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40  
year  
ANNIVERSARY





a winner is a dreamer  
who never gives up

**NELSON MANDELA**

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# Long live the IJRC!

by Alban Poudret

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**Born in Geneva, where it is holding its birthday celebrations, the IJRC is 40 years old. Here's to a long and healthy life for the IJRC!**

40 years have passed! It's time for the party to commence – and it's good that it's happening in Geneva, where it all began!

It was on April 2 1977, within the framework of the CSIO of Geneva, then organised at the Patinoire des Vernets, that the International Jumping Riders Club first met.

Much time has passed since the days of founding fathers, Broome, Schockemöhle, D'Inzeo, Pessoa and Mathy Jr., but it was then that the professional sport began to take on its current shape. The season no longer ran over just eight months but lasted throughout the year and, before long, the winter circuit of the World Cup would be launched, completing the loop!

Some professionals, mostly British, were excluded from the 1976 Montreal Olympic Games and the 1977 European Championships in Vienna, and we were forced to make some changes, adapting our sport to the real world rather than regretting





the bygone days, charming at times, but somewhat elitist and militaristic in ethics and style.

Yet today's problems are more similar than may appear at first sight to those faced at the inception of the club – of which the much-missed Raimondo d'Inzeo was the first President and David Broome (one of the British riders excluded from the 1976 Olympics) the second. The world has certainly changed and the 'business' has developed at a high speed -- but the concerns of the riders remain the same.

Riders may not wish to live purely off their passion any more, but they dream of a world where sport is harmonious – not just based on money, which has unfortunately taken over: and that's a fact. Instead, they hope that fairness, fair play and the well-being of the horse will be guaranteed. Is the goal of the Club not to make the voices of both riders and horses heard at the same time?

The riders have shown a great openness in accepting more quickly and unanimously than expected the banning of hind boots – just one small step towards improving the horses' well-being.

Along with the current president, Switzerland's Christina Liebherr, influential members such as the four Olympic champions Ludger Beerbaum, Rodrigo Pessoa, Steve Guerdat and Kevin Staut, often make their voices heard. The fact remains that IJRC's spokesperson is most often Eleonora Moroni Ottaviani, its director for twenty years and the organiser of several CSI events, as well as the 1998 World Equestrian Games in Rome. Eleonora is an independent woman of great integrity, guided by her passion. And it's a joy to organize the staging of the Top 10 Final at Palexpo in Geneva alongside her.

The IJRC's missions, in addition to the Rolex IJRC Top 10 Final and technical aspects of the World Show Jumping Rankings, include the governance and development of the



sport. Over the years, riders have achieved great victories, such as the reintroduction of the Table C (hunting course) in the European and World Equestrian Games or the abandonment of the standardisation of entry fees following the North American model (which would have resulted in vastly increased costs for European riders); but they have also had to swallow bitter pills, such as the decision taken by the FEI and the IOC to compete in the 2020 Tokyo Olympics with only three riders, and no drop score.

And there are still many battles left to fight, like the defence of the Nations Cups, the beating heart of our sport: sublime events, devalued and threatened by more lucrative circuits. Or, again, regarding the World Rankings, though, on this subject the voice of the IJRC should hold most sway.

At the last IJRC General Assembly, held on August 26, 2017, during the European Championships in Gothenburg, important decisions were made regarding the future of

our sport. In the presence of more than one hundred people, including riders and members of the Club, the President of the Equestrian Federation International (FEI) Ingmar De Vos, and its Secretary General Sabrina Ibanez, the IJRC voted unanimously on a proposal strongly supported by its committee, namely:

- To limit the possibility of earning World Ranking points to once per day
- To only award World Ranking points at CSI 5\* events if the following criteria regarding the percentage of invitations are adequately met: 60% in descending order of World Rankings of the riders entered at the event (including home riders); 20% for the National Federation of the host country (NF); and 20% for the Organising Committee (OC)

The IJRC does not want to include circuits other than the Nations Cup and the World Cup, the two historic circuits of the FEI, where selections are made by the chefs d'équipe (and the National Federations), which benefit



QUALIFIED RIDERS DURING THE OPENING CEREMONY OF THE FIRST WORLD CUP FINAL IN GÖTEBORG

from exception(s) to the above rules. Other circuits or competitions should not be able to deviate from these rules, especially the maximum 20% of invitations.

The multiplication of paying places is not a solution for the future of an Olympic sport such as ours, especially at the 5\* level. It could even kill our sport and the future of the most talented riders, if left unchecked. In Gothenburg, the 2012 Olympic Champion Steve Guerdat (London 2012), reminded those present that:

“Notre but est d’attribuer des points aux ranking uniquement lors de concours offrant du bon sport et pas à des manifestations ouvertes aux cavaliers ayant les moyens d’acheter leur participation. Nous devons trouver le meilleur système pour atteindre notre but et pro-

téger le vrai sport.” (“Our goal is to attribute ranking points only to shows which present good sport and not at events open to athletes who have the means to pay to compete. We must find the best way to achieve our goal and protect true sport.”)

On this subject, we should ask: should we promote an elitist sport, through sometimes very expensive paying circuits (like drivers in Formula One)? Or should we defend the “open” world of Nations Cups, where the chefs d’équipe select through meritocracy? Riders need to be more vocal in the FEI commissions on these points.

These will be some of the most pressing concerns over the coming months and years. Resolving each of them is crucial to guarantee an Olympic future for our sport.



**United by sport  
since 1977.  
We believe in the  
athletes.**



# 1977 Membership List

AS PER JUNE 25, 1977

<b>AUSTRIA</b>	=	<b>1 MEMBER</b>
37	BACON	KEVIN
<b>AUSTRIA</b>	=	<b>5 MEMBERS</b>
41	FRÜHMANN	THOMAS
42	SIMON	HUGO
63	WASSIBAUER	RÜDIGER
64	BOOR	BORIS
65	KULZEBOS	HENK
<b>BELGIUM</b>	=	<b>7 MEMBERS</b>
1	MATHY	
10	WAUTERS	
21	VAN PAESSCHEN	STANNY
22	VAN PAESSCHEN	EVA
23	CUEPPER	HENRY EDGAR
24	DAOUT	HERVÉ
25	TYTECA	FERDI
<b>BRASIL</b>	=	<b>1 MEMBER</b>
2	PESSOA	NELSON
<b>FRANCE</b>	=	<b>5 MEMBERS</b>
8	ROZIER	MARCEL
12	PAROT	HUBERT
13	CHABROL	JEROME
48	CONSTANT	DANIEL
49	ROGUET	MARC
<b>GERMANY</b>	=	<b>16 MEMBERS</b>
4	STEENKEN	HARTWIG
9	SCHOCKEMÖHLE	PAUL
14	LIGGES	FRITZ
15	SNOEK	HENDRIK
16	GÖSSING	LUTZ
17	MEHLKOPF	WILLIBERG
18	ERNST	JÜRGEN
29	SCHMIDT	HAUKE
30	VON BUCHWALDT	ACHAZ
31	WINKLER	HANS GÜNTER
32	SCHOCKEMÖHLE	ALWIN
33	SÖNKSEN	SÖNKE
40	SCHULZE-SIEHOFF	HENDRIK
54	KOOF	NORBERT
55	WILTFANG	GERD
68	MERKEL	LUTZ

<b>GREAT BRITAIN</b>	=	<b>10 MEMBERS</b>
3	SMITH	HARVEY
5	BROOME	DAVID
7	JOHNSEY	DEBBIE
26	BRADLEY	CAROLINE
27	RICKETTS	DEREK
28	PYRAH	MALCOM
35	FLETCHER	GRAHAM
36	WHITAKER	JOHN
57	ROBESON	PETER
66	NEWBERY	TONY
<b>IRELAND</b>	=	<b>2 MEMBERS</b>
38	MACKEN	EDDIE
67	POWER	CON
<b>ITALY</b>	=	<b>4 MEMBERS</b>
11	D'INZEO	RAIMONDO
43	ORLANDI	VITTORIO
50	MANCINELLI	GRAZIANO
51	NUTI	GIORGIO
<b>NETHERLANDS</b>	=	<b>7 MEMBERS</b>
19	MEIER	GERD
34	NOOREN	HENK
39	HEINS	JOHANN
56	HORN	HANS
58	WOUTERS V.D. OUDENWIJER	HARRY
61	EBBEN	ANTOON
70	NELCHIOR	LEON
<b>SPAIN</b>	=	<b>5 MEMBERS</b>
6	ALVAREZ CERVERA	LUIS
44	SEGOVIA	ALFONSO
45	ROSILLO	JOSÉ MIGUEL
46	RIVERA	JAIME
47	AMOROS	EDUARDO
<b>SWITZERLAND</b>	=	<b>7 MEMBERS</b>
20	ETTER	GERHARD
52	WEIER	PAUL
53	WEIER	MONICA
59	FRIEDLI	JÜRG
60	MELLIGER	WILLI
62	GABATHULER	WALTER
69	MAEDER	KURT

Today the IJRC has more than 500 riders jumping in top international events.

**01**

**IJRC  
HISTORY**

The International Jumping Riders Club since 1977 is the voice of show jumping riders from around the world.



# International Jumping Riders Club

**The International Jumping Riders Club (IJRC) is the voice of show jumping riders from around the world. It is open, with voting rights, to all riders who have taken part in the Olympic Games, World or Continental Championships, and at least five Nation Cups, and to riders ranked in the best 300. Membership is open, without voting rights, to supporters, fans and riders ranked in the best 3,000.**

## HISTORY

In April 1977 a group of 25 international riders, including David Broome, Raimondo D'Inzeo, brothers Paul and Alwin Schockemöhle and Nelson Pessoa were asked to establish a club that could allow riders to form a group. On 24 June 1977 the IJRC was launched in Vienna.

In the same year Raimondo D'Inzeo was elected as the first President followed by David Broome, and Franke Sloothaak.

In February 1999, former president Franke Sloothaak and Secretary General Eric Waulter asked lawyer Gianrico Moor and Dr. Eleonora Moroni Ottaviani to prepare the club's articles of association in a manner more suited to the

times that would guarantee their practicality. In June 1999, the general meeting of the Riders' Club approved the new articles of association in Aachen. The meeting elected a new president, **Cayetano Martinez de Irujo**. After the presidency of Rodrigo Pessoa, in August 2013 the IJRC appointed the Olympic Jumping athlete Christina Liebherr (SUI), as the first woman to become President of the Club.

IJRC is recognized as the world's premier riders' association, representing the interests of all riders within the International Equestrian Federation (FEI) and sporting institutions across the globe.

In 2008 with Princess Haya of Jordan as FEI President, the IJRC and FEI signed an important agreement, recognising the IJRC as the owner of the Ranking List Formula.

In 2014 the IJRC signed with the FEI the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) thanks to which the IJRC works closely with the FEI to expand the Olympic disciplines of Jumping.

The then President Christina Liebherr commented the MoU saying: "Our club strongly believes that the co-operation



between our riders, event organisers and the governing body for our sport, the FEI, is key in bringing equestrian sport to a higher level. This is the start of a new way of working with the FEI and the athletes we represent, as we focus on the global development of Jumping." It was just two years before this agreement, that the FEI decided to use Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) to better define its relationship with the different stakeholders. The MOUs cover universal issues such as FEI recognition, FEI Rules and Regulations, horse welfare, code of ethics, commitment to democratic processes, consultation, FEI General Assembly, FEI Sports Forum and meetings, governing law, dispute resolution, communication, and implementation. MOUs have already been signed with WHW, organisers and officials. Although recognition by the FEI does not entail voting rights at the FEI General Assembly, the MOUs formalise the relationship with the FEI, giving a voice to organisations working with the FEI in the development of equestrian sport.

The same year the IJRC signed another important Memorandum of Understanding with the North American Riders Group, (NARG), thanks to which, the riders would have had a unique voice in front of the

International Federation for Equestrian Sports and in the world.

The same year (2014) at the beginning of April, the Club cooperated with a new program conceived for talented young show jumpers, under the patronage of the European Equestrian Federation (EEF) and the support of Rolex, called: "The Young Riders Academy" developed by Athenaeum, that involved a lot of former IJRC members.

Athenaeum is a non-profit association founded by a group of professionals with a passion for horses. The project is the result of a complex reasoning: the world of sports is evolving fast and athletes must become managers of themselves to achieve their ambitions. The equestrian sport, for reasons related to its nature, has lagged a lot behind the others.

The above scenario inspired the Athenaeum working group, and the young Riders Academy is the result.

This program will give five talented riders between the ages of 18 and 23 the chance to get six months of training and boarding at a well-known professional stable with no costs. On top of that, the program also includes

**1977****1977**

On 24 June 1977 the International Jumping Riders Club (IJRC) was launched in Vienna (by David Broome, Raimondo D'Inzeo, Paul Schockomöhle and Nelson Pessoa)

Raimondo D'Inzeo was the first President followed by David Broome and Franke Sloothaak

**1998****1998**

Under the presidency of Franke Sloothaak, the owners gained the right to two free passes to all FEI events.

**1999****1999**

In February 1999 the club's articles were prepared by lawyer Gianrico Moor and Dr. Eleonora Ottaviani. In June 1999, the general meeting of the Riders' Club approved the new articles of the association in Aachen. In June 1999: new President Cayetano Martinez de Irujo: with him and with Donna Pilar de Borbone as FEI President, the IJRC and FEI started a constructive relationship. The IJRC had the right to nominate its own representative in the Jumping Committee (this right was cancelled in 2014).

**2008****2008**

With Princess Haya of Jordan as FEI President, the IJRC and FEI signed an important agreement, recognising the IJRC as the owner of the Ranking List Formula.

**2010****2010**

Under Cayetano's presidency, thanks to the support of DOKR President Breido Graf zu Rantzau, the IJRC gained the right to attend the FEI Group 2 meetings (during the FEI General Assembly in Kuala Lumpur). This started a relationship with all the NFs of the Group 2. Hanfrid Haring (President of Group 2) welcomed IJRC representatives Emile Hendrix and Eleonora Ottaviani. This was a major breakthrough that marked the beginning of a dialogue and a collaboration with the national federations.

**2011****2011**

The club won the right to have a rider in the FEI and on the Executive Board with the right to vote. The first representative of the Equestrian Athletes was Kevin Staut.

**2012****2012**

A IJRC representative could become a Board Member with the right to vote in the EEF (European Equestrian Federation).

**2014****2014**

Memorandum of Understanding was signed between FEI and IJRC. Memorandum of Understanding was signed between IJRC and NARG.

professional education in communication, business and economics, veterinary and legal practice related to show jumping. The objective is to develop future champions as well as potential managers of this sport.

