



PRESS RELEASE

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# STARS OF THE 2025 RACING SEASON

## A year of new records and unforgettable moments

The 2025 racing season has now drawn to a close, offering an opportunity to reflect on the women and men who dominated the horse racing scene this year. Based on the official results, we highlight those who stood out on the flat and over jumps, **the leading jockeys, trainers, owners and breeders.**

The 2025 season was filled with resounding confirmations, wonderful surprises and remarkable achievements : a trainer who set new records, another who became champion trainer for the first time, an owner who secured the title of leading owner for the 15<sup>th</sup> consecutive year, not to mention the famous Aga Khan colours that dominated the sport throughout the season. France Galop would like to extend its congratulations to the women and men who propelled the sport to its highest level this year.

Discover the stories of these exceptional individuals who left their mark on the 2025 racing season.

## LEADING TRAINERS IN 2025 (Rankings by prize money earned)

**FLAT RACING– Francis-Henri Graffard breaks all the records !** (Chantilly – Oise)



2025 marked a turning point for racehorse trainer Francis-Henri Graffard, following an exceptional season characterized by unprecedented achievements.

Based in Chantilly, at the France Galop managed training centre, he overwhelmingly dominated the flat trainers' rankings, amassing a record €10.4 million in prize money and recording 170 victories in France alone!

In addition, he set a new record for the **most Group 1 wins by a French**

**trainer** in a single year, with 14 victories at this highest level in flat racing. Nine of those wins came in France, while five were achieved internationally in Germany, UK, USA and

Japan. The previous record had been held for many years by André Fabre, who is also based in Chantilly.

Among Francis-Henri Graffard's most remarkable performances this season are his victories in France, including the **Prix de Diane Longines** (Gezora) and the **Qatar Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe** (Daryz), the race that each autumn attracts the world's best horses to compete at ParisLongchamp. A few weeks after that impressive home victory, his horses went on to lift the **Breeders' Cup Filly & Mare Turf** in America (Gezora) and the **Japan Cup** (Calandagan), one of Japan's most prestigious races. In fact, Calandagan not only became the first French horse in 38 years to lift this important race, but he did it in great style, **breaking not only the track record, but recording the fastest time worldwide** over the 2,400 meter distance!

Francis-Henri Graffard trains over **200 horses**, owned by many French, but also numerous international owners. His exceptional talent has drawn the attention of one of the most prestigious racing colours in the world, those of the Aga Khan (green silks with red epaulettes and a green cap). Since 2021, this young professional has trained around 80 horses for **The Aga Khan Studs**. Under his guidance, in 2025 these historic silks enjoyed a particularly successful season at the highest level, in France and abroad.

## **JUMP RACING- Mickaël Seror takes the championship after a late surge !** (Chantilly - Oise)



Already in the spotlight this season thanks to the record-breaking achievements of flat trainer Francis-Henri Graffard, the Chantilly training centre also features at the forefront of jump racing, this time thanks to Mickaël Seror, who claimed his first championship title following a decisive late season surge!

For the first time in his career, the young professional topped the jump trainer's rankings

with nearly €4.4 million in prize money, narrowly edging out François Nicolle (€4.3 million), based in the south-west of France, who had won the 2025 Grand Steeple-Chase de Paris and had been crowned French jump racing champion trainer on numerous occasions!

**Mickaël Seror enjoyed the most successful season of his career in 2025:** He celebrated 93 victories National Hunt victories, and his horses were placed 439 times (2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>), while his combined flat and jump tally stands at 115 victories and nearly 530 places. In fact, while his core activity is now focused on jump racing, Mickaël Seror continues to train a string of flat horses as well.

He started training in 2010 and first broke into the top ten of the jump trainers' rankings in 2023 when he finished sixth. Since the start of his training career, Mickaël Seror has recorded a total of 540 victories, including 407 National Hunt victories and 133 flat victories, as well as nearly 1 160 places (2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>).

# LEADING OWNERS AND TRAINERS IN 2025

(Rankings by prize money and breeders' premiums)

## FLAT RACING- LEADING OWNER AND BREEDER

**An outstanding year for the prestigious Aga Khan Studs colours and breeding operation** (Oise et Calvados)



By the close of 2025, The Aga Khan Studs had claimed the titles of leading owner and breeder in flat racing, reaffirming the enduring excellence and consistency of this truly iconic name in international racing.

