raiders, Hukum and Westover, with the 5-y-old Japanese mare, Through Seven Seas, cast in the role of potential party pooper.

Ace Impact puts Deauville (Calvados) in the pole position as favourite

The last horse French-trained horse to win the Qatar Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe was Sottsass. The 2020 winner was trained at Deauville by Jean-Claude Rouget. The same professional will again be represented this year, this time by the probable favourite: Ace Impact, a 3-year-old colt as yet unbeaten in five starts.

Ace Impact was bred by Mme Waltraut Spanner. He is co-owned by Serge Stempniak and Gousserie Racing, the racing wing of the Chehboub family.

He was elevated to the rank of the top French 3-y-old colt by winning the Qatar Prix du Jockey-Club at the beginning of June. Ace Impact made his racecourse debut towards the end of January, during the course of the Cagnes-sur-Mer meeting. He then followed up by winning a Class 1 race at Bordeaux-Le Bouscat in April, before coming up trumps again in the Prix de Suresnes (Listed), which is a

stepping-stone to the Qatar Prix du Jockey-Club. This summer, during the course of the Deauville Barrière Meeting, he yet again showed the extent of his talent by producing a flying finish to win the Prix Guillaume d'Ornano, a Group 2 race run over 2,000 metres (10f). Ace Impact has not raced since Deauville, and he therefore heads into Sunday's race as a fresh horse on what promises to be the biggest test of his young career.

Cristian Demuro has ridden the colt in all his races, and he boasts a prior win in the Qatar Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe. As he guided Sottsass to victory in 2020!

> DEAUVILLE - Jean-Claude Rouget, the trainer of Ace Impact

Quote sourced from the France Galop press conference

« The colt returned to action after a break in the Prix Guillaume d'Ornano on August 15, which is just over six weeks prior to the Arc. I have decided to bank totally on the freshness card rather than tackling either the Irish Champion Stakes or the Prix Niel. The horse has been on the go since January, which marked his debut. It's unusual for a classic colt, but I didn't want him to begin his career last November [2022]. So it was important to give him time between the 'Guillaume d'Ornano and the Qatar Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe. Similarly, his last serious workout took place last week. His workout on Monday wasn't as demanding, but, then again, I preferred to work him at the very beginning of the week rather than on Tuesday, so as to give him an extra day's rest... The forecast good to soft ground should suit everyone. Ace Impact, given his stride devouring-action, should relish such conditions. Before the race, we can't be absolutely certain that he'll stay the trip. However, the manner in which he finishes his races, allied to the fact that his sire had the required stamina, lend me to feel fairly optimistic on this subject. The fact that he's discovering Longchamp for the first time isn't a worry: as the colt is a straight-forward ride once he settles. Furthermore, many horses have won the Arc without prior experience of Longchamp! As for the older horses... it's true that he has no form lines in which he can be measured against them. Although the 3kg (7lb) weight for age allowance at this stage of the season is important. The race holds no particular terrors! ! I'm just hoping for a race run at a proper gallop so that the hold-up horses like him can get into the race... It's rare for an Arc to be devoid of pace: everyone is jockeying for a good position at the start of the race, and mindful, too, that the pace can steady when the field reach the 'petit bois' part of the course... »

Simca Mille: the other Deauville standard bearer

Another trainer similarly based at Deauville, Stéphane Wattel, will rely on the apple of his eye, Simca Mille, in this edition of the Qatar Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe of which he is the co-owner in tandem with the horse's breeder, the Haras de la Perelle, a stud based not far from Deauville, and belonging to the German national Jurgen Winter.

Simca Mille provided Stéphane Wattel with his first Group 1 victory by winning the Grosser Preis von Berlin during the summer at the main expense of Sisfahan, with whom he is due to renew rivalry on Sunday. The 4-year-old Simca Mille is at the peak of his form, and he loves ParisLongchamp where he was second to Onesto in the Grand Prix de Paris last season. He will be ridden by the rising star of the French jockey scene, Alexis Pouchin, who, at the tender age of 23, will be riding for the first time in the Qatar Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe. Stéphane Wattel boasts a prior runner in the race, as Tôt ou Tard represented him in the 1995 renewal.