**IJRC MISSION**

The club strongly believes that the co-operation between riders, organizers and the federal body is the key to ensuring a high level future for equestrian sport.

Among its aims, the club lists:

- Promotion of the image of show jumping;
- Promotion of the ideals of sportsmanship and fair play;
- Co-operation with the competent national authorities towards new norms and regulations;

- Support for national and international associations and international show jumping organizers in all their efforts;
- Putting the riders' views in matters of rules and regulations before the governing body;
- Protecting the image and interests of the riders who respect the above objectives.

**IJRC ACHIEVEMENTS**

The IJRC has fought in favour of the sport on behalf of the riders and has shown engagement in its work through goals achieved.

The IJRC Club now has a rider representative with the right to vote on the FEI Jumping Committee, FEI executive board and FEI Bureau.

The IJRC plays an active part in all decisions

concerning jumping rules and technical issues. The IJRC has a seat with right to vote on the European Equestrian Federation Board. The IJRC is the owner of the FEI Longines ranking list formula.

The IJRC has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the FEI.

The IJRC and the North American Riders Group (NARG) have also signed an agreement. Among its achievements the club lists:

Horse owners are essential to the success of a rider and owners now have two free passes to all FEI Events including Championships and Olympics.

In the 5-star events, all participants can now benefit from a free entry fee, free meals for athletes and grooms.

In the 4-star events all the riders competing

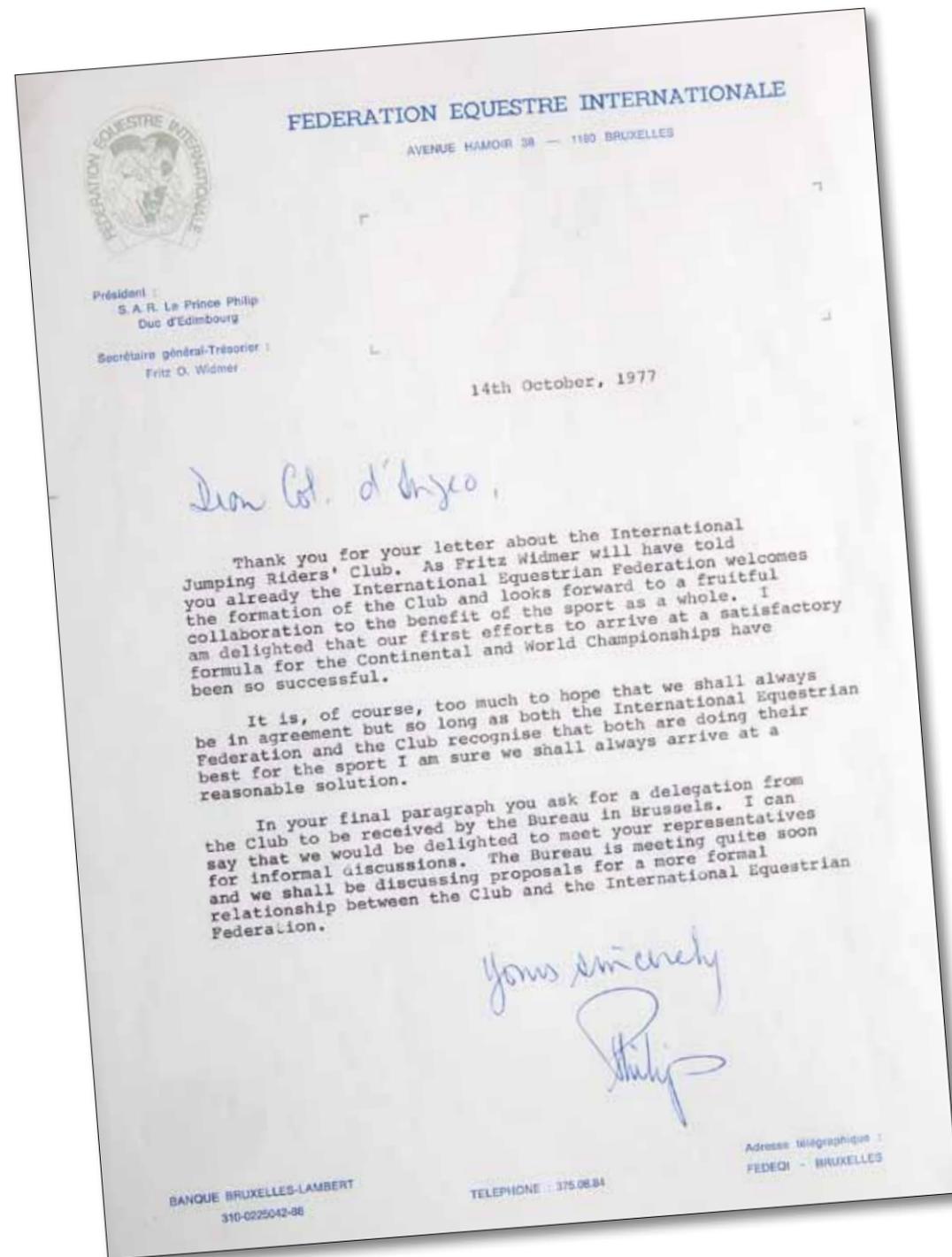
in the Grand Prix can now benefit from free accommodation.

In all international events the entry fees are now fixed :

- maximum entry fee for Young Horses
- maximum entry fee for Young Riders, Junior and Pony Events

The events prize money has increased and is index-linked.

New rules for clean sport have been requested and achieved, introducing a list and some thresholds. Legal support can be obtained by athletes if necessary.



“

It is, of course, too much to hope that we shall always be in agreement but so long as both the International Equestrian Federation and the Club recognizes that both are doing their best for the sport I am sure we shall always arrive at a reasonable solution.

”

# The Founding of the IJRC

by Max. E. Ammann

**For international equestrian sport, especially show jumping, the sixties were a peculiar decade. The three major global championships were held outside of Europe: the Olympic Games of 1964 in Japan, the Olympics of 1968 in Mexico and the Jumping World Championships of 1966 in Buenos Aires. The outbreak of the deadly swamp fever in the mid-sixties closed the borders between the continent and the British Isles. There were no English or Irish riders at the open European Championships of 1966 in Lucerne. These European Championships in Lucerne saw three non-Europeans on the podium: Nelson Pessoa, Frank Chapot and Hugo Arrambide. The top European, Paul Weier, was fourth and went home without a medal. All this had a depressing effect on the European interest in show jumping.**

The seventies changed it all. It began with the glorious World Championships of 1970 in La Baule; even the Canadians – the Olympic Champions of 1968 – sent a team. The media interest in La Baule was huge. Even the big German daily newspaper sent their own correspondent to cover the Championship. Two years later the media and public interest at

the Munich Olympic Games was even bigger and also the World Championships of 1974 in Hickstead, was a major event. The happiness over the success of these three events was disturbed by the demand of the FEI, led by the President, Prince Philip, that all National Federations “clean their house” – i.e. eliminate the so-called “shamateurs”. Only the British and Irish followed suit and declared practically all their top riders as professionals. Consequently there were only British „amateurs“ competing at the 1975 European Championships and the 1976 Olympic Games.

All this: the glory of La Baule, Munich and Hickstead, and the uncertainty about the amateur question dominated the discussions, both among the riders, as well as among the journalists. They came together more often, went for dinner. The question of the future of equestrian sport brought the riders and the media to joint discussions.

The results were, consequently, the founding of the International Alliance of Equestrian Journalists in 1974, the founding of the International Jumping Riders Club in 1977, the re-emergence of the year book *l'Année Hippique* in 1978 and, in the same year, the creation of the World Cup for Jumping Riders.

For the Jumping Riders the important year was 1977. It began with an improvised meeting of the riders at the CSI Dortmund in March, followed by the founding of the IJRC in Geneva on 2 April 1977 and finally the first General Assembly in Vienna in June 1977 (see photo on the next page).

On 19th March 1977 some twenty riders met during the CSI Dortmund to discuss the situation in international equestrian sport and the role and position of the riders. After the meeting Eric Wauters came to me and told me that they had decided to hold a more formal meeting two weeks later during the CSIO Geneva. They were thinking about forming an association of the riders.

On Friday, 1st April, the riders met in the riders hotel of the CSIO Geneva. After lengthy discussions they decided to meet again the following day. They instructed Neco Pessoa and François Mathy to contact me and ask me to attend the meeting. Thus on Friday evening I was peacefully sitting in the press stands in Les Vernets when Neco and François showed up. I left the stand and joined them. I agreed to be at the meeting at 10.00am the next day. On Saturday, 2nd April 1977, some thirty riders were present. The first point which was raised was: should a riders association be a partner

of the FEI or be rather a union-like fighting machine? The meeting decided on partnership.

After some two hours of discussion the meeting adjourned, the whole group moved in front of the TV to watch Red Rum win his third Grand National. At the end of the meeting a founding charter was signed by thirty riders. Ten riders were designated as the founding committee, of which four (François Mathy, Harvey Smith, Nelson Pessoa and Hartwig Steenken) formed the board. The question of the President was left open. It was also decided that riders not in Geneva should be contacted and be asked for their support. In consequent phone calls. **Hans Günter Winkler, Alwin Schockemöhle, Paul Weier** and many more pledged their support. They formed a consultative committee.

The following day, on Sunday, 3rd April 1977, the International Jumping Riders Club held its first press conference, announcing the foundation of the club. There was one opposing view: Piero D'Inzeo\* felt the club to be unnecessary because the national federations could take care of the interests of the riders. It was an absurd intervention by an older rider who in his long career, had more than once publicly battled against his federation. Piero's more pragmatic

INTERNATIONAL SHOW JUMPING CLUB

FOUNDING CHARTER

After an initial meeting on March 19, 1977, in Dortmund and subsequently in Geneva on March 31 and April 1, 1977, a representative group of international riders agreed on April 2, 1977, in principle to the foundation of an International Jumping Riders Club.

An initial committee of 25 riders was established to carry on the concept to a first General Assembly to be held in Vienna in June. Membership is open to all riders who have ridden in the Olympic Games, or at least in five Nations Cups.

The International Jumping Riders Club was founded to benefit the sport: to assist the governing bodies and the international organizers in improving the image of the sport we serve. Namely

- to give constructive criticism to show organizers
- to put the riders point to the governing bodies concerning rules and regulations.

Geneva, April 2, 1977

Luis Alvarez Cervera, David Broome, Debbie Johnsey, François Mathy, Nelson Pessoa, Marcel Rozier, Paul Schockemöhle, Harvey Smith, Hartwig Steenken, Eric Wauters;

*Marcel Rozier*  
*David Broome*  
*Debbie Johnsey*  
*Nelson Pessoa*  
*Hartwig Steenken*  
*Eric Wauters*  
*Paul Schockemöhle*  
*François Mathy*  
*Luis Alvarez Cervera*



HARVEY SMITH, MALCOLM PYRAH, MAX E. AMMANN, ARNOLD SCHUMACHER

brother Raimondo d'Inzeo was then elected President at the first General Assembly of the IJRC in Vienna.

The European Championships of 1977 were held at the end of June in the Vienna "Südstadion". At the first IAEJ General Assembly during the Championships with twenty-seven riders present, the statutes were adopted and a membership of seventy riders confirmed. Criteria for membership were a participation at the Olympic Games, World- or Continental Championships or five stars in a Nations Cup.

The first letters sent out by the club went to FEI President Prince Philip and to the FEI Secretariat. In the letter to Prince Philip the club offered its co-operation and suggested a meeting at the next FEI General Assembly in December 1977 in Brussels. Prince Philip

in his answer gracefully welcomed the club. In its letter of 28th July 1977 to the Secretary General of the FEI the IJRC made proposals concerning new formulas for World and Continental Jumping Championships. Most of it was incorporated in the revised FEI rules.

As for myself, in Vienna, I gave up the Presidency of the International Alliance of Equestrian Journalists to concentrate on my voluntary work as secretary of the International Jumping Riders Club. When, in the fall of 1978 the World Cup was created, I resigned from this position to concentrate on the World Cup and the editorship of l'Année Hippique.

**Max E. Ammann** was the IJRC Secretary from April 1977 until October 1978

\* Over the years Piero became one of the biggest IJRC supporters. Eleonora Ottaviani said that the support she received from Piero D'Inzeo and Nelson Pessoa helped her to overcome difficulties and challenging moments, in the years from 1998 until now.

# Paul Schockemöhle

## Founder, with his brother Alwin

COUNTRY | GERMANY

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**A founder member of the IJRC with his brother Alwin, Schockemöhle won the European Championships in show jumping three times in succession – in 1981, 1983 and 1985 – with the legendary Deister, a unique achievement that has never been topped. His mastery of the sport was confirmed with further successes at the Olympic Games and Nations Cups.**

“The club is the voice of the International Jumping Riders at the FEI. Before the club was founded there was no communication between the riders and the FEI. The riders had no chance to influence the rules, shows and so on; the FEI made their own rules.

When we started 40 years ago -- David Broome, Francois Mathy Senior, a few others and myself -- we thought of founding a club to which all riders could belong. When we were finally successful, we made Raimondo D’Inzeo the our first president and Max E. Ammann our secretary (we needed someone who could write to the FEI). So finally the club was established, and some riders gave part of their prize money so they could pay Max E. Amman, and the rest.

My best memory is of the time when David Broome, who knew Prince Philip, the former

President of the FEI, quite well, and we were able to establish the World Cup. We had a meeting with Prince Philip and he quickly agreed. As a result, everything was set very soon. The first show was, I believe, in 1978 in Göteborg, Sweden.

The IJRC Club -- especially myself and David -- went to the former President of the Göteborg Horse Show and to the chairman of Volvo (the main sponsor of the World Cup for more than 20 years) -- so we were able to present the World Cup to Prince Philip with a sponsor already on board.

We sent Max E. Ammann to Volvo to finalise the contract and he became the Director of the World Cup. Then he established the different rules and the League -- and the World Cup became a success!

We also found another sponsor through a friend who was riding at that time, which was how we managed to have the Ministry of Agriculture as a sponsor of the World Cup.

The Ministry of Agriculture sent flowers to the shows and made the events look very nice. There were flowers on the jumps and everything looked fantastic! Göteborg was the right place for this event because there is always a superb atmosphere, with many young people who are really enthusiastic about the World Cup. All this is why every two years the World Cup Final is in Göteborg.

**“In the past we helped each other a lot. Sometimes I rode a horse in dressage for David Broome and another time he rode my horse.”**

At that time the group of international riders was not as big as it is now and wasn't so global, in terms of competitions and nationalities. We met nearly every week (David Broome, D’Inzeo and others) and there was a lot more friendship among the riders than there is now. Now a lot of riders just do their own job, while in the past we helped each other more, like sometimes I rode dressage on a horse partnered with David Broome and he rode my horse. This was really positive.