This sporting success has a particularly poignant meaning, as the year 2025 had begun in sorrow with the passing of His Highness the Aga Khan IV, who in 1960 had taken over the breeding and racing operation founded in 1921 by his grandfather. His daughter, Princess Zahra Aga Khan, who had been involved in racing since 1990 and who is now at the helm, along with the entire team, including Nemone Routh, Racing Manager in France and Director of The Aga Khan Studs, approached this season as a continuous tribute to the vision, elegance and legacy of this eminent figure in the world of racing.

Marked by a series of top-level victories at the highest level, this exceptional year was highlighted in France by the 8th victory of the Aga Khan colours in the Qatar Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe, as well as on the international stage. In Japan, Calandagan's victory in the Japan Cup captured widespread attention. Bred by the The Aga Khan Studs and running in their colours, Calandagan was named 2025 Cartier Horse of the year at their annual ceremony in London.

In 2025, The Aga Khan Studs was crowned Champion Flat racing owner thanks to nearly €6.3 million earned in prize money from 78 victories and 131 places. The Aga Khan Studs also topped the breeders' rankings, after earning nearly €600 000 in breeders' premiums thanks to 100 victories and 232 places achieved by horses bred at their stud.



## JUMP RACING- LEADING OWNER

**The Papot family, leading owner for the 15<sup>th</sup> time!**



Once again in 2025, the Papot family reaffirmed its position as a leading presence in jump racing. For the 15th consecutive year, with manager Xavier Papot at the helm, the family retained its place as the leading owner in jump racing. This outstanding consistency also reflects the success of the family's breeding operation, which has produced many of the horses that carry the Papot silks.

Horse racing is a shared passion within the Papot family, spanning generations from grandparents to grandchildren. They all come together for the major racing events, proudly wearing attire that mirrors their iconic silks that are light green with royal blue diamonds, royal blue sleeves and cap.

In 2025, the family who is originally from Brittany, enjoyed once again some unforgettable moments, highlighted by another success in the **Grand Steeple-Chase de Paris**, one of the most sought-after events in the jump racing calendar.

In 2025, the Papot family owned horses earned more than €2.7 million in prize money, thanks to 43 victories and 107 places. Since registering their colours in 1985, they have been carried to victory more than 1270 times in jump races, including 177 Grade 1 races, the highest level in racing. They have also been successful in 107 flat races.



## JUMP RACING – LEADING BREEDER

### Haras de Saint-Voir – Champion breeders of jump horses since 2020 (Allier)

In 2025, the Haras de Saint-Voir has once again established itself as the leading breeder of jump horses after earning €280 000 in breeders' premiums, thanks to 52 victories and 195 places obtained by horses bred at their stud.

For three generations, the Haras de Saint-Voir has been a leading authority in breeding jump horses and has consistently featured at the top of the rankings. The stud has in fact been champion breeders for the past six years, from 2020 to 2025.

The stud, which regularly produces National Hunt champions, is situated on a vast estate in the Allier region and is also renowned for its flat horses. Today, the stud is run by Nicolas de Lageneste.

The Haras de Saint-Voir also enjoyed a fabulous 2025 season as an owner. It sits in second place in the owners' rankings with €1.6 million earned in prize money thanks to 54 victories and 207 places (2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>). In 2023, the Haras de Saint-Voir achieved the remarkable distinction of leading the breeders and owner's rankings in jump racing.



## LEADING JOCKEYS IN 2025

Each year, the « Cravache d'Or » (golden whip) recognises the jockey, female or male, (horse racing is one of the rare sports where men and women compete against each other) who has won most races in a season.

### JUMP RACING – CHAMPION JOCKEY

#### Lucas Zuliani, Cravache d'Or jump jockeys 2025

At just 22, Lucas Zuliani enjoyed a breakthrough season in 2025, claiming his first **Cravache d'Or** in jump racing. For the first time in his career, he passed the 100-win mark in a single season and added nearly 300 places (2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup>) to his tally.