> DEAUVILLE - Stéphane Wattel, the trainer of Simca Mille)

Quote sourced from the France Galop press conference

« Simca Mille was very much a late developer. I made the mistake of giving him his racecourse introduction on ground that was verging on bottomless. He showed his true mettle in 2022, at the age

of three, when he won a conditions race at Angers in very good style. He subsequently won the Prix du Lys Longines, a Group 3 race over 2,400 meters (12f), which got his career up and running. He also won the Qatar Prix Niel, a Qatar Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe prep, but we hadn't entered him for the latter race in 2022. In order to do so he would have had to be supplemented, and he was only a 3-year-old at the time, which would have entailed racing on heavy ground which he hates... So we ran him in the Japan Cup instead. For some reason that I still can't fathom, he ran very poorly in Japan. This year, we had the Qatar Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe in mind for him. He has only raced four times this year to ensure that he is prime condition, and he has won three times, having provided me with my first career Group 1 victory which came about in Germany, and in the wake of a career spanning 30 years! He has only been beaten by Irésine, a fantastic horse in his own right, in the Prix Ganay, this year.

On Sunday, he will be racing on his favorite ground and ideal course. He's a very intelligent horse and a straight-forward ride. It is only during the pre-race parade when he can get stirred up. We will be clashing with horses which are theoretically superior to him, but it is a great opportunity to take them on in optimal conditions.

He will be ridden by the young jockey Alexis Pouchin, who won his first group aboard Simca Mille in the Prix d'Harcourt, and who, in turn, went on to ride my first Group 1 winner [as a trainer]. He gets along very well with my horses and deserves to ride him in this race.

Simca Mille made his debut in my colours because I had leased him from his owner, Jürgen Winter, in the wake of the colt failing to make his reserve at the sales. When he started to show some quality, I ended the lease arrangement with the colt reverting to his rightful owner, and by way of thanks, he [Jurgen Winter] gave me a 30 per cent stake in the horse. He's a gentleman. I named the horse because I like quirky names. The Simca Mille is undoubtedly the ugliest car to emerge from the French production line, and the main point of its engine was to make a noise... However, I promise that if we finish in the first three on Sunday, it will become my favourite car! »

Chantilly (Oise region) is again well represented

Chantilly is the biggest French training centre. It is therefore not surprising that it has the biggest representation in the Qatar Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe, with three runners hailing from as many different yards. André Fabre, who saddles Place du Carrousel, is the only one of the trio to have already trained an Arc winner. The form shown by the Al Shaqab Racing and Ballylinch Stud representative brooks no discussion. A winner on the 2022 Qatar Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe card when annexing the Prix de l'Opéra Longines, a Group 1 race restricted to fillies and mares, Place du Carrousel continues to show a high level form and is coming off successive group wins: namely the Prix Gontaut-Biron - Hong Kong Jockey Club at Deauville in the summer, before following up in one of the Qatar Arc Trials, the Qatar Prix Foy, in which she stamped her authority.

Trainer Fabrice Chappet will saddle the 4-year-old Onesto, who was tenth in this corresponding race last year. He carries the colours of Gérard Augustin-Normand. The businessman is one of the biggest French owners and he acquired a 50 per cent stake in the colt after his excellent fifth in last year's Qatar Prix du Jockey-Club. It proved to be a successful investment as Onesto went on to capture the Grand Prix de Paris *en route* to finishing an excellent second in the Irish Champion Stakes a few months later. After winding up his 2022 campaign following his seventh in the Japan Cup, Onesto was a creditable fourth on his 2023 return in the Prix du Haras de Fresnay-Le Buffard – Jacques Le Marois, at Deauville during the summer. To fine-tune his preparation for the Qatar Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe,

Onesto returned to Ireland for a second crack at the Irish Champion Stakes – only to finish a disappointing seventh.

Still on the subject of Chantilly, trainer Pascal Bary will saddle Feed The Flame, a 3-year-old colt who carries the colours of the Écurie Jean-Louis Bouchard. Fourth in the Qatar Prix du Jockey-Club, he subsequently proved a brilliant winner of the Grand Prix de Paris: a race run on July 14 over the same course and distance as the Qatar Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe. Feed the Flame is coming off a second in the Qatar Prix Niel (Group 2). This hold-up horse has the advantage of knowing every blade of grass at ParisLongchamp, having won there twice in three prior attempts. For Pascal Bary – still seeking his first win in the race – the tale regarding this colt is all the more endearing, as it represents a bond of friendship forged with Jean-Louis Bouchard and his racing manager Gérard Larrieu which dates back some 40 years. They had their first Arc runners in 1994 with Sierra Madre and Celtic Arms. Almost thirty years later, it is together, in the stands, that they will follow the fortunes of Feed the Flame, a colt who will yet again be entrusted to the experienced hands of jockey Christophe Soumillon.