The club has managed to influence many FEI decisions and the bigger the club is, and the more members it has, the stronger it is. I would always encourage young riders to join the IJRC, to better develop the sport together, and to formulate our ideas, which the club can communicate to the FEI. The more members the club has, the more influence it has on the FEI.”



# Nelson Pessoa

## Founder

COUNTRY | BRAZIL

**A founder of the IJRC, Pessoa was one of the greatest riders of his generation. Among his many achievements, he represented his country at several editions of the Olympics and was European Champion twice. In 1992, at the age of 56, he was the oldest equestrian to take part in the Barcelona Summer Olympics.**

“For 40 years the IJRC has provided an enormous service to riders but there’s still an awful lot to do. If I may make a suggestion, since the sport has evolved and there is now a huge financial interest, riders and owners can make the most of this -- but at the same time they must protect the sport. The Club must be supported because it represents the united strength of the athletes, just as in other sports. Racing car drivers and tennis players also have unions and the day the unions disappear, the athletes will be lost.

In my own career I fortunately never needed to call on the Club to support me but it supported my sport in the right way which allowed me to have a good career. I’m certain that if I’d ever needed help, the Club would have been there for me. The Club has never abandoned any rider in need. Certainly, the Club also represents friendship; in the past things were simpler; the sport was

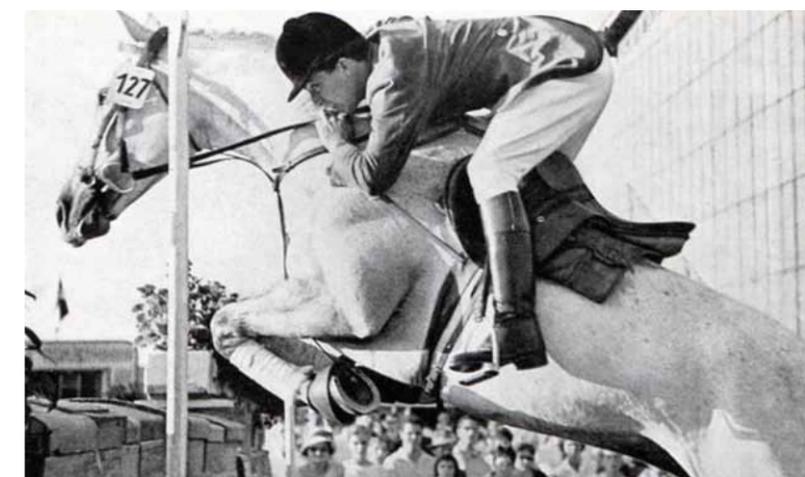
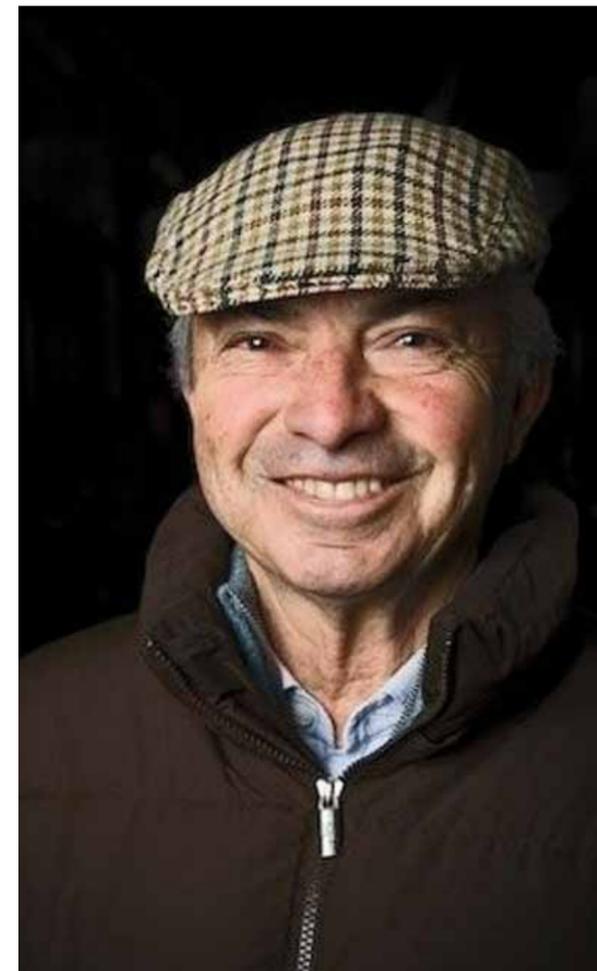
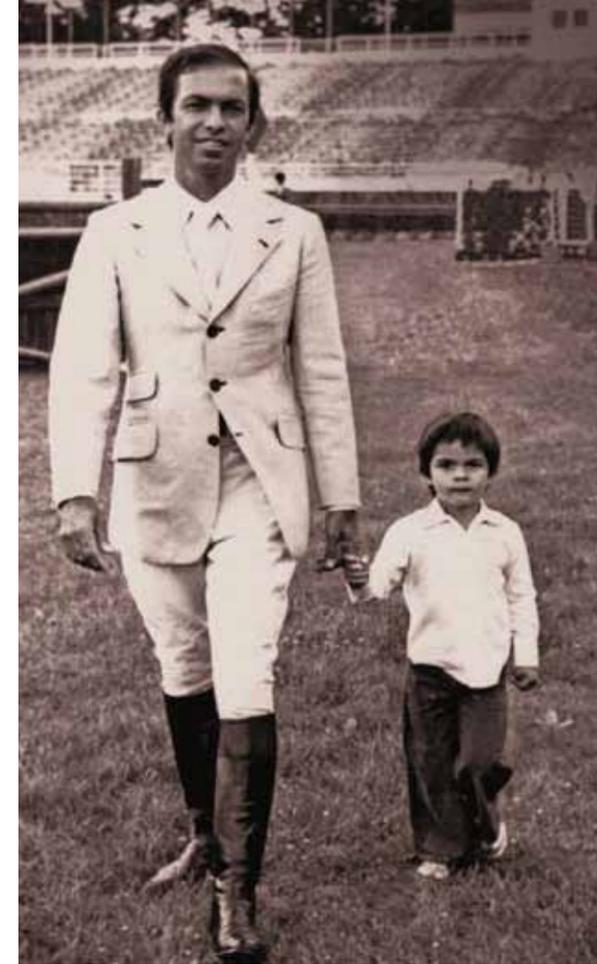
more informal.. Nowadays there are too many competitions, too many riders, and it’s hard for them to meet up in peace.

One thing that seems important to me is the fact that we now have a rider on the FEI Bureau and Executive Board. Once upon a time the FEI didn’t even listen to us. And when we spoke to them about this, they didn’t want to know. The nicest thing of all is the Top Ten: an initiative entirely thanks to the Club; it’s a fantastic competition.

My favourite memories are of when the FEI began to listen to us, when we were invited to the meetings (Invitation to group 2 Kuala Lumpur -- Editor’s note); and the great victory of finally having a representative on the FEI Bureau. I hope the riders continue to be intelligent enough to maintain the Club and sustain a Secretary/Director who does a great job. If they put the Club to one side, they’ll regret it.

If we founded the Club 40 years ago when we were younger and we realised back then that it was needed, there’s all the more reason today, now that the Club exists, has a personality, and some power, for young riders to support it.

Unions exist in every profession in the world. The Club represents the riders’ strength; they should all be aware of this and remain united. They must support the IJRC.”



# Raimondo D'Inzeo

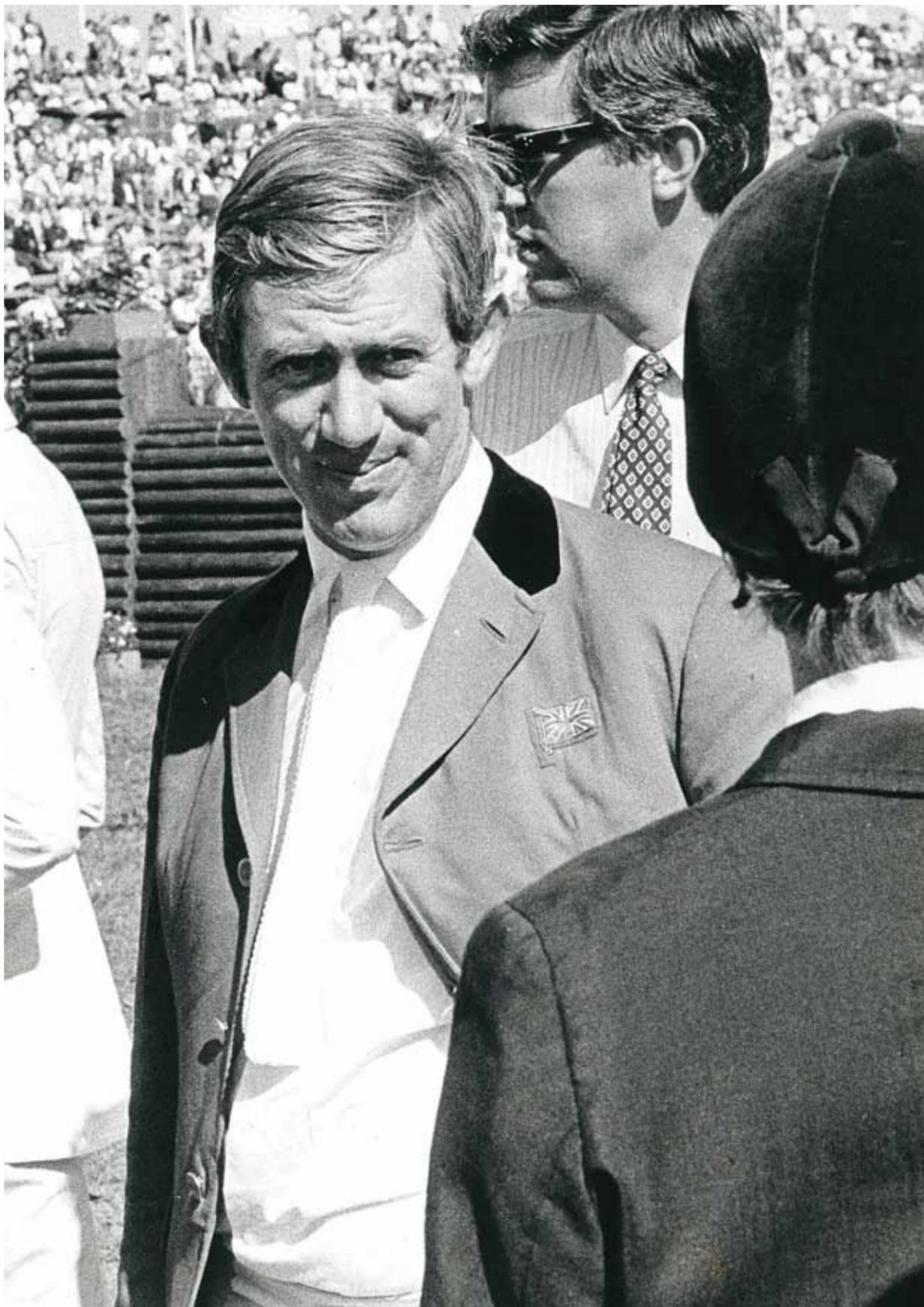
## Founder and First President

COUNTRY | ITALY



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**General Raimondo d'Inzeo, eight-time Olympian and individual gold medallist at the 1960 Olympic Games in Rome, passed away in 2013 at the age of 88. Raimondo d'Inzeo was a founding member and former President of the International Jumping Riders Club (IJRC), which was created in June 1977.**



# David Broome

## Founder & President

COUNTRY | GREAT BRITAIN

**A founding member and President of the IJRC for 15 years in the early days, David Broome's many accolades include competing in the Olympics five times and winning individual Bronze medals in 1960 and 1968. He won individual Gold at the European Championships three times and Gold at the World Championships in 1960. He is still the only rider ever to have won the King George V Gold Cup six times on six different horses, between 1960 and 1991.**

"Forty years ago, we had no connections, no communication at all with the FEI. It was really time we invented something as we had huge problems on our hands. So, with Eric Wauters and Paul Schockemöhle, we created the IJRC and communication began between the riders and especially with the FEI. We had a good first president in Raimondo D'Inzeo for one or two years, and then I was president for fifteen years, till Franke Sloothaak came along.

Prince Philip, President of the FEI, believed in our club. He heard what we wanted to say and to change; he allowed us to go once a year to the FEI Bureau and to speak for at least an hour about our problems to all the important members of the FEI. Thanks to this, we achieved many goals. It was in those years, 1978-79, that together with Max E. Ammann, Paul Schockemöhle, myself and the IJRC created the World Cup and a more modern sport. It was a very positive time, following a difficult period. And with John Roche, a former rider, as partner at the FEI, it became easier for us. We were able to improve.

It is still very important to have a strong riders' club. I am retired, a farmer now, and don't go very often to shows. I don't follow everything but I think that it's essential that the IJRC Bureau represents all the riders, not only the Top Twenty, but the Top Two Hundred or more, as their problems are different. The Bureau has to be helpful to all the international riders, defend their future, defend the Nations Cup and fair sport. So I don't know exactly how the sport is running now, but long life to the IJRC!"