After missing out by only 9 wins on his first cravache d'or last year, the jump jockey's championship had been his main target this season.



Competing at the highest level, Lucas continues the family tradition, as his older brother Angelo was crowned champion jump jockey in 2020. The two brothers, who were born in the Maine-et-Loire region, often ride against each other.

Lucas started riding under orders in 2019 and has since won more than 350 races and has been placed nearly 590 times (2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>).



## JUMP RACING – FEMALE JOCKEY

### Bryony Frost, Cravache d'Or Female jump jockeys 2025



On the female jump jockeys' side, **Bryony Frost is crowned female jump jockey for the first time, thanks** to 28 victories and 114 places (2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>).

From a very young age, horses have been a central part of her life. The daughter and sister of English jockeys, she was the first female jockey to lift a Grade 1 (highest level in racing) at the famous Cheltenham Festival in the UK in 2019.

After riding 300 winners, including 5 Grade 1 races in the UK, she decided to move to France in 2024.

After her first full season in France in 2025, she is already leading the female jockeys and features in 18th position in the overall rankings (men and women together).

## FLAT RACING – LEADING JOCKEY (Official rankings since 31<sup>st</sup> October)

### Cristian Demuro, Cravache d'Or Flat racing 2025

Cristian Demuro had to wait until 2025 to claim his first French cravache d'or (217 victories in 2025), despite being one of the finest Italian jockeys of his generation.

His career began in Milan in 2009. In 2011, at the tender age of 19, he won his first Italian championship, repeating the feat in 2012 after setting a national record by riding 264 victories in a single season.

In 2013, he moved to France where he was quickly taken on by Jean-Claude Rouget, one of the country's most prominent trainers, with whom he soon achieved success at the highest level of the competition.

Today, 33-year-old Cristian Demuro has become a household name not only in France but also abroad. This year he spent his winter riding in Japan before returning to France for the 2026 season.



## FLAT RACING- FEMALE JOCKEY

### Marie Vélon, Cravache d'Or flat 2025

The suspense lasted until the very end of the season! The female flat racing Cravache d'Or 2025 was decided in a gripping duel between two top riders, with **Marie Vélon ultimately prevailing** to extend her record of success.

Opposing her was the experienced **Delphine Santiago**, a benchmark in the sport with **already eleven titles** to her name. However, the new generation of female riders definitively had its say.

At 26, **Marie Vélon**, firmly at the top of the women's rankings since 2020, was competing for a sixth consecutive **Cravache d'Or**, a target that reflects her consistency and determination.



The 2025 season saw the young jockey confirm her status with an outstanding season, where she recorded **76 wins** and **427 places** after riding in close to **900 races in France**.

These stats also earned her a **13th place in the overall rankings** (men and women together), highlighting her major role in the landscape of French flat racing.

## INTERNATIONAL - Japan

### Christophe Lemaire crowned Champion jockey for the 8th time in Japan!

The skills of French jockeys are also renowned abroad.



Based in Japan since 2015, in 2025 French jockey Christophe Lemaire was crowned Champion flat jockey in Japan for the eighth time, which is truly a remarkable achievement.

Christophe Lemaire, who is originally from Gouvieux, a town neighbouring onto Chantilly (Oise), has been a pioneer in Japan.

In 2015, together with his Italian colleague Mirco Demuro, he became the first foreign born jockey to hold a full Japanese licence.

In earlier days, and during the quiet time of the season in France, he had regularly spent several months in Japan. In 2017, only two years after moving permanently to Japan, he became the first foreign born jockey to be crowned champion jockey in the country of the rising sun.

Since then, he has dominated the championship. In 2018, he even set a new record when he won 215 races in a single season. Today, there are only two jockeys who have passed the magic figure of 200 victories in a season: Christophe Lemaire and Yutaka Take, the most famous of Japanese jockeys and a true sporting legend.

Lying in second place of the championship at the beginning of November, Christophe Lemaire was back in the lead by the end of 2025 when he recorded his 140<sup>th</sup> victory of the season. His closest opponents were Keita Tosaki with 132 victories and Kohei Matsuyama with 128 victories.

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