> Pascal Bary (the trainer Feed the Flame)

Quote sourced from the France Galop press conference

« I think he's capable of winning on Sunday. On a track that rates softer than during the Qatar Arc Trials, he will be more at ease. I can't claim to have an in-depth knowledge of the British raiders, but Ace Impact is, for me, the horse to beat, and he's a hold-up horse too. In the Qatar Prix du Jockey-Club, Ace Impact raced behind Feed the Flame. The trip was too short for my colt, and he finished upsides Marhaba Ya Sanafi, the winner of the Emirates Poule d'Essai des Poulains, and three to four lengths in arrears of Ace Impact.

It was a good performance. In the Qatar Prix Niel, Feed the Flame was a little rusty. It's difficult to race on July 14, before having a break, and then resuming again at the beginning of September. Feed the Flame had a little trouble in finding his feet on a fast track. Having such a horse at the end of my career is something very fortunate. Jean-Louis Bouchard is very upbeat ahead of Sunday, we have a magnificent colt, and are heading to the Qatar Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe with a chance. Obviously, we are heading there with [a mix of] pleasure and enthusiasm. And if not this year, it will be next year! As he will be an even better 4-year-old. »

Hukum carries British hopes

British trainers will be four handed in the race. The two candidates with the best credentials are Hukum and Westover: with both serving up a fantastic duel at Ascot in July during the King George VI and Queen Elizabeth Stakes, a Group 1 race considered to be the British equivalent of the "Arc". This particular battle went the way of the 'miracle' horse Hukum: a reference to the fracture he suffered last year. After a lengthy recovery period, Hukum has emerged even stronger as he is undefeated this year. He will carry the colors of Shadwell, a stable whose founding father was the late Sheikh Hamdan Al Maktoum, and whose daughter, Sheikha Hissa, has taken over the reins following his death two years ago. Shadwell has never won the Qatar Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe before but this concern did breed the 2001 winner Sakhee. As for Westover, who carries the 'Juddmonte' colours (who boast six prior Arc wins with Rainbow Quest, Dancing Brave, Rail Link, Workforce and the dual-winning Enable), and the racing operation associated with the late Prince Khalid Abdullah, he finished sixth in the 2022 Qatar Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe when unsuited by the testing conditions.

> Owen Burrows, the trainer of Hukum

Quote sourced from the France Galop press conference

« We are very happy with his condition. The horse ran at the end of July and his preparation was eased as a result. We were then able to ramp up his training for the very big race that is the Qatar Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe. Ground which rates as good, or good to soft, is ideal as far as he's concerned. Hukum is better than ever this year. He had already progressed in 2022, before his injury which surfaced in the wake of Epsom, and which sidelined him. We resumed again with him this year, and he has never showed so much enthusiasm in his work. For some reason that I cannot explain, he also seems to have acquired more speed as underscored by his win in the Brigadier Gerard Stakes over 2,000 metres (10f). Concerning race tactics, we will certainly be all the wiser once the draw is unveiled. One thing is certain, the race will be very competitive. We narrowly beat Westover in the King George and he ran very well at ParisLongchamp last year on ground that was too soft for him. Ace Impact has the right to be [considered] a crack performer. He has been very impressive to date. Feed the Flame and the Japanese mare Through Seven Seas, narrowly beaten by Equinox, also enter the equation. The bar is a high one and that's normal: as it's the Qatar Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe! »

German challengers with ambition

The 100th edition of the Qatar Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe, run in 2021, went to the surprise package, Torquator Tasso, trained at Mülheim by Marcel Weiss, and owned by the Gestüt Auenquelle. Torquator Tasso became the third German winner of the race - ten years after his compatriot Danedream, who still holds the race record (2'24"49 over 2,400 meters, which equates to an average speed in excess of 60 kms per hour). Henk Grewe, for his part, trains at Cologne. Two of his runners will be out to provide the German racing scene with further success: namely the 3-year-old Mr Hollywood and the 5-year-old Sisfahan. Both have very different profiles: as the former has a preference for soft ground, whereas the latter is a top of the ground type. However, whereas the former is in full bloom, as underscored by his second place in the Grosser Preis Von Baden (Group 1), the latter has yet to reach the winner's circle in almost a year.