# Franke Sloothaak

## President

COUNTRY | GERMANY

**A former IJRC President, Franke competed for Germany at the 1984 Summer Olympics in Los Angeles, where he won team Bronze and at the 1988 Summer Olympics in Seoul, where the team won the Gold medal. He competed at the 1996 Summer Olympics in Atlanta, where he again won a Gold medal with his team.**

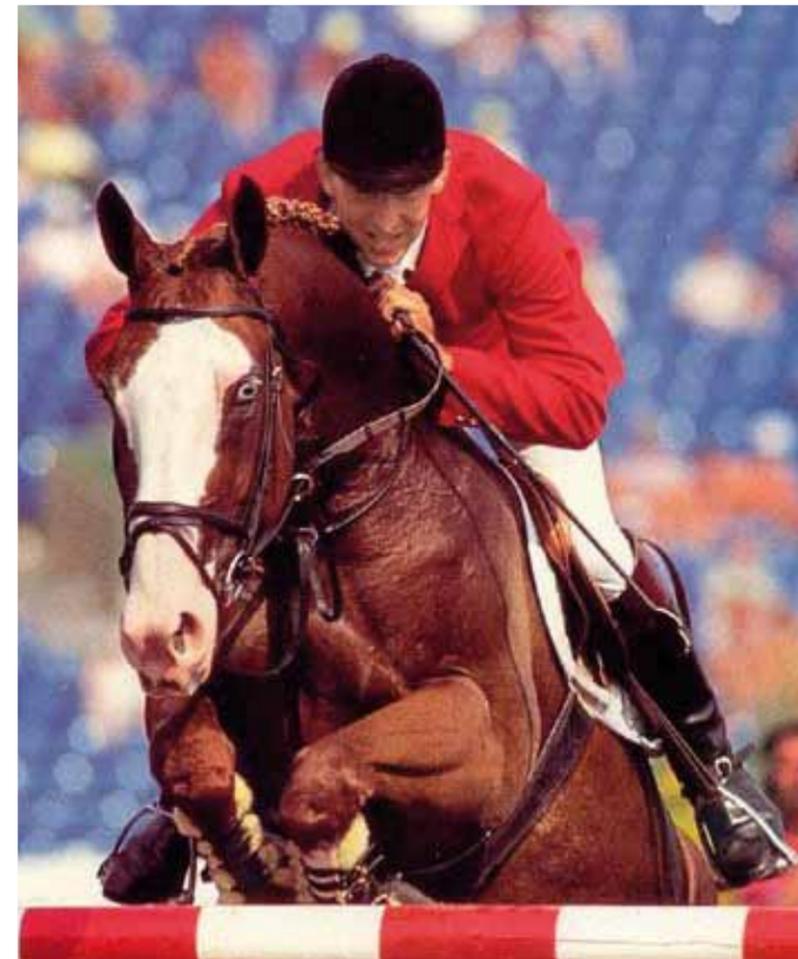
“The aim of the IJRC is to improve our sport, to stand up for the riders’ interests. In the beginning, the riders had no power, they had nothing, they were weak. There was no relation with the FEI, and the FEI itself caused problems for the riders of the IJRC. The then secretary of the FEI was a strong person but the Club didn’t want him and the federations didn’t believe the Club would be able to act. But in 1997 when Donna Pilar was the President of the FEI, the Club with the support of the strongest riders and with the agreement of the National Federations of the strongest countries, managed to change the then FEI Secretary Mr Etienne Allard, who not was working for the benefit of the sport. After this a lot of things changed and the club became stronger. The Club had to be sure that the FEI was working in favour of

and not against our sport. It was not a nice period when riders had no influence in the sport. With the Ranking Lists and other issues, we saw there was room to discuss. I would like the IJRC to be even stronger and have more influence in the sport. The riders must remain united, because otherwise they will be very weak.

The sport has given me a lot and I wanted to give something back. It is important to think about what is needed for our future, because this is the biggest problem we have: what will our sport look like in 10 years time?

In most countries, I’d say only about 1% of athletes are involved at a national level of the sport. The remaining 99% probably never sees how the FEI behaves. How we can convince other riders to be part of the Club?

There are a lot of issues regarding the Nations Cups, the Ranking Lists, etc, that should be discussed with all involved. The sport needs to be open to a lot of people and this will help us in the future. I’m happy that in China the sport is developing, because this will be important for the future health of show jumping.



The easiest way to convince young people to be part of the Club is to help them and to train them. For example as Eleonora is already doing through the Young Riders’ Academy. It is important to provide young rider with information on the sport, so they can think about their futures.

When I left the Club, the presidency went to Cayetano. It is important to find the right personality for this position -- and he was the right man. When I started to work for the Club, with Paul, David, and Eric Wauters, they had great experience as riders, as well and we worked very well. They invented the World Cup and found Volvo as a sponsor -- but then the World Cup was sold to the FEI so this prove that it is difficult to find a group working together in the same direction. It is important to find a good committee that works together behind the scenes in the interests of the Club. It is essential that the group remains united in its aims.”

# Cayetano Martinez de Irujo

## President

COUNTRY | SPAIN

**President of the IJRC from 1997-2007, and again from 2011-13, Martinez de Irujo previously served as Vice President from 1994-1997. Among his many professional achievements, he was selected to represent Spain in the Barcelona Olympics of 1992.**

### **“We made the club strong, open, universal and operative”**

“In 1994 Doña Pilar became president of the FEI, and Bo Helander was the FEI Secretary General. At that time, I was at the top, number 29WR. I was asked to join the IJRC -- actually to contact Doña Pilar -- because there had been a big rupture between riders, organisers and the rest of the sport with the FEI, after Princess Anne's presidency I was named Vice President. Two years later, by statutes, I became President of the IJRC. That day was very strange. I had the feeling that a German was going to become president of the 'Bullfighters'. I think nobody really cared that much about

me. When we started in the club, basically it had been surviving for twenty years thanks to the exhaustive efforts of Eric Wauters. During the presidency of Franke Sloothaak at IJRC, and with the directorship of Eleonora Ottaviani, and me as Vice President, we managed to fill the enormous gap and start working together with FEI and others indispensable parts of our sport.

When I became President of the club, Eleonora and myself created a very strong and variegated committee, including the two strongest and most influential riders of the moment as joint Vice Presidents: Rodrigo Pessoa and Ludger Beerbaum. Slowly and carefully, we managed to make it work; that was the key to our success. We made the club strong, open, universal and operative, ending up having a representative on the Executive Board and achieving great goals. The club means a great deal. The sport needs the input of well-channeled athletes to grow, update and be successful. The political part, together with the management of the sport, is as important as the riding itself to form a strong, successful and popular sport. This is fundamental for the riders to understand.”

# Rodrigo Pessoa

## President

COUNTRY | BRAZIL

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**A former president of the IJRC, Pessoa is a three times Olympic medal winner, gaining Bronze in 1996 and 2000 and Gold in 2004. He won the World Cup Final in 1998, 1999 and 2000 on Baloubet du Rouet, becoming the first rider to win three times consecutively with the same horse.**



"The IJRC is a very important link between the athletes and our governing body, the FEI. The Club taught me that we athletes must be involved in the administration part as well as the sport. One of my best memories of the club are related to a meeting in London, when we were talking about the World Cup and someone said: 'We need drama! More drama!' And then Jean Marc Nicolas stood up and said: 'We don't need more drama! I already have enough drama in my house!' It is very important for the new generation to get involved because the future of the sport is for them and they need to know how everything works. There is a lot of politics, unfortunately!"



# Christina Liebherr

## President

COUNTRY | SWITZERLAND

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**Christina Liebherr was elected President of the IJRC Club in 2013, becoming the first woman to take on this prestigious role. Christina competed in the 2004 and 2008 Olympic Games, picking up a Team Bronze medal in 2008.**

'The IJRC is an anchor for professional riders, where they can find help from people

who really understand the problems they face. My best memory is from 2013. Just after my election as president we refused to sell the rights to the ranking formula. Joining the IJRC gave me another chance to see how professional some riders are and to work with them has been very enriching. My advice to young riders to convince them to join the IJRC is this: Don't wait to be changed but put time into making the changes.'



# Eric Wauters

## General Secretary

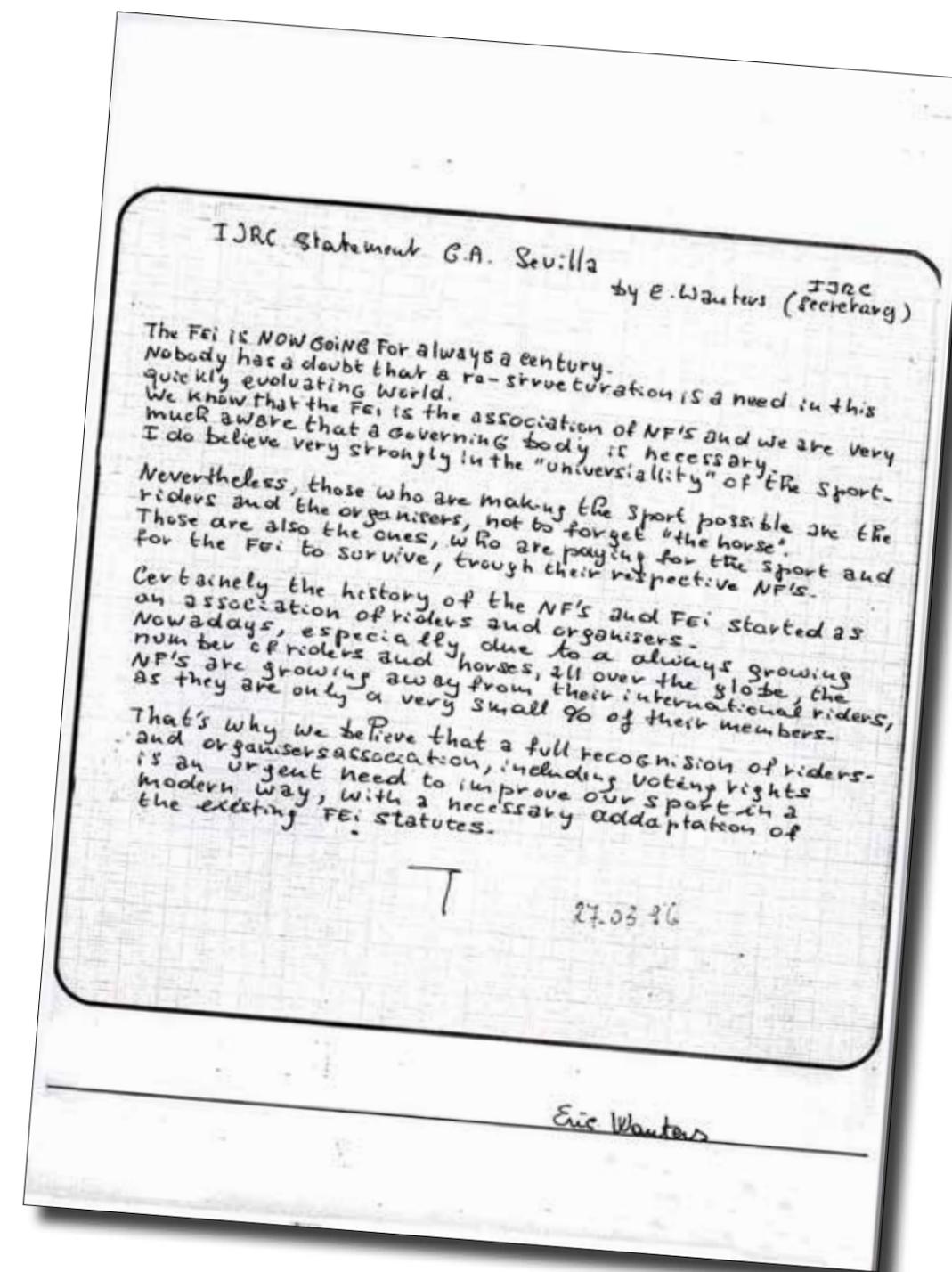
COUNTRY | BELGIUM

**Eric Wauters (12 May 1951 – 21 October 1999) was a Belgian equestrian and Olympic medalist. He was born in Antwerp. He competed in show jumping at the 1976 Summer Olympics in Montreal, and won a bronze medal with the Belgian team.**

From Cayetano Martinez de Irujo:  
"When we started in the club, basically it had been surviving for twenty years thanks to the exhaustive efforts of Eric Wauters."

From the history:  
In February 1999, former president Franke Sloothaak and Secretary General Eric Wauters asked lawyer Gianrico Moor and Dr. Eleonora Ottaviani to prepare the club's articles of association in a manner that would be more suitable to the times and guarantee their practicality.  
In June 1999, the general meeting of the Riders' Club approved the new articles of association in Aachen.

FRONT: LUIS ÁLVAREZ DE CERVERA, NELSON PESSOA, HARVEY SMITH, MALCOLM PYRAH, MAX E. AMMANN  
BACK: MARCEL ROZIER, ERIC WAUTERS, FRANÇOIS MATHY, PAUL SCHOCKEMÖHLE, HARTWIG STEENKEN





**02**

# **MISSION AND VALUES**

The International Jumping Riders Club strongly believes that the co-operation of the riders, organisers and the federal body is the key to taking equestrian sport to a higher level.



# Eleonora Moroni Ottaviani

## Director

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**The current director Eleonora Moroni Ottaviani talks about her role and passion for the sport.**

**Do you have a particular highlight from working with the IJRC?**

There have been a lot over the years I've worked there, but here are a few: agreeing the CSI competition requirements (Entry Fees, Prize Money, Minimum requirements for CSI and CSIO) was an extremely important moment and involved seven years of negotiations with the sports' governing body and representatives; the signing of our partnership with Rolex; but mainly I think of little moments, laughter and the debates during dinners and meetings.

**One of the objectives for the association is to promote the image of equestrian sport in jumping. How do you think the IJRC has done this?**

Paying attention to the rules and being part of the FEI (International Equestrian Federation) and EEF (European Equestrian Federation) committees. Additionally, we try to offer

spectacular competitions to the public, for example the Rolex IJRC Top 10. We also try to encourage all of our members to use social media, as communication is so important these days and an area we will continue to invest more in.

**What are the main challenges of the association?**

First and foremost, we make sure that fair play and the horses' welfare are the priority in our sport. We also ensure that the athletes' voices are heard and considered by those who have to make decisions in the sport. This also means giving these institutions the correct tools to make the decisions. Lastly, we want to make sure that the retired athletes remain a part of the sport.

**In your mind, what are the IJRC's biggest achievements?**

The credibility and respect the IJRC has achieved in the equestrian world is fantastic. If I had to list them; being recognized by the Olympic Committee in 2004, the CSI



## IJRC Team

requirements, the Ranking List formula, the contract and the Memorandum of Understanding with the FEI which recognizes the formula's ownership by the IJRC.

### What does the club mean to you?

**Friendship, Passion, Battles.** As I've already said, choosing to be on the side of the athletes hasn't always been easy, but in the end it has given me great pleasure.

Finding yourself in disputes facing 100 federation presidents, or at meetings with institutional representatives (FEI) united without a chink, has caused some difficult moments, which were overcome thanks to the help of real friends.

I am fully aware that many people believe I have merits and powers I don't possess. These difficult moments were overcome thanks to the work of my president, Cayetano and my true friends, Francois, Rodrigo, Ludger and Emile.

I have also been supported by a number of riders and a couple of federation presidents, whom I respect and admire very much, among them, Donna Pilar, Princess Haya, Breido Count zu Rantzau, Hanfried Haring, Theo Ploegmakers and John Roche, who have always been close to the club and to me personally.

I also had the help of these friends at moments of great difficulty in my private life, and these are not things you easily forget. It's good to know you have someone you can always count on.

We now have a new generation in the club. Kevin and Steve have already contributed a great deal and I am sure they'll be pillars of the club in the future, too. It's true, in the end, the club has provided me with an unbeatable experience of life. It has helped me to grow and there have been moments I will treasure always.

