



Press Release

Sunday, May 18, 2025

Le Défi des Haras – Grand Steeple-Chase de Paris

**Diamond Carl finally gives leading
Charente-based trainer François Nicolle
his first Grand Steeple-Chase de Paris
win**



"There's now one question journalists won't be able to ask me anymore: When are you going to win the Grand Steeple-Chase de Paris?" said trainer François Nicolle with a smile, just seconds after his charge **Diamond Carl** (Diamond Boy) captured France's most prestigious jumps race on Sunday at Auteuil.

As surprising as it may seem, the renowned professional from Saint-Augustin, near Royan (Charente-Maritime), had never previously won this race — despite a résumé filled with victories in all of France's other top hurdle and chase events.

To win, his jockey Clément Lefebvre — stepping in at the last minute to replace the injured Bertrand Lestrade — rode a textbook waiting race, letting leading contenders **Gran Diose** (Planteur), **Goliath du Rheu** (Castle du Berlais), and **Kolokico** (Cokoriko)

battle it out at the front. Of the trio, Kolokico was the only one able to kick on in the final straight and for a brief moment seemed destined for victory... until Diamond Carl swept past between the final two fences, opening a decisive gap that only grew on the run-in. Behind Diamond Carl and Kolokico, **Grandeur Nature** (Lord du Sud) finished third, having also been ridden patiently.

This win marks the fourth Grand Steeple-Chase de Paris for owners the Papot family, following the victories of **Sel Jem** (2022), **On The Go** (2018), and **Bel La Vie** (2013).

Official result

LE DÉFI DES HARAS – GRAND STEEPLE-CHASE DE PARIS

1st DIAMOND CARL (C. Lefebvre)

2nd KOLOKICO (J. Reveley)

3rd GRANDEUR NATURE (G. Masure)

Time: 7'27"03. Margins: 6 – 8 1/2 – 6.

Quotes

François Nicolle, trainer of Diamond Carl, 1st (Saint-Augustin, Charente-Maritime):

"The last time *Diamond Carl* ran, he had an issue with his withers. We did our job: the osteopath worked on him and got him spot-on. I told Clément not to worry. He also spoke with Bertrand Lestrade, who would have ridden him if not for his injury. Bertrand was very generous and gave him lots of insight. It's a shame for him, but that's racing. *Diamond* had shown a beautiful outline last time. He jumped really well. I didn't see him make a single mistake during the race, which is fantastic. And he's got a real turn of foot. What does this win mean to me? I think I'm going to cry on the podium (laughs). There was huge pressure. But now... I feel better."

Madame Jacques Cyprès, co-owner and breeder of Kolokico, 2nd:

"It's wonderful! We've finished second three times now with Lord Daresbury's colours. We're like little Poulidors, but we still love them! The horse had worked really well, so we said: let's go! At five years old, it's always a question of facing the older horses. But every time we've tried to protect a five-year-old, it hasn't worked out. So my husband and I said: we've got to try. And James Reveley gave him a superb ride."

Lord Daresbury, co-owner of Kolokico, 2nd:

"To do this at five years old is incredible — even exceptional. When the track at Auteuil is like this, it's beautiful. We saw a spectacular race on a spectacular racecourse. I absolutely loved it!"

François Pamart, co-trainer (with Arnaud Chaillé-Chaillé) of Grandeur Nature, 3rd, and Toscana du Berlais, 4th (Royan, Charente-Maritime):

"We're really happy with *Grandeur Nature* (3rd) and *Toscana du Berlais* (4th). Both ran their races, and that's the most important thing. Today, the best horse [*Diamond Carl*] won. *Grandeur Nature* ran a really good race. He's older now, so we chose to ride him more patiently so he could give his all at the end — and that's exactly what he did."

Toscana's performance is really extraordinary because he managed to handle the 6,000 metres. Now both horses will go on holiday and return in the autumn. Running your first Grand Steeple-Chase de Paris as a trainer brings a lot of pressure. But I'm proud."



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