



Newsletter n. 26 - 21 September 2022

## DRIVING TO THE TOP OF THE WORLD

Here we go! After a full weekend dedicated to the three-day-eventing World Championship, **Pratoni del Vivaro** is ready to host the FEI Driving World Championship that will take centre stage from 22 to 25 September.

Vet-check went pretty smoothly apart from one horse that will be re-inspected tomorrow. A total of **37 athletes representing 16 nations** will perform their dressage test on Thursday and Friday. The first session on each day is scheduled to start at 10 am while the afternoon session will start at 2,30 pm.

The spectacular marathon will take place on Saturday at 10 am.

On Sunday, there will be the final competition between the cones from 10 a.m. while at 2 p.m., the grass arena 'Posillipo' will host the final event reserved for the Top 20 who will compete for the final victory.

Six nations are competing for the team podium: Australia, Belgium, France, Germany, The Netherlands and Hungary.

There are also individual competitors from Austria, Poland, Italy, Czech Republic, Romania, Spain, United States, Sweden, Switzerland and Uruguay.

Follow all the action at this link

[https://www.clipmyhorse.tv/en\\_EU/events/8870/fei-driving-world-championship-2022-pratoni-del-vivaro](https://www.clipmyhorse.tv/en_EU/events/8870/fei-driving-world-championship-2022-pratoni-del-vivaro)

## STAGE IS SET FOR THRILLING DRIVING CHAMPIONSHIP

Germany's Dirk Gerkens will be first to take his team of horses into the arena when the **FEI Driving World Championship 2022** begins with the **Dressage** phase at 10.00 local time tomorrow at Pratoni del Vivaro, Italy.

The 45-year-old German will compete as an individual and a total of 19 athletes will compete tomorrow while the remaining 18 will take their turn in the Dressage arena on Friday.

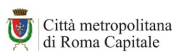
A draw of nations took place last night and the order-of-go for teams is Belgium, France, The Netherlands, Hungary, Germany and Australia. Teams consist of either two or three athletes, with the best two scores counting toward the final result.

The three members of the **Belgian** team are Tom Stokmans, Dries Degrieck and Glenn Geerts. Dressage will take place over two days and Stokman and Degrieck will compete tomorrow while Geerts will line out on Friday afternoon.

The **French** team consists of Sebastien Vincent, Anthony Horde and Benjamin Aillaud while the star-studded **Dutch side**, who are chasing down their eleventh team title in the 50-year history of these Championships that date all the way back to 1972, consists of Koos de Ronde, Bram Chardon and his father Isjbrand Chardon.

**Hungary** has taken the world team title on four occasions and first into the ring for them tomorrow will be the legendary József Dobrovitz whose son, József Jr, will compete on Friday along with third team-member and 2004 individual champion Zoltan Lazar.

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Georg von Stein, team silver medallist at the FEI World Equestrian Games in Tryon, USA in 2018, will lead the **German** team effort tomorrow while his 2018 team-mate and 2015 European individual gold medallist Michael Brauchle will compete on Friday when third team-member, Mareike Harm, will bring the Dressage phase to a close.



Boyd Exell (AUS)

Team **Australia** fields only two drivers and they both compete on Friday. Tor van den Berge will be second into the arena in the morning, and then all eyes will be on his compatriot, the phenomenal **Boyd Exell** who has been the most dominant force in the sport of Four-in-Hand Driving for many years and who will defend the individual World Championship title for the **sixth consecutive time** later in the afternoon.

## FACTS AND FIGURES

The FEI Driving World Championship 2022 will take place at **Pratoni del Vivaro** (ITA) from 22 to 25 September. This is the **25th edition of the Championship** which first took place in Münster (GER) in 1972 where Switzerland's August Dubey took the individual title and Great Britain won team gold.

A total of **37 athletes from 16 nations** will compete, and with 5 horses per athlete the total number of horses in competition is **185**.

The line-up for this week's Championship includes **all of the top-19** in the current FEI Driving World Rankings.

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The **countries represented** are: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Spain, Switzerland, Sweden, Uruguay and USA.

**6 nations** are fielding teams which can consist of either two or three athletes, with the two best performances from each team counting for the final result. The teams are from Australia, Belgium, France, Germany, Hungary and The Netherlands.

In the history of the Team Championship **The Netherlands** has taken the **greatest number of titles** with 10 in total.

**Hungary** and **The Netherlands** share the record for the biggest number of individual gold medals with six each.

The phenomenal **world number one**, 50-year-old Australian **Boyd Exell** who is also eight-time FEI Driving World Cup™ champion, has been unbeatable for individual gold at the last five world championships and is back to defend his title once again.

The **youngest competitors** at this Championship are both aged 27 - Germany's **Anna Sandmann** and Belgium's **Dries Degrieck**. The oldest competitors are both aged 61 - Uruguay's **Ernesto Colman Mena** and Dutch legend **Ijsbrand Chardon** who has nine team and four individual gold medals in his trophy cabinet.

Two sets of **fathers and sons** competing together - **Jozsef Sr and Jozsef Jr Dobrovitz** from Hungary and The Netherlands' **Ijsbrand and Bram Chardon**.



Czech athlete, **Jiri Nesvacil Jr**, competes with a team of beautiful **Kladruber** stallions (*in the picture - Parkes Media*). With a history that dates back to 1579 they are now a rare breed with a worldwide population of just 1,500, most based in the Czech Republic and 500 owned by the National Stud which is where the driver is based. Intelligent, strong and agile their distinguishing features include a convex Roman nose, expressive eyes and an elegant high-stepping gait. They have been bred to come in just two colours - grey and black.

The Marathon course designed by Germany's **Josef Middendorf** is 9km in length with 8 exciting obstacles en route.

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