A few days ago, Sebastian Weiss, the co-owner of Mr Hollywood in partnership with Wanja Oberhof, announced that a 50 per cent stake in the colt had been sold to His Highness Sheikh Abdullah bin Khalifa Al Thani. So Mr Hollywood will carry the colours of the latter owner on Sunday. As for Sisfahan, bred in France by Guy Pariente, he represents the racing interests of Darius Racing and Michael Motschmann.

Fantastic Moon, the winner of the Qatar Prix Niel, is the third German representative: he was supplemented (a last minute entry fee costing €120,000) by his owners, the Stall Liberty Racing and his trainer, Sarah Steinberg.

> Henk Grewe, the trainer of Mr Hollywood and Sisfahan

Quote sourced from the France Galop press conference

« The decision to tackle the Qatar Prix de l'Arc with Mr Hollywood was taken two weeks ago. It's not often that we have horses good enough to run in the Arc! I would have preferred a heavy or very soft track for him, given that he has sensitive feet, but that won't be the case. He remains capable of acting well on good ground and, yes, I'm confident. I have enjoyed many great victories in tandem with his jockey Bauyrzhan Murzabayev. He rode my first group winner, and the same jockey will provide me with my first Arc winner (laughing)! He rode the colt in his work on Monday and everything went very well. Regarding Sisfahan, he was due to run in Cologne last Sunday but he likes good

ground and it was riding soft there. The Arc is an owner's dream and we're heading in that direction. He will be ridden by Lukas Delozier and in a manner that befits his outsider status. »

Continuous : the sole Irish representative

Ireland is a strong racing nation on the international scene. However, this year, it will have just one representative, and it came perilously close to being totally absent from the Arc this year: that is until Continuous, the colt trained by Aidan O'Brien, one of the world's most successful trainers, was supplemented for the race on Wednesday. It was his victory in the St Leger on 16 September that convinced his connections, namely the Coolmore supremos - surely the most powerful force of its kind in the thoroughbred world - and backed up by its ultra-performing breeding and racing operations - to take this step.

> Aidan O'Brien (the trainer of Continuous)

Quote sourced from the France Galop press conference

« The colt seems in good shape and we're hopeful. He seems tough enough and in good enough shape to face the challenge. Furthermore, his previous races were spaced out time wise. Continuous only raced twice at two. Generally speaking, I would say that we only enter horses for the Qatar Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe which have the most obvious profiles for this, because of the cost element. This is now the team's strategy relative to this race, while entertaining the possibility of supplementing [a horse] if the opportunity arises.

In my opinion, his best career performance came in the Great Voltigeur Stakes at York. With his owners, we therefore had the idea of racing him in the Arc at the back of our minds subject to a good performance in the St Leger, and providing he came out of that race in good order. He's in great shape, and everyone who looks after him is satisfied with him. He has only done two light pieces of work since then. He's straight forward, adapts to all types of ground, can easily hold his position during a race, and has gained in maturity. »

Japan sounds the charge yet again

If there is one nation that is fascinated by the Qatar Arc de Triomphe it's Japan! As the whole nation will be glued to their television screens on Sunday (and some Japanese nationals are even travelling to France!) to support their representative, **Through Seven Seas**. The Japanese have been trying to win our legendary race for a long time: as the first Japanese runner in the Arc was Symboli Speed in 1969.

Although Seven Seas will be ridden by Christophe Lemaire, a French jockey who transferred to Japan where he has enjoyed phenomenal success since 2015. The 5-year-old Through Seven Seas reached a milestone in 2023. A listed winner in January (when ridden by Théo Bachelot), she then easily won a Group 3 handicap at Nakayama (ridden by Christophe Lemaire) in March, before posting a career best performance when a neck second to Equinox in the Takarazuka Kinen (Group 1), having been trapped behind a wall of horses when the final sprint got underway.