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### Elisabetta Garobbio Current Secretary of the IJRC

"In 2003 when Eleonora asked me to help her part time with the administration of the IJRC, I didn't know exactly what would come up!

It was amazing to discover that behind a sport that I had the pleasure to watch only on TV, and seemed so simple, there was so much work to do: rules, relationships with the FEI and its commissions, listening to the riders' problems and trying to do the best for them.

My best memory is the European Championship in Windsor: the atmosphere was great and for the first time we had all the riders competing at the Championship attending our General Assembly. They felt involved and expressed with emphasis their opinions about the items we proposed. In Windsor we had the pleasure of welcoming the then FEI President, Princess Haya, to our meeting. This was a very emotional moment for me.

### Laura Borromeo IJRC Assistant

Working with the IJRC over the past few years has been a great pleasure – but most of all, an enormous honour. As the 'spokesperson' for the riders, the Club is among the institutions whose voice should be listened to first, because the riders are the first to experience any problems arising in the special but complex world of our sport.

Seeing the riders acting together to improve the sport, united by the Club, is a unique and incredible experience. Working with Eleonora is a journey of personal development and growth, which improves the present to construct a better future, every single day.

# Passion, friendship and fighting spirit

twenty years at the helm of the IJRC



**You have been director of the IJRC for twenty years. What motivated you to get involved?**

That's right, twenty years, already! Initially, I was asked to write the club's statutes and then I found myself leading the club, without realizing it. At the time this only meant attending about two meetings a year. Today there must be fifty! I don't like being tagged as a riders' defender. I am not in the service of anyone -- except the sport. If I agree with a rider, I get up to support him or her. If I disagree, I get up anyway -- to discuss. The athletes know me. They like me, but I think they are a bit scared of me too!

**The club has a special relationship with the Geneva International Horse Show. Can you explain what it means to the IJRC?**

Geneva was where the first meetings between international riders were held.

The Show hosted important AGMs. We maintain common values and cultivate the same philosophy of sport. It is therefore natural that Geneva has, among other things, hosted a large share of the 17 editions of the Rolex IJRC Top Ten Final.

**What IJRC victories have given you most satisfaction over the years?**

The greatest victory was the establishment of the medication and banned substances lists. It must be remembered that even twenty years ago ethical rules existed only for athletes, but not for the horses they relied upon. These lists were a major step forward. Along the same lines, remarkable progress has been made on registration fees for international competitions as well as on the awarding of World Ranking points. Finally, we have managed to establish a dialogue with the International Equestrian

Federation (FEI). We don't always agree, but at least we talk to each other now!

**But the IJRC is not only about victories ...**

No, of course not. I am thinking in particular of the format change imposed for the Olympic Games, with three, rather than four, riders per team. We haven't managed to reach a compromise and I think this is a real dark point for our sport. We are also working to make the invitation system for international competitions fairer, but the battle is not yet won!

**Do you ever feel discouraged?**

It can happen. Being Director of the IJRC isn't always easy. You are not attached to a national federation, nor to the FEI -- and you aren't a rider either. This loneliness, which sometimes weighs heavy, is the price I have to pay for my independence, which is my main strength. It allows

me to follow my ideals and take the road that seems to me the fairest. When one is active behind the scenes of high-level sport, there are also delicate cases to manage. Some have marked me for life. Fortunately, I can count on the support of club's members, some of whom have become close friends, and of my family. Without that, it would be impossible. If I had to summarize the IJRC in four words, I would say 'passion, friendship and fighting spirit' are the keys.

**Is it difficult to mobilise the riders?**

You might think so, yes. But even though riding is a fundamentally individualistic discipline, a discussion with any top rider proves that each of them is willing to act for the good of his sport. The most difficult thing is to get them sitting at a table, talking about things! What drives me to

continue is that I can always find people who are willing to engage and speak up to convince other athletes like Steve Guerdat, Kevin Staut, Rodrigo Pessoa, François Mathy Jr, Cayetano Martinez de Irujo, Emile Hendrix or Ludger Beerbaum. They are aware that cultivating these exchanges is necessary if they want to take control of their destiny and influence the future of their sport.

**Clément Grandjean.**

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03

# THE VOICE OF THE PEOPLE

What does the IJRC mean to its members? What does it offer to riders, both upcoming and veteran? How has it changed over the years? Members of the equestrian world share their memories.



**Letter from the former FEI President HRH Princess Haya Bint Al Hussein**

# **IJRC and FEI**

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As the IJRC celebrates its 40th anniversary this year, I would like to use the opportunity to congratulate members past and present on this milestone moment. What started as a small group of international riders discussing the challenges and frustrations facing them in 1977 has today turned into a respected and professional body, with the athlete, both human and equine at the heart of discussions.

I have admired and respected the manner in which the IJRC has 'stood its ground' on many occasions and speaks in a 'collective' voice for the riders, this I applaud, and is indeed something other sports today could learn from.

The investment and creation of the Young Riders Academy is yet another testament to the tireless work of the IJRC of which I am sure will assist and empower our talented young riders to forge and develop their own careers and the sport of which we all love.

HRH Princess Haya



# 2017: IJRC and FEI



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It's an honour for me to be invited to contribute to this book published on the occasion of the celebration of the 40th anniversary of the IJRC and a real pleasure for me to write it.

I must admit that I didn't know that the IJRC had such a long history and I hope you forgive me for this as I was only 14 years old when the organisation was created.

Over the past 40 years, the sport of jumping has evolved tremendously. When I entered the sport some 30 years ago as a member of an organising committee of an international jumping event, the sport was completely different. The international calendar counted only a very limited number of events and the majority of the organisers were a club of friends that with the help of the local economy put together a show mainly for the fun of organising. Socialising was also high on the agenda and the majority of the riders were amateurs at that time, so the

socialising was also high on their agenda. The FEI was a small organisation and it must have been around the time when the IJRC was created that the FEI moved its offices from Brussels to Bern.

If we look at the sport today, it's a whole new ballgame. With over 1,600 international jumping events in the calendar and close to 70,000 jumping riders and horses registered at the FEI, the sport has grown exponentially. This growth has driven the professionalisation of the sport at every level, from the riders, to the organisers, trainers, grooms, rules... and without a doubt a more professional FEI.

The growth has also meant addressing more and more challenges such as preserving the welfare of the horse; the fight against doping and match fixing; managing the calendar; finding a balance between commercial interests and the interest of the sport and its main actors; and, last but not

least, safeguarding the interests of the riders by guaranteeing them a participation based upon merit.

Concerning this last point, the IJRC has been instrumental in creating the ranking which is now managed together with the FEI and is used as the parameter for the invitation systems. We can say that the IJRC was visionary and the ranking is truly a legacy of the IJRC.

As a governing body, the FEI needs to strive to always find a perfect balance between the interests of all parties involved, the riders, but also the organisers, national federations, officials, owners and a growing number of individuals that are professionally involved in the sport.

During the years and given the above, I believe we can say that the relationship between the IJRC and FEI is open and honest and generally speaking very good. We have established a

Memory of Understanding which governs our relationship and found an agreement on the management of the riders ranking. We do not always agree but the IJRC has had a large influence and impact in the decision making process of the FEI and we intend to continue this relationship in the future.

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the IJRC with its anniversary and we look forward continuing and expanding our relationship.

The FEI is a service organisation and the athletes are one of the most important stakeholders of our sport. Congratulations again, warm regards and at your service,

Ingmar De Vos  
FEI President

# Ludger Beerbaum

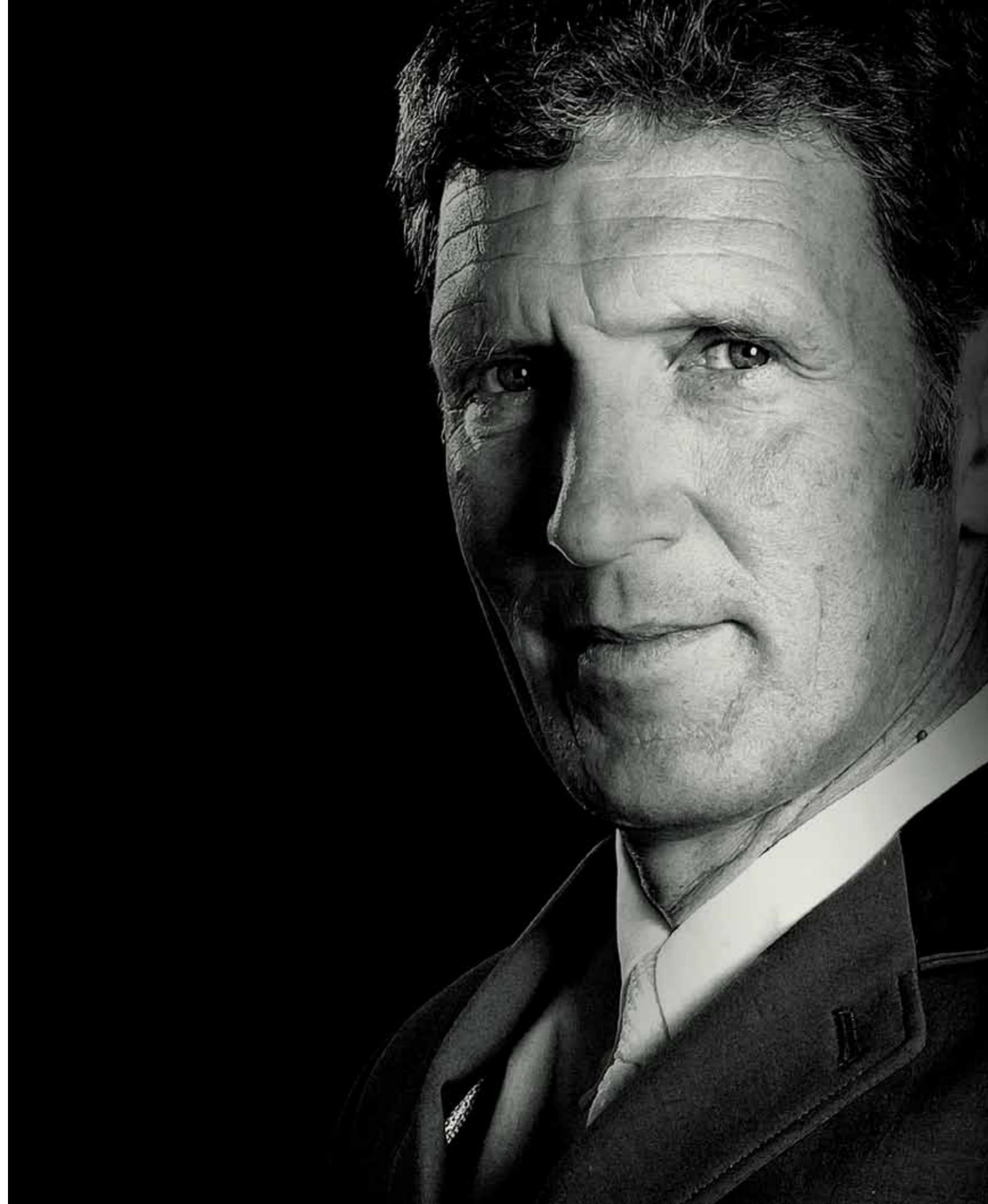
## Germany

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**Beerbaum is the current Vice President of the IJRC. He is among the most renowned show jumpers on the circuit, having won Olympic Gold on four occasions and been Number One in the World Rankings several times. He has also won five Gold Medals at European Championship and two World Championships.**

'The IJRC -- especially Eleonora -- has supported me in many difficult situations throughout my career: for example, after the Athens 2004 Olympics when my horse Goldfever tested positive, and I had to defend myself against the FEI. Of course I received support not only in sports matters, but also in growing and developing as a person whose opinion was taken seriously.

Most of the time, working for the club has been a very rewarding experience. Apart from the 'official' work and meetings, we had a lot of fun -- though of course there were also fights! Most of the time, these were positive and constructive and led to more recognition and credibility in our community. Last but not least, I have experienced real friendship and trust among the majority of the board members over the past 25 years. This has been, and remains, extremely valuable!'





# Meredith Michaels-Berbaum

## Germany

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**An active member of the IJRC, Meredith was born in Los Angeles but changed her citizenship from American to German after marrying fellow rider Markus Beerbaum in 1998. She won three FEI World Cup Finals making her the first woman in history to do so riding the great Shutterfly. With Shutterfly Meredith came fourth individually in the 2008 Beijing Olympics. She won team Bronze on Fibonacci at the Rio de Janeiro Olympics in 2016.**

“I will never forget coming to Europe in 1991, as a student and aspiring young American rider. I was blown away by the international show jumping sport. I had only known my experiences in the States which seemed minuscule in comparison with those of Europe

and its variety of nations and shows and riders. I immediately fell in love with the diversity of each individual show with its own charm and character, all distinct and unique. I was both intimidated and impressed by the immense amount of talented riders representing different countries, with not only their own riding styles, but often their own language.

How would there be any sort of cooperation or coordination between various groups with so many differing opinions and views? There needed to be some sort of organizing body to represent the riders and stand up for their rights and connect them to the federal governing body (FEI) and to the show organizers. That's when I was introduced to the International Jumping Rider's Club.

