

PRIX DE DIANE LONGINES

DIMANCHE 20 JUIN

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DIMANCHE 20 JUIN 2021 - CHANTILLY

JOAN OF ARC AND THE BASQUE JOCKEY IORITZ MENDIZABAL COMBINE TO GIVE AIDAN O'BRIEN HIS FIRST PRIX DE DIANE LONGINES WIN

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- Video of Tony Parker with the jockeys : [HERE](#)
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The Irish filly Joan of Arc, ridden by the Basque jockey Ioritz Mendizabal and trained by Aidan O'Brien, came up trumps in the Prix de Diane Longines at Chantilly on Sunday. It was a scenario reminiscent of the Qatar Prix du Jockey-Club, which was run at the same course on 6 June.

Aidan O'Brien, based in Ireland, is one of the most successful trainers in Europe... However, incredibly, he had never won either the Qatar Prix du Jockey-Club or the Prix de Diane Longines prior to this season: and Ioritz Mendizabal, entrusted with the task of piloting both St Mark's Basilica and Joan of Arc, has subsequently enabled him to achieve this particular Holy Grail. Joan of Arc is owned by Coolmore: one of the mega-powers of the thoroughbred industry. She is a daughter of the greatest stallion currently in activity, Galileo.

Ioritz Mendizabal, 47, was one of the most experienced jockeys in the classic. He boasts three wins in the Qatar Prix du Jockey-Club, but this marked his first victory in the Prix de Diane Longines. He also numbers four *Cravache d'Or* titles: the accolade which goes to the jockey which has won most races in a calendar year.

Joan of Arc accounted for French-trained Philomène, ridden by Mickaël Barzalona and trained at Chantilly by André Fabre, with the latter producing a superb finish. Trainer André Fabre also saddled the third Bugarita. The Chantilly training centre also made its mark via the fourth Sibila Spain. The latter is trained by the young Christopher Head, and he was having his first runner in a race of such prestige. The fifth Rougir hails from the Calas training centre (in the South-East of France), where her trainer Cédric Rossi is based, and he, too, was having his first runner in the classic.

Quotes from connections

Aidan O'Brien (trainer of Joan of Arc, 1st)

« I'm delighted, even more so because she was bred at home by John and Susan Magnier. Well done to the whole team. Ioritz gave her a super ride. This is a race we have tried to win many times but it is not easy to win. Ioritz Mendizabal is someone very intelligent, a real horseman and whenever we have had the chance to work with him, it really puts us at ease. He is a world class jockey. According to Ioritz, she shouldn't have a problem stepping up to 2,400m. The Qatar Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe could therefore be a possibility for her. We have a lot of very good three-year-olds this year, it's very exciting. »

Hermine Bastide (representing Coolmore, owner of Joan of Arc, 1st)

« This victory comes with a lot of emotion. Surprised? Not particularly, because everyone had worked so hard, with this in mind. To win a classic always brings a deal of emotion, but this one is extra special as it was the first Prix de Diane Longines for Aidan O'Brien. »

Pierre Gasnier (representing Coolmore, breeders of Joan of Arc, 1st)

« She is the sister of Gleneagles and the fifth Group one winner out of mare, You're so thrilling, It's quite remarkable! Even better, she is perfectly named to be winning in France! »

Ioritz Mendizabal, jockey of Joan of Arc

« Aidan O'Brien is my Santa Claus! He has given me two superb horses to ride in recent weeks. I want to thank him very much. He gave me some simple instructions, but when the horses are as good as that, it's easy. All this success is a direct result of the hard work put in at home and for me to be working with the Aiden O'Brien team is just incredible! I can imagine that my two daughters and my mother were shouting at the television... Throughout the race I was just getting ready to accelerate. I wasn't pushing her, I was simply just going with her in her stride. AS of 400m out I wasn't fully sure we were going to win because Sibila Spain is a good filly, but Joan Of Arc fought hard and got there for me. »

Lisa-Jane Graffard (Godolphin French representative , owner of Philomène, 2nd)

« We are extremely happy with this performance; she has really shown that she is a top class filly. She finished quite strongly, and she is a very exciting filly going forward. The winner was very courageous. I think that Philomene is better over this distance rather than the 1,600m of the Poule d'Essai. We will step her up again because she gets every yard. In the Poule d'Essai she wasn't ready to face Group 1 opposition over 1.600m, even if she is very classy. She comes from a family that improves with age. I think she looked better in the paddock today and I think that she will come on again for that. We have always loved her. She comes from a very good pedigree, and she is also very beautiful, we are very lucky to have her. »

Maxime Guyon (jockey of Burgarita, 3rd)

« For just her third race, that was a magnificent performance. She still isn't quite hardened but that will come with time, she has run excellently today. »

Christopher Head (trainer of Sibila Spain, 4th)

« Our strategy worked out and she really did have a lovely race. Today we have really seen her quality at the top level. It is very reassuring, especially as she still has the capacity to progress- not forgetting that she didn't run as a two-year-old. Sibila Spain will progress again from this and the fact we were drawn on the wide outside may have gone against us, especially in the closing stages. As for the future, we will have a chat with her owners. You always want to win, but even still, fourth in a race like this is excellent. »

Cédric Rossi (trainer of Rougir, 5^e)

« We saw today that she gets the distance. She has come on as a three-year-old and has been unlucky on a couple of occasions. It is a shame that there wasn't a little more pace on because the jockey said that he couldn't pull her up at the finish. It's great, she is a lovely horse and if everything goes well, she will have her day. She has a lot of character, and she knows it. She can be calm just as easy as she can be excited. As for the future we don't know what we will do with her, but we will take her home and give her a kiss for a start! »

Alan Cooper (manager of the Niarchos, owner of Harajuku, 6th)

« She has run very well. 200m out we thought she was going to get there. She finished 6th but was only a length and a half off the winner. After her Group Three success, we are very happy to be involved at the finish of a classic. »

Nemone Routh (manager of HH The Aga Khan, owner of Khalidiya, 16th)

« The filly has a lot of action and the way the race was run probably didn't suit her. She lacked a bit of experience to get involved in a race as tough as this. »

Tony Parker was at Chantilly Racecourse for the Prix de Diane Longines

Tony Parker, former professional basketball player and racehorse owner who is hoping to lift France's major horseracing events with his Infinity Nine Horses stable, is amongst the guests at the Prix de Diane Longines, which has attracted 5000 authorized spectators to the Chantilly racecourse.



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