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Press release

10 September 2023

QATAR PRIX VERMEILLE - PARISLONGCHAMP **Ireland's Warm Heart snatches an Irish win in the Qatar Prix Vermeille** Results and quotes from connections

The Qatar Prix Vermeille, a prep race for the Qatar Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe but also an objective in its own right in view of its Group 1 status - the highest level in world horseracing - went to the Irish filly Warm Heart, who showed remarkable courage to take up close home and pip the French-trained Mélo Mélo. England's Sea Silk Road was third, whereas the favourite, France's Blue Rose Cen, had to settle for fifth place.

Warm Heart provided Aidan O'Brien with a first success in the Qatar Prix Vermeille. The latter is one of the most successful professionals in the world. She was never initially entered in the Qatar Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe. Her entourage still have the option of supplementing her (a last-minute entry fee costing €120,000) or heading to the Qatar Prix Royallieu or the Prix de l'Opéra Longines, which are two Group 1s races, restricted to the fairer sex, the same weekend.



The technical result

- 1st WARM HEART
Trainer: Aidan O'Brien – Jockey : James Doyle
- 2nd MÉLO MÉLO
Trainer : Francis-Henri Graffard – Jockey : Mickaël Barzalona
- 3rd SEA SILK ROAD
Trainer : William Haggas – Jockey : Tom Marquand

Distances : Short head – 1 1/4l – Short head. Time : 2m'31''29s
Ground: 3,4 (good to soft)

What connections said :

Hermine Bastide, the Coolmore representative, co-owners of Warm Heart (1st) – Ireland

"She loves good ground and is super generous. James Doyle said she hadn't had the easiest of races, and yey she showed a lot of determination. The team will decide the next step."

James Doyle, the jockey of Warm Heart (1st)

"The race was a bit of a trappy contest. Normally, she exits the gates very well but she slipped today, losing her action for a few strides, and so I found myself further back than I would have liked, and a bit fenced-in. They didn't go very fast and I was worried during the race. She showed a lot of determination to come out on top. Once in the lead, she doesn't really stop, but tends to idle a bit and wait for the others, which is what she did in the Yorkshire Oaks, and what she did again today. As for the Arc, her connections will decide. My feeling is that she needs good ground - being a light-actioned sort, and the going is therefore important in this regard. We've already seen editions of the Arc being run on fast ground, it can happen, but it's not common either."

Francis-Henri Graffard, the trainer of Mélo Mélo (2nd) – Chantilly (Oise region)

"Today, we came up against a filly who was really a tough cookie. Furthermore, Mélo Mélo was conceding 3.5kg to the winner, which is a lot. Looking to the future, she'll be even better suited by much softer tracks. In any case, I think she delivered a great performance!"

Tom Marquand, the jockey of Sea Silk Road (3rd) – Great Britain

"I'm very pleased with his performance. She's a super filly. One day, she'll win her Group Group 1 race when all the conditions come right for her. In the Yorkshire Oaks, she had run a little freely, but today I followed the pre-established outlined before the race. She's a classy filly."

Christopher Head, the trainer of Blue Rose Cen (5th) – Chantilly (Oise region)

"It's possible that the season has been a little long for the filly. She was very good order in the first half of the season. We're going to talk to her owner, and see how she recovers so we can look ahead to the future. She should stay in training next year, so we'll certainly be concentrating on her 2024 campaign."

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