The IJRC was created to be, and still remains,

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**“The international sport was a bigger bowl of fish than I had ever known. It was then that I realized that this diversity also brought complications. Who would organize all the different players?”**

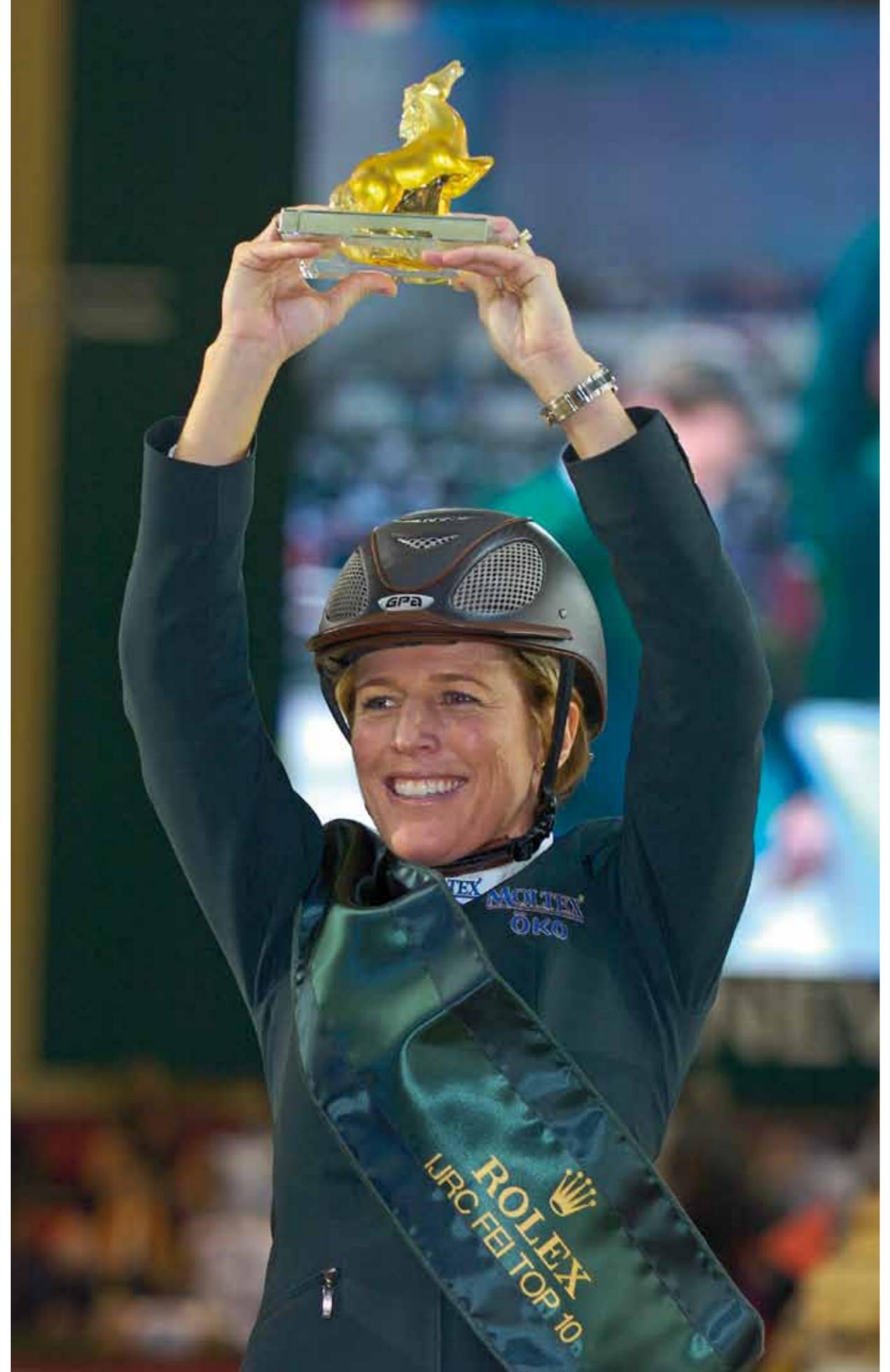


the organization which represents the riders. It ensures that the riders' rights are respected, their opinions heard and their needs acknowledged. Following the riders' suggestions, the IJRC makes sure that shows provide proper conditions, facilities and treatment -- fair for both the athlete and his/her horse. The IJRC is an essential link between the FEI and the organizers and the riders.

In addition to being an important governing force for the riders, the IJRC has also created some of the finer aspects of our sport, including the World Ranking List and the Top Ten Final. I will always fondly remember winning the Top Ten Final on two occasions with my great horse Shutterfly. I was honored to have the opportunity to compete against the best in the world in a special event. Still today, as I am striving to get back in the Top Ten, I enjoy watching the event as one of the highlights of the year.

I am also grateful to the personalities behind the IJRC which have kept it alive and thriving. Just to mention one, Eleonora Ottaviani has been the backbone of the organization for many years. She has worked relentlessly in the name of the riders. Eleonora has demonstrated that she can be a tough player on the international stage and also a friendly face when things go wrong.

The IJRC has established its importance over the last forty years. Its longevity has proven it to be of great value to the riders and to the sport as a whole. Through the betterment of conditions for horse and rider, in addition to the promotion of communication between the various constituents in the international sport, the IJRC has succeeded in bringing the equestrian sport to a higher level. I am grateful to have the IJRC and to be part of it."





# Kent Farrington

## USA

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**Farrington's many accomplishments include over twenty-five Grand Prix wins, team Gold at the 2011 Pan American Games in Guadalajara, the King George V Gold Cup at CSIO Hickstead and many others. He also won team Bronze in Caen at the FEI World Equestrian Games. Farrington was the first American to win the International Jumping Riders Club Rolex Top Ten Final in 2015, and he won team Silver with Voyeur at the Río 2016 Olympic Games. He is NARG representative in the IJRC.**

### What does the club mean for you?

"The IJRC is a representation of the sport today. It was started by riders so that we as a group could have a voice, and I think it has only grown in strength and importance since it began many years ago.

### What is your best memory related to the club?

My best memories are when I see the value of

the group of riders. When we go to a meeting to discuss the future of the sport and you see that the age differences and background differences are all put aside because everyone's interest is in what is best for the sport from our perspective.

### Did the club represent for you also friendship and nice memories?

The Top 10 Final has become a highlight of the sport. It is something I always look forward to and is fun to do with my friends and competitors.

### What would you say to a young rider to convince them to be part of the club?

If a young rider is really interested in the sport, I would suggest it is important to understand that riders must stick together. In order for us to help guide the future of the sport we need to work together and have one voice. That is best plan for the best future of the sport."

# Tiffany Foster

## Canada

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**A member of the IJRC, Foster represented Canada at the 2012 London Olympics. In 2015 she was part of the team winning Gold at the Pan American Games, and in 2016 achieved her dream of being once again selected to represent her country at the Rio de Janeiro Olympics. She is NARG representative in the IJRC.**

"The IJRC means a lot to me. I think it does a great job of representing riders from all around the world and unifying all of us as one cohesive group. I have the privilege of being able to compete frequently in North America as well as Europe and I know that if I ever have an issue or concern my first phone call is to the IJRC and they have always been there for me. It's great to have all of the top riders in the

world working together and giving insightful opinions that help shape and influence our sport. My favourite memory is seeing two very important people to me, Kent Farrington and Eric Lamaze, win the Top Ten Final in back-to-back years. The Top Ten is one of the best classes of the year to watch and to see them both win it was very special. I suggest that every up-and-coming rider joins the IJRC because the more united we are, the stronger we are, and the club is one of the most important groups in our sport today!"



# Markus Fuchs

## Switzerland

**The IJRC Representative for the FEI Jumping Committee from 1997-2000, Fuchs retired from the sport in 2009. He represented his country five times at the Olympic Games from 1988-2004, winning Silver in 2000 as part of the Swiss team. Over the same period, he won numerous medals at the European Show Jumping Championships, including individual Silver in 1999 and team Gold in 1995. He was World Cup Champion in 2001.**

"I always was of the opinion that riders who are constantly in the Top One Hundred of the ranking list have a responsibility to develop and

improve the sport in various ways. In this respect, the regulations play an important role, and therefore top riders should actively participate in the IJRC. A united and strong riders' club is able to change things for better. That was my main reason for putting time and energy into the IJRC. One of my best memories is also one of my last. \*With a humorous picture of myself and the comment: 'It's time to say Goodbye,' I invited all of my colleagues from the IJRC to attend my last round at the CSIO St Gallen 2009. Every ambitious young rider should join the club in order to understand/follow the development of our sport and to influence upcoming changes to the regulations."



# Steve Guerdat

## Switzerland



**An active member of the IJRC, Guerdat was the winner of the Rolex IJRC Top Ten Final in 2010. In 2012, he won individual Gold at the Olympic Games in London. He was the winner of the World Cup Final in both 2015 and 2016.**

“My very best wishes to our club, which is vital for the development of our sport. A good Riders’ Club is needed to counter the errors of our federation, the FEI. We have a federation, which deals mainly with political and administrative issues, like most federations, and which is often far removed from sport. And we -- we are very far removed from their concerns.

The sporting side should prevail, but as in most other federations and in business, it is politics that wins (at first sight); we must try to counterbalance that -- or at least be heard. And even if you don’t often win, the worst thing is not to try, not to fight for what you think is right. We have to try everything.

It is important that there is an organisation whose priority is the sport, which dares to dream in this very political environment. We have been able to make them accept some things, at times: to fight against the harmonisation of entry fees based on the American system, for instance -- but it’s sad that we needed to fight at all to avoid that, right?

**Steve Guerdat, champion olympique 2012, vainqueur des finales de Coupe du monde 2015 et 2016, gagnant de la finale du Top 10 Rolex IJRC 2010**

« Tous mes vœux à notre Club, qui est important pour le bon développement de notre sport. Il est nécessaire d’avoir un bon Club des cavaliers, également pour contrer les erreurs de notre fédération, la FEI. On a une fédération, qui s’occupe surtout des questions politiques et administratives, comme la plupart des fédérations, et qui est très éloignée du sport. Et nous, nous sommes très éloignés de tout ça. Le côté sportif devrait primer, mais comme dans la plupart des autres fédérations et dans le business, c’est la politique qui l’emporte (prime) ; on doit essayer de contrebalancer ça ou en tout cas de se faire entendre. Et même si on ne gagne pas souvent, la pire des choses serait de ne pas essayer, de ne pas se battre pour ce qu’on pense juste. On doit tout essayer.

Il est important qu’il y ait un organisme dont la priorité est le sport, qui essaie de garder du rêve dans ce milieu très politique. On a pu faire avancer certaines choses, lutter contre l’harmonisation des engagements sur le système américain, mais c’est triste qu’il faille une telle bagarre (lutte) pour éviter ça, non ? Au-delà des problèmes à court terme, des

Beyond the short-term problems -- fair rankings, the defence of the Nations Cups -- the issue that worries me the most at the moment is that we are once again becoming an elitist sport.

When I started riding, riding was not necessarily seen in a good light: my friends believed it to be a sport exclusively for the rich. "You have money, you can ride!" they would say. And we don't like to hear that as a child. Then, the sport began to democratise and become more popular and accessible and make more children dream. The most talented had their opportunities. We were going in the right direction, at last!

At the same time, many other sports were doing the exact opposite. If you compare Formula One today to that of thirty or forty years ago, I think the drivers back then would not recognize the 'drivers' of today. In football, players have become 'little princesses', with whims.

For the past five or six years, we have seen the multiplication of competitions with pay-cards and the beginning of the Global Tour, which knew how to create a circuit on the side, intelligently, and which did not initiate the system of pay-cards, but has moved the sport to another new dimension, unfortunately. This has meant that we have become, once again, an elitist sport, a sport of the rich, inaccessible to normal people – at all this at very high speed. And this is with the approval of the FEI, which has done nothing to prevent things from going this way.

When we have the privilege of practising a sport that we love and can earn a living from, we must feel grateful and give something back. We must put back in a bit of what we receive, because it doesn't feel like a job; we live from our passion, fortunately. Many sportspeople complain of working hard, having practised for three or four hours before getting a massage at a 5-star hotel and going home in a Ferrari. I think they should first say thank you and feel indebted for what we have.

Instead, the opposite is occurring. We are closing off our sport, making it inaccessible,

rankings justes, la défense des Coupes des Nations, des sujets du moment, ce qui m'inquiète le plus c'est qu'on en revient à une approche élitiste du sport. Quand j'ai commencé à monter, l'équitation n'était pas forcément bien vue, mes copains parlaient d'un sport de riches, « Tu as de l'argent, tu peux monter ! », et on n'aime pas entendre ça enfant. Ensuite, le sport a commencé à se démocratiser et à se populariser, à devenir plus accessible et à faire rêver plus d'enfants. Les plus talentueux avaient leurs chances. On allait dans la bonne direction.

Dans le même temps, beaucoup d'autres sports faisaient le chemin inverse. Si vous comparez la Formule 1 aujourd'hui à celle d'il y a trente ou quarante ans, je pense que les pilotes d'alors ne nommeraient pas ceux d'aujourd'hui des pilotes. En football, les joueurs sont devenus des « princesses », avec des caprices.

Depuis cinq ou six ans, la multiplication des concours avec pay-cards et le début du Global Tour, qui a su créer son circuit de son côté, intelligemment, et qui n'a pas initié le système des pay-cards, mais l'a fait passer à une toute autre dimension, on revient hélas à un sport totalement élitiste, à un sport de riches, inaccessible pour des gens normaux, et ça à vitesse grand V. Et avec l'aval de la FEI, qui n'a rien fait contre.

Quand on a le privilège de faire un sport que l'on aime et d'en vivre, on se doit d'être reconnaissant et de rendre quelque chose à son sport. De rendre un peu de ce que l'on reçoit, car on ne fait pas un travail, on vit de notre passion. Beaucoup de sportifs se plaignent de travailler dur, pour s'être entraîné trois ou quatre heures avant de recevoir un massage dans un hôtel 5 étoiles et de repartir à la maison en Ferrari, or ils devraient d'abord dire merci et se sentir redevables. Là, c'est tout le contraire, on ferme notre sport, on le rend inaccessible, et ça m'inquiète vraiment. Si ça continue, je n'aurai même plus envie de pratiquer ce sport, je continuerai bien sûr



and this really worries me. If it continues like this, I will not want to practise this sport anymore. I will continue to ride, of course, because I like it, but our sport must keep its values intact.

The most beautiful thing a child can say to me is: "One day, I would like to ride a horse and try to do the same as you; I dream of being a professional rider". Today, how should I answer him? "Forget it, that's not possible, if you don't have a few tens of millions in your parents' account, go play football or play tennis. Do something else!"

Today, we are unfortunately going in this direction, which goes far beyond what we can do to keep credible rankings or Nations Cups. This is far more serious: it's the philosophy itself that we need to review and change. Many riders benefit now, in the short term, without worrying about the future of their sport; they don't feel they have a debt to pay. I would like to ask them: "What will you say to your own children if they are really talented, and ask you to pay to start in competition? . . . What will you say?"

à monter, car j'aime ça, mais notre sport doit pouvoir garder ses valeurs.

La plus belle chose qu'un enfant puisse me dire, c'est « Un jour, j'ai envie de monter à cheval et essayer de faire comme toi, je rêve d'être cavalier professionnel ». Aujourd'hui, que dois-je lui répondre ? « Oublie, ce n'est pas possible, si tu n'as pas quelques dizaines de millions sur le compte de tes parents, va jouer au foot ou faire du tennis, fais autre chose ! » Aujourd'hui, on va hélas dans cette direction, donc ça dépasse largement ce que l'on peut faire pour garder des rankings crédibles ou des Coupes des Nations, c'est beaucoup plus grave, c'est toute la philosophie qu'il faut revoir et changer. Beaucoup de cavaliers en profitent maintenant, à court terme, sans se soucier de l'avenir de leur sport, ils ne se sentent pas redevables. J'aimerais leur demander ceci : « Que répondrez-vous à vos propres enfants, qui monteront super bien, quand ils vous demanderont de payer une table ou plus pour monter tel ou tel concours ? »

# Emile Hendrix

## Netherlands



**Hendrix was part of the IJRC Board for many years, during the presidency of Cayetano Martínez de Irujo. For more than a quarter of a century he was at the absolute top of Dutch show jumping. The horses Finesse and Livius are inseparably associated with his name. He participated in the Atlanta Olympic Games in 1996 and in the Aachen World Championship in 1986 as well as numerous European championships.**

### What does the IJRC mean to you?

I very much appreciated being a IJRC Board member when I was an international rider. I really enjoyed working with Cayetano, the President of the Club. The one who kept everything together was Eleonora -- and without her the Club would not be the way it is now. We had very good meetings, some of them at my place, some in other shows. We had a wonderful time and the Club was very important to me.