> Tomohito Ozeki (the trainer of Through Seven Seas)

Quote sourced from the France Galop press conference

« The travel arrangements from Japan worked out very well and, since her arrival, the mare has bedded-in really well. I wanted to give her one last piece today [Wednesday, 27 September] morning

at the piste des Aigles training track. By way of preparation for this work, she cantered on Sunday morning, which was also a scouting out mission. She has adapted very well and likes Chantilly. We were able to see her stride out in great style at the finish. Through Seven Seas has reached her optimum level as a 5-year-old. In her younger days she showed a lot of temperament, ate little, was very thin and lacked strength. The mare was roughed off for the season after August [2022], and she has strengthened up as a result. I'm very pleased with the weather forecast and the forecast going for Sunday, as it should suit her perfectly. For any trainer, the Arc is a huge goal, which may seem somewhat a bit removed... but it is now staring me right in the face. I believe in the mare. »

> Christophe Lemaire (the jockey of Through Seven Seas)

Quote sourced from the France Galop press conference

« The mare worked on a track which rated very soft track on Wednesday morning [September 27] and we saw, in view of her stride devouring action, that it did not inconvenience her. Her rider had the mare well in hand, and she seemed to me to be very tonic, very fluid in her paces, while still exuding power. I 'm very satisfied with what I saw. I have ridden her in the past and was back in the plate this year when the mare won a Group 3 race. She gave me a big buzz and has come on a bundle compared to previous seasons. After her Group 3 win, she confirmed [favourable impressions] by running second to Equinox in the Takarazuka Kinen, proving that she was up to Group 1 standard in Japan, and we are well aware of the level of Japanese horses, and in particular Equinox. This gives her the right to tackle the Arc and to put on a good show. As a French jockey, winning the Qatar Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe is a dream, and even more so when it's achieved on a Japanese horse, given my connections with that country. That would mean so many things. I'm going to give it my all on Sunday. »

Ground update : heading towards good to soft (3,3) ground on Sunday

The risk of rain in the Parisian region is very low: the probability of rain falling on Thursday and Friday is only 25 per cent, and a tiny amount at that, in the order of between 0 and 2 mm. Furthermore, if the weather forecasts are accurate, and given that no watering of the course is planned, good to soft ground awaits THE showcase event of world horse racing.

Another important parameter revolves around that an eight metre portion of the track has not been in use since July 14. The rail will be moved 18 metres from its usual position on Saturday to maintain the condition of the track, but it will revert to its usual position on Sunday. The open-stretch will come into play on Sunday, namely 450m from the post, and spread over a width of 6m, as is customary each year.

LISTE DES PLACES À LA CORDE / DRAW NUMBER

QATAR PRIX DE L'ARC DE TRIOMPHE 2023

Dimanche 1^{er} octobre – ParisLongchamp

N°	CHEVAL / HORSE	STALLE / STARTING GATE	JOCKEY	ENTRAÎNEUR / TRAINER	PROPRIÉTAIRE / OWNER
1	SISFAHAN	13	L. Delozier	H. Grewe	Darius Racing /M. Motschmann
2	HAYA ZARK	4	G. Mosse	A. Fouassier	Mme Odette Fau
3	ONESTO	9	M. Guyon	F. Chappet	G. Augustin-Normand
4	SIMCA MILLE	15	A. Pouchin	S. Wattel	Haras De La Perelle
5	BAY BRIDGE	6	R. Kingscote	Sir Mr. Stoute	J. Wigan /Ballylinch Stud
6	WESTOVER	1	R. Hornby	RM. Beckett	Juddmonte
7	HUKUM	14	J.V. Crowley	Ol. Burrows	Shadwell Estate Co. Ltd
8	PLACE DU CARROUSEL	11	M. Barzalona	A. Fabre	Al Shaqab Racing /Ballylinch Stud
9	THROUGH SEVEN SEAS	5	C.P. Lemaire	T. Ozeki	Carrot Farm
10	FREE WIND	3	L. Dettori	J & T. Gosden	George Strawbridge
11	MR HOLLYWOOD	10	B. Murzabayev	H. Grewe	Cheikh Al Thani /Oberhof /Weiss
12	FEED THE FLAME	2	C. Soumillon	P. Bary	Ecurie Jean-Louis Bouchard
13	ACE IMPACT	8	C. Demuro	JC. Rouget	Gousserie Racing /S. Stempniak
14	FANTASTIC MOON	12	R. Piechulek	Mme S. Steinberg	Liberty Racing 2021
15	CONTINUOUS	7	R-L. Moore	AP. O'Brien	Smith /Magnier /Tabor /Westerberg

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