



PIAZZA di SIENA

91° CSIO ROMA 2024
MASTER D'INZEO

Press Release - 22 May 2024

ALL SET AND READY TO GO AT PIAZZA DI SIENA 2024

The sun is shining, there's a gentle breeze and the finishing touches are being quietly put in place around the historic oval at **Piazza di Siena this evening** ahead of tomorrow's opening day of **CSIO Rome 2024**, the world's most iconic horse show staged in the Borghese Gardens in the heart of Italy's beautiful capital city.

It's the calm before the storm however as the mood will change dramatically once the action gets underway at 08.00 local time tomorrow morning with a big buzz of electricity as the best riders in the world battle it out for the honours over four fabulous days of showjumping.



Lalla Novo and Diego Nepi Molineris.

Highlights

The highlights of the busy week include Friday's **Intesa Sanpaolo Nations Cup** and Sunday's career-defining **Rolex Grand Prix**. Last year the story of the Nations Cup competition was all about the Irish who won the coveted trophy for the very first time since it was first staged in 1926.

For the Boys in Green there was a huge sense of achievement when at last they landed the title their country had wanted for such a very long time. And they are hoping to do it all over again.

"We were absolutely over the moon to win here last year, it took 97 efforts to win it!", said Irish Chef d'Equipe Michael Blake this evening.



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“When I first came here we were barely pipped by Sweden into second place and at the time I didn’t know we had never won it, so obviously it went on my to-do list but it became very hard to do! Last year it went to a jump-off and luckily enough it all worked out for us. This year we are bringing what we perceive to be a strong team, the team that won the LLN in Ocala. But that was on a different continent and it was a couple of months ago so everybody is here for a reason and we are very hopeful we will have a good show, but we all know that horse sport can make fools out of any of us!”, he added out with a laugh.

Special

Like all of the riders, team managers and all the visiting crews, Blake says the CSIO in Rome is very special indeed. *“I’ve been coming here since 2017 and I absolutely love it. When you walk down the hill and see all the people sitting on the grass and watching the show and appreciating it, and the general public walking through - it puts the show back into showjumping and I love that!”*

The natural amphitheatre at Piazza di Siena provides the perfect viewing area from which to see the action, and the fact that the public can watch it for free is a huge plus in the Irishman’s opinion.

“It’s like a theatre, the arena down below where they can see it all happening and then go for an ice-cream at half time - it’s the most fabulous experience for everyone, the horses, the riders and the public!”

But there are plenty of other top teams ready to get in the way of last year’s winners and this evening the Irish were drawn in the unfavourable **first-to-go** starting position in Friday’s competition.

Draw

The draw was conducted by both Event Director **Diego Nepi Molineris** and a lady who is a legend of Italian showjumping, **Lalla Novo**. The Irish will be followed into the ring by teams from Mexico, Austria, USA, Belgium, United Arab Emirates, Germany, Sweden and Australia in that order before Team Italy take their turn as last to go.

“We are delighted to see new nations here this year and we are also happy about the the other teams that come here too” said Show Director **Sara Rifesser Monti**. *“We know this is a very important edition for those who are approaching the Olympics and we will give them sport they need”.*

There is so much history in this place where all the greats have competed over so many years, and this year CSIO Roma - Master d’Inzeo celebrates its **91st anniversary**. Placing your name on the prestigious Roll of Honour here is a lifetime goal for every rider, and the story of the 2024 edition is all about to unfold....so don’t miss a moment....

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