### What are your memories related to the club?

I have a lot of memories, some of them related to when the club had big issues with the FEI regarding various things. In my opinion, the Club is one of the main stakeholders of the sport. We are a very important group and we should have a big input and a big influence on

many decisions happening in favour of show jumping. The Board members should not only think as riders but -- as Ludger Beerbaum did many times -- they should also thought as if they were on the chair of FEI, or one of the organisers. Most of the board members were open-minded and this was very important. Today with many discussions going on, like the one about ranking, the Club has to be very strong since it holds the ranking rights. I was in the working group lately in Lausanne, and I was in favour of having a ranking for rider/horse combinations. Secondly, I don't think we have too many ranking classes but the way so many ranking classes count at the shows right now is too much.

This has been my position for a long time because I was always in the position of the riders that have maybe only one good horse. It is difficult for the people with several horses to really get close to them. Of course, you could say that everyone should have more horses -- but it is not easy for everybody. That is something I always felt quite strongly about.

### What was your best memory related to the club?

It was when the Top Ten was created. Having the best riders in the world competing together was one of the highlights achieved by the Club and it still exists right now!



**How has the club changed compared to its beginning? Would you suggest that a young rider join the club? What would you tell him to convince him/her?**

This is a bit hard for me to answer because I have not been in the meetings lately, but from what I've understood, now it is sometimes difficult for people to attend the meetings, and even if they have a lot of questions on their mind, these questions don't come always out during the meetings. And another thing -- it has been very, very difficult to find new people who are interested in being on the board of the Club. A message I would like to give young riders is that I know riding is their core business -- but I think their commitment to being a board member or a member of the Club is very important because the Club is fighting for them.

This is something they really have to understand, and they have to be united, because if riders are no longer united in a Club, they will lose their power.

This is a very good reason why they should be committed, should be members of the Club and should attend the Club General Assembly. I had a very nice time in the IJRC and it was a real learning process to be with people together on the board. And that was a very important thing for me.

It is important to be involved with the Club to fight together to achieve a better sport, to improve it, to be part of it and to be very united. Even though now I'm not a rider any more, I feel I'm very welcome at the IJRC and I really appreciate this.

# Eric Lamaze

## Canada

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**Lamaze won individual Gold and team Silver at the 2008 Olympic Games on his beloved horse, Hickstead. The pair went on to win major Grand Prix events in Geneva, Aachen, La Baule and Rome. 'He was the best horse in the world,' Lamaze told CNN in 2017.**

'The IJRC means a lot to me. The Club gives a voice to the riders with the FEI, and allows us to have power as a group. My best memory is winning the Rolex IJRC Top Ten Final in Geneva last year (2016) with Fine Lady 5. The Top Ten Final is a unique competition within our sport and big credit goes to the IJRC for developing this innovative concept and to Rolex for

supporting it. I already know most of the riders from competition but the Club gives us a good reason to come together, united as friends. I would certainly encourage young riders to join the IJRC. They get a lot of knowledge about what is happening in the sport, and it helps them to stay up to date with current news. Not everyone has time to read all of the press releases from the FEI and other bodies, and the Club helps us to stay informed.'

# François Mathy Jr.

## Belgium

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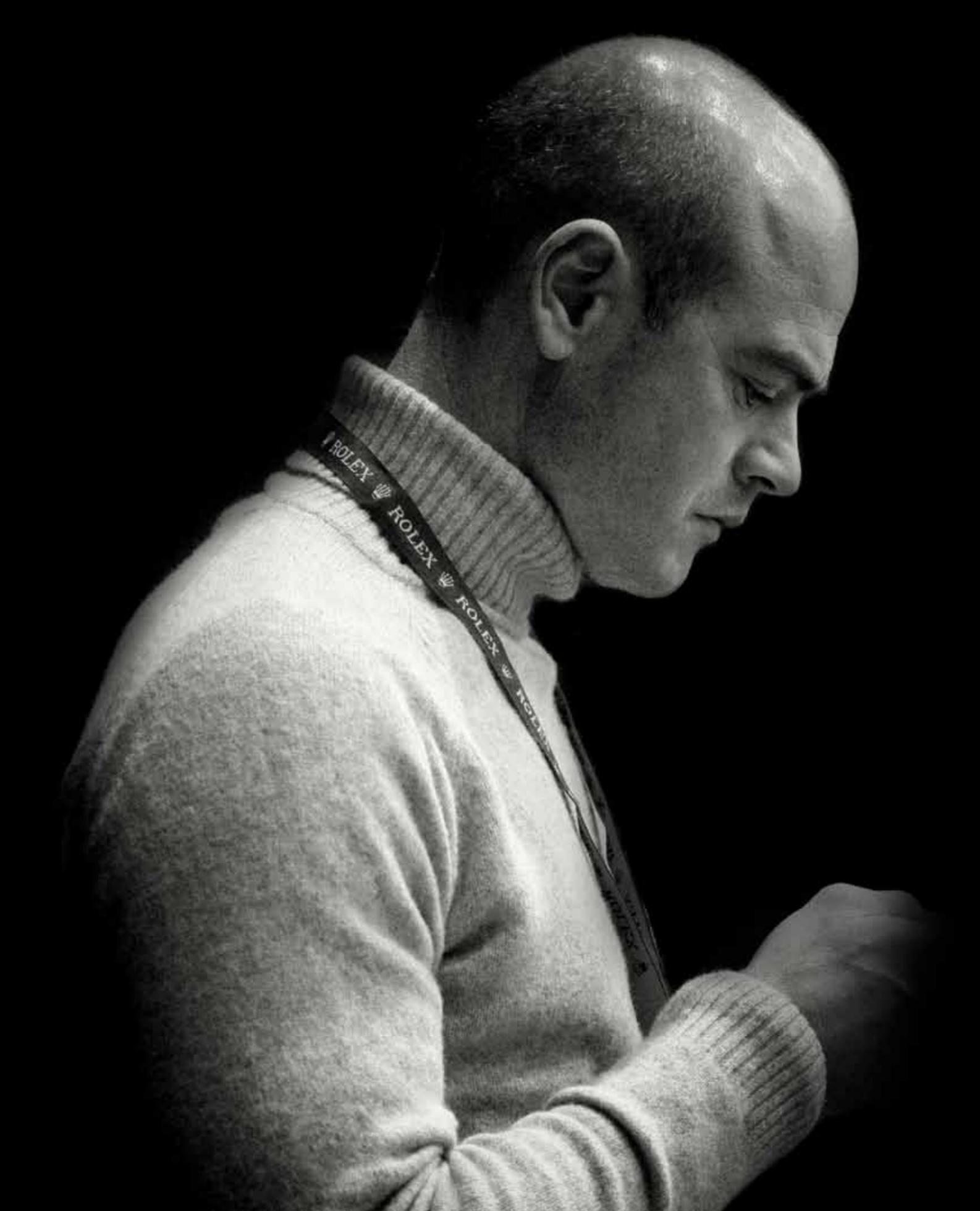
**The winner of many competitions, including the San Patrignano, Modena and Madrid Grand Prix events, François Mathy JR has also been among the top finishers in many prestigious Nations Cups. He represented Belgium at the World Equestrian Games in Rome and the World Cup Final in Lyon. He is the accounting auditor of the IJRC.**

"I first joined the IJRC when I met Eleonora Ottaviani. I was interested to see a professional approach to the sport connected with all the implications of the club, and how the main institutions are working hard for the sport. There are a lot of different parties – the FEI, show organizers and the riders -- and each have their own interests. These have to be combined, and if nobody represents or defends

the riders, the other parties will wield too much power, and they will not move the sport in the right direction. For this reason the club is extremely important to me.

On the Committee, every moment was a "sporting moment" during the competitions -- but it was also important for the personal side of life. Some of the nicest moments were connected to San Patrignano, where we held a meeting in the hotel on the beach!

If you want to be part of something, you have to be active and not stand around complaining in your own stable. You have to look forward and try to view the sport from all angles and see how it works. The club is the right place to start making changes in the right direction."





# Kevin Staut

## France

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An IJRC board member, in 2009 Staut won Individual European Gold. In 2016, he was part of the French jumping team winning Gold in the Rio de Janeiro Olympics.

**“My first memory of the IJRC is of walking into a room with all the top riders I had just seen on TV”**

It was hugely stressful, believe me! I'm too young to know the club from its beginning but think it's really important to be part of a strong working riders' group to defend the values of our sport. Young riders need to be involved in the discussions and the actions of the club because they are the future of equestrian sport!”



The key to a successful future for any association is constant renewal, as long-time members of the IJRC all agree. To that end, the Club actively encourages the participation of young, upcoming riders, who bring new ideas and energy to the scene. Below, some of the most talented new names in show jumping tell us why they hope to play an active role in the future of the IJRC.

# IJRC NEXT GENERATION

\*The **A YOUNG RIDERS ACADEMY** is a program conceived for talented young European show jumpers, under the patronage of the European Equestrian Federation (EEF), with the cooperation of the International Jumping Riders Club (IJRC) and the support of Rolex. Founded in 2014 by Athenaeum, a non-profit association, the programme will give talented riders between the ages of 18 and 23 the chance to get six months of training and boarding at a well-known professional stable. On top of that: professional education in communication, business and economics, veterinary and legal practice related to show jumping. The objective is to develop future champions as well as potential managers of this sport.



# Derin Demirsoy

TURKEY

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**In 2011 Demirsoy won the individual silver medal at the European Championships for juniors. It was the first time in Turkish equestrian history that a junior won a medal at the European Championships. He was part of the A Young Riders Academy in 2016.**

“As the new generation of show jumping, it is our responsibility to make sure that the right regulations are in place to ensure the continuity and global growth of our sport without sacrificing any essential values. It is therefore crucial that the youth play an active role in the IJRC.”

# Reed Catherine Kessler

USA

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**Kessler began riding at six months old in a basket on her first pony, as both her parents rode. At 18, she was nominated for the US show jumping team at the 2012 Olympic Games in London, making her the youngest show jumping competitor in Olympic history.**

‘It is crucial that the younger generation is an active part of the International Jumping Riders Club. We are the future of show jumping, and the responsibility falls on us to help shape and protect our sport.’

# Michael Duffy

IRELAND

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**In 2012, aged just 17, Michael Duffy from County Galway, Ireland, became the youngest ever Senior Irish National Champion. He was part of the A Young Riders Academy in 2016.**

“The IJRC gives us riders a voice to help develop our sport for the better. The next generation of riders need to have their voices heard, as it is us who will reap the benefits in the future. The IJRC is the best platform to do this, and create the best sport we can.”

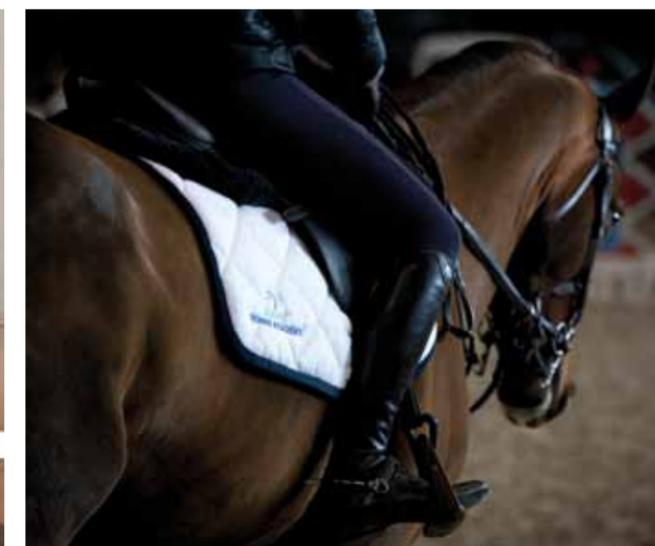
# Laura Klaphake

GERMANY

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**23-year-old Klaphake jumped to her first five stars Grand Prix in Hamburg and this year represented Germany at the European Championships in Gothenburg, Sweden. She was part of the A Young Riders Academy in 2016.**

“It is very important that we, the younger generation, are a part of the IJRC. We are the future of our sport. Without being active in the riders’ club we won’t be able to protect our sport, which is our responsibility.”





04



# TOP 10 FINAL



The Top Ten Final recognises and celebrates the achievements of the best show jumpers in the world.

# The story of the IJRC Top 10 Final



The Top Ten was born at the end of the nineties, when the International Jumping Riders Club, in the persons of Eleonora Ottaviani, François Mathy Jr. and Rodrigo Pessoa, started to work to improve the formula of the ranking list. They also found a sponsor: Susi Gandini, a woman of high fashion, the sister of former Italian Federation president Vittorio Orlandi. A special class was created to thank and to give visibility to the sponsor, which had helped to develop a more accurate ranking list.

The result of this was the invention of the Top Ten Final, which recognizes and celebrates the achievements of the best show jumpers in the world. The initial sponsors were Gandini and Rolex. Only the Top Ten riders in the global rankings were invited to go head-to-head and only a brilliant sportsman or sports-woman able to perform at their very best on every occasion, is capable of winning this elite competition, which demands exceptional timing, courage and skill.

#### THE FORMAT

According to scientific research, the average spectator is able to watch television, without interruption, for no more than 45 minutes at a time. With this in mind, a competition was

created that was just 40 minutes long. The shorter competition format created for the Top Ten has proved to be ideal for TV and has undoubtedly contributed to the large global audience who watch the show from around the world.

Again with television in mind, it was decided that the contest should have a small number of starters and ten riders seemed about right. As selection criteria is determined by a rider's position in the Rankings, the event naturally attracts some of the most well-known and accomplished athletes in the world and creates an exciting atmosphere which is unrivalled in indoor jumping events.

The original formula -- still in place today -- has two courses, allowing the riders to jump the first longer course with a Gran Prix horse, and the second speed course with a particularly fast horse.

Two different horses are still permitted today. The idea of competing over two courses is additionally linked to the importance of giving a face to these champions and of introducing them to the public. At the end of the first course the riders dismount from their horses and walk back into the arena to be interviewed. This formula also thinks of the horses' welfare, without forcing them to pause immediately



**“It is always a marvellous adventure to work on this special event. All the editions give me unforgettable emotions, that remain: riders, organizers, sponsors, public and all the people involved.**

**One of the best things is to know that this unique and special competition is offered every year by the International Jumping Riders Club. I wonder if all this is fantasy or reality.”**

ELEONORA OTTAVIANI about the TOP 10

after jumping the course because the rider has to be interviewed.

Since the beginning, then, far-sightedness and modernity have been the basic ingredients of the Top Ten Final, now one of the highlights of the equestrian calendar. The aim is to make jumping an involving, fast-moving spectacle, and to transform riders and horses into stars on a par with other sports. Ten riders, ten styles and ten personalities are the focus of this event.

The Top Ten final is probably the most competitive Show Jumping contest in the world with only the Top Ten riders in the global rankings invited to go head-to-head. Only a brilliant sportsman or sports-woman able to perform at their very best on every occasion, is capable of winning this elite competition, which demands exceptional timing, courage and skill.

#### **LOCATION**

Once the success of the competition had been established, the International Jumping Riders Club began looking for a suitable location that had to be linked to an already successful international competition, taking place at the end of the year. Finding the right arena wasn't easy; most events organizers were not open

to new competitions and there was concern about which horses would then compete in the Grand Prix. Initially, Geneva seemed to provide the ideal solution and Alban Poudret and Pierre Genecand gave the IJRC Club full confidence. They dedicated one entire evening of the Geneva competition to the Top Ten, and allowed the IJRC Club to organize everything as they wanted within their event. After the first editions, other organisers expressed interest in hosting the Top Ten. The event became itinerant, with the aim of increasing visibility for the Club, its goals and riders -- who were all committed to working for the good of the sport. Besides Geneva, Brussels, Paris, Stockholm have all hosted the Top Ten Final and many others competitions have expressed interest in providing a temporary home for the event. The inaugural competition took place in Geneva and was held in the city for seven years in a row,

#### **FROM 2001-2007.**

2010 marks the 10th anniversary of the popular competition and it is set to return to Geneva, after being held in Brussels and Paris in 2008 and 2009 respectively. In 2013 Stockholm played host to the event.

### PRIZE MONEY

The Top Ten's prize money has increased significantly year after year, but what makes this class special was best explained by Ludger Beerbaum, who, following the first edition said that he would have taken part even without prize money, because of the competition's special atmosphere – and because he felt he was doing something for the IJRC. The Club has special meaning for riders, who know that it always supports the athletes, whatever the necessity. The International Portuguese rider, Luciana Diniz, who will take part in the Top Ten 2015 for the first time, had the same thought. Luciana's first reaction when she qualified for the Top Ten Final class was as follows: "It is a dream come true. I will take part in this competition for the pleasure of doing it and not for the prize money".

### THE FORMULA

The IJRC Board worked hard to ensure the success of this event. Having two courses - and a break between them that lasted not more than 5-10 minutes – proved crucial. The riders, too, were anxious to show what the IJRC was capable of from an organizational point of view. The formula required experienced personnel in the warm-up arena and near the main arena entranceway.

As a result, Emile Hendrix and François Mathy Jr were appointed to coordinate and organize

the event. The formula is somewhat unusual; for example the riders can't see the other competitors. It's a bit like a ski race in which the athletes are asked to race without knowing the previous scores.

With its unique formula, over the years, the Final has played host to some spectacular and memorable performances including Ludger Beerbaum's consecutive victories in 2001 and 2002. Meredith Michaels-Beerbaum (2004 & 2006) and Rodrigo Pessoa (2003 & 2005) join Ludger as the only three riders to have raised the trophy twice.

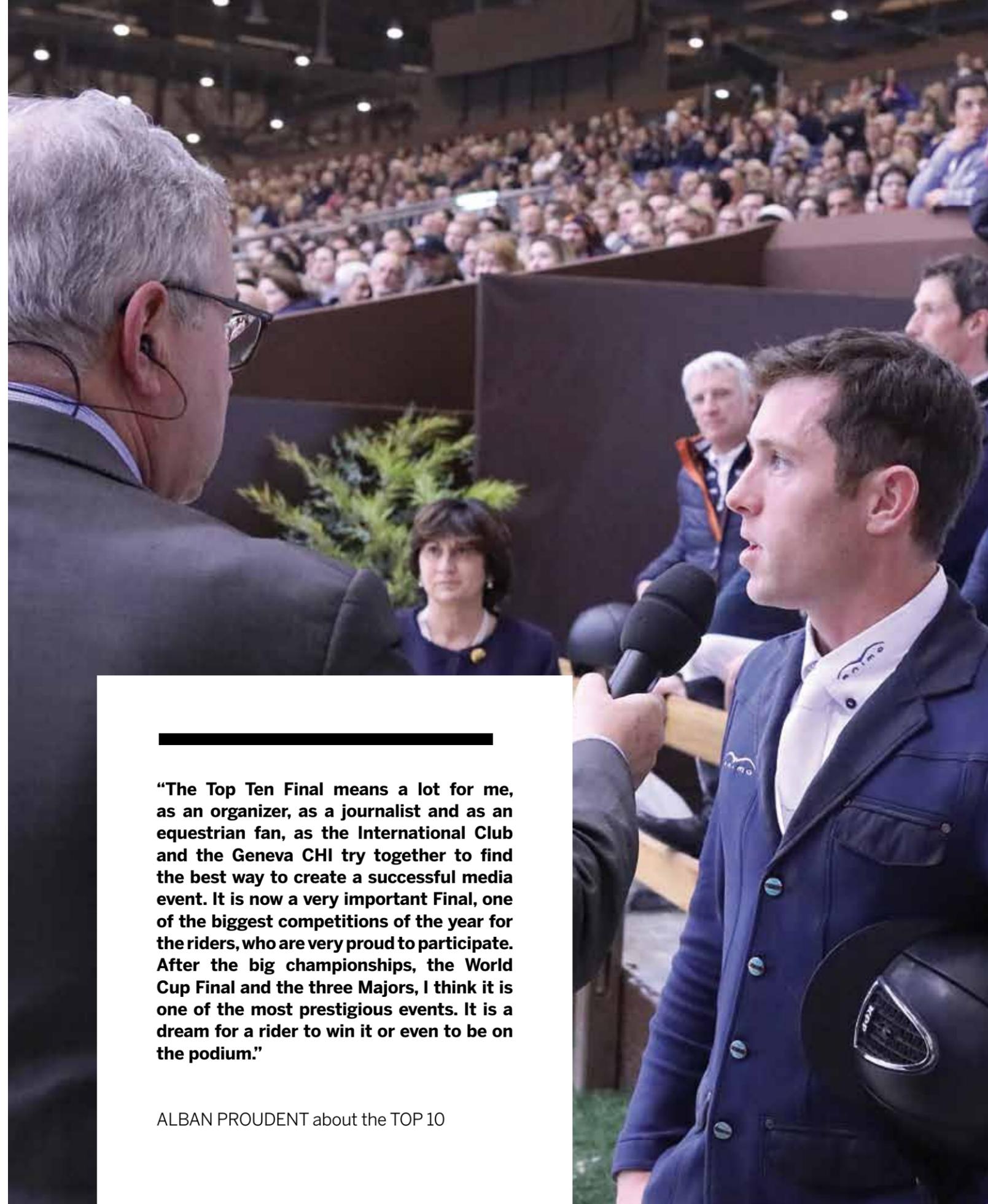
### THOUGHTS FROM THE "DOTTORESSA"

From the book: "Le Concours Hippique International de Genève, from 1926 up to today, a History of Passion", Written by Alban Poudret, Editions Slatkine.

Known affectionately as the 'dottorressa', Eleonora Ottaviani, the dynamic IJRC Director, shares her notes from the first final, written in the little notebooks she carries around:

"Friday the 7th December 2001: During the music of the winners round in Geneva, typical of the city,

I became very emotional, as I knew that tomorrow would be the big day. The Top Ten was a project that we had long dreamed about and created all together, by mutual consent. The formula was there, the TV presence had been



**"The Top Ten Final means a lot for me, as an organizer, as a journalist and as an equestrian fan, as the International Club and the Geneva CHI try together to find the best way to create a successful media event. It is now a very important Final, one of the biggest competitions of the year for the riders, who are very proud to participate. After the big championships, the World Cup Final and the three Majors, I think it is one of the most prestigious events. It is a dream for a rider to win it or even to be on the podium."**

ALBAN PROUDENT about the TOP 10



**“After going to Lisbon to watch the 2000 Tennis Masters, won by my fellow countryman Gustavo Kuerten, I really believed that show jumping needed a Top Ten final as well. The IJRC board talked about it in Geneva in December of the year 2000 and it was born the following year. I think the Rolex IJRC Top Ten Final has become a highlight of the season on the show jumping calendar for the riders involved. It’s always very special to be able to participate in this prestigious competition and eventually to win it.”**

RODRIGO PESSOA (Winner of the TOP 10 in 2003-2005) about the TOP 10

thought out; above all I think that it is easy to work with people that, as here in Geneva, have sport as their main priority. It is a pity that it isn't like this every where...”

The day after: “At the curtain, the tension is at its height. I have a ball in my stomach, it's like attending an examination. The credibility of our club, the IJRC depends on this final, but the riders don't realize this, we could lose face.”

“Fortunately, everything looks good, the stadium is full, Peter and Alban have never seen such a vibrant stadium and so full ... the volunteers tribune is packed and we had to improvise some extra places.

We are all switched on, Jos (Lansink) told me that he gathered his nervous strength: the parade can go on! Cayetano and Emile (Hendrix) ran to me from the paddock: Michael (Whitaker) had a problem with his horse, we have to replace him... with only 15 minutes to go!

The first round went fine, but Michael had to retire; that's normal if you have to make a last-minute change to the horse!

Second round: the interviews were good. Markus made a mistake on the last fence, but did not lose his sense of humour at the microphone. Even Rodrigo with 8 points looks happy about the Final: everything went well! A sublime race, our race, a world championship in 50 minutes! Ludger beat Ludo, they congratulated each other and we have a beautiful winner: Ludger, celebrated by everybody!

The prize-giving ceremony was splendid: the podium, the joy, the adoring public during the winners' round. Is this real?

# Gandini Tessuti

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After the first Top Ten edition, the former Italian Federation President Vittorio Orlandi, brother of Susi Gandini, woman of high fashion, who was the first sponsor of the Top Ten, wrote:

“My sister Susi and I were very happy with the wonderful evening of the first TOP TEN Final. First of all, we wish to thank and compliment all the riders for their kindness and professionalism – besides their ability. I have never watched such a high-grade competition. In the whole history of showjumping, this is the first time that ten riders of such skill do compete. The course, with all its difficulties and heights, seemed absolutely easy. And Beerbaum course was a real show. Congratulations everybody!”

“We send all the riders, the Board and the untiring Director our warmest wishes for a Merry Christmas and A Happy New Year 2002. We will hear from one another soon next year.”

And fifteen years after the first edition, the former Italian Federation President Vittorio Orlandi, wrote:

“From the perspective of today, I’m extremely happy to have contributed, along with my sister, Ms Gandini, to the birth of this superb event, which is now recognised, worldwide, as one of the most important on the international calendar.”



# Rolex and the IJRC united in Equestrian glory

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As the International Jumping Riders Club marks its 40th anniversary, Rolex, its founding supporter, celebrates six decades of excellence in equestrianism at the highest level. The Swiss watch brand’s privileged relationship with the sport is highlighted by its partnerships with the top-ranked riders and principal competitions, including the Rolex Grand Slam of Show Jumping, and the four Major events: The Dutch Masters, the CHIO Aachen, the CSIO Spruce Meadows ‘Masters’, and the CHI Geneva.

Rolex’s strong ties with equestrianism build on a tradition that began in 1957, through an alliance with British show jumper Pat Smythe, who became the brand’s first equestrian Testimonee. Since that auspicious partnership, the brand’s involvement in horsemanship has grown to the extent that it is now behind some of the most innovative competitions, such as the Rolex Top 10 Final.

When the International Jumping Riders Club unveiled the concept of a Top 10 Final in 2001, Rolex was there to support the event from the start. A highlight of the equestrian calendar and the season finale, the 2017 contest, held at the prestigious CHI Geneva, brings together the 10 highest ranked riders in the world, head to head, to crown the best show jumper of the year. This year’s 17th edition of the Top 10 Final marks major anniversaries for both Rolex and the IJRC,

and honours their long-standing partnership and commitment to elevating the sport.

Driven by its universally recognized excellence and long-standing tradition, Rolex has embraced the rich heritage of equestrianism. Its enduring support has helped shape the future of the sport, in collaboration with cherished partners, such as the International Jumping Riders Club and its flagship event, the Rolex IJRC Top 10 Final.



ROLEX IJRC TOP TEN FINAL TROPHY



ROLEX IJRC TOP 10

# Final winners

YEAR	RIDER	HORSE	PLACE
2016	ERIC Lamaze (CAN)	Fine Lady	Geneva
2015	KENT Farrington (USA)	Voyeur	Geneva
2014	SCOTT Brash (GBR)	Hello Sanctos	Geneva
2013	DEUSSER Daniel (GER)	Evita van de Veldbalie	Stockholm
2012	AHLMANN Christian (GER)	Taloubet Z	Geneva
2011	TWOMEY Billy (IRL)	Tinka's Serenade	Paris
2010	GUERDAT Steve (SUI)	Jalisco Solier	Geneva
2009	EHNING Marcus (GER)	Plot Blue	Paris
2008	ROBERT Michel (FRA )	Kellemoi de Pepita	Brussels
2007	KÛRTEN Jessica (IRL)	Castle Forbes Libertina	Geneva
2006	MICHAELS-BEERBAUM Meredith (GER)	Shutterfly	Geneva
2005	PESSOA Rodrigo (BRA)	Baloubet Du Rouet	Geneva
2004	MICHAELS-BEERBAUM Meredith (GER)	Shutterfly	Geneva
2003	PESSOA Rodrigo (BRA)	Baloubet Du Rouet	Geneva
2002	BEERBAUM Ludger(GER)	Gladdys S	Geneva
2001	BEERBAUM Ludger (GER)	Goldfever	Geneva







## **credits**

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Laura Borromeo - IJRC Team

**ART DIRECTION** BeeDesignLab

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Thunholm – Stefano Grasso – Stefano Secchi  
– World of Showjumping – IJRC Archive Young  
Riders Academy Archive – Alban Poudret  
Archive

**TEXTS** Alban Poudret – Laura Borromeo –  
IJRC Archive – Max E. Ammann – Eleonora  
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