

NAYEL NASSAR

Steals the SHOW at Longines Masters of New York

By Molly Sorge/Jump Media

The Longines Masters of New York made a resoundingly successful return to NYCB LIVE, home of the Nassau Veterans Memorial Coliseum, in Uniondale, NY, on April 25 through 28, combining top sport with thrilling entertainment.

Nayel Nassar made history by becoming the first rider to win both the Longines Speed Challenge and the Longines Grand Prix at the same event riding the same horse. Nassar, who competes for Egypt but is based in California, rode Evergate Stables LLC's Lucifer V to both victories.

"It's unexpected, really!" said Nassar when asked what it was like to write Longines Masters history. "It means the world. Thank you, Christophe [Ameeuw], for providing us with this platform. We can't showcase what we do without a platform to do it on and I'm really grateful. I've always loved these shows and hopefully I can keep making it a target of mine."

Lucifer V belongs to Nassar's girlfriend and fellow grand prix rider Jennifer Gates. He struck up a strong partnership with the 13-year-old Hanoverian gelding quickly. "He's such a trier and an athletic horse; he's faster than anything I've ever ridden before with a natural ability to leave the jumps up," said Nassar, V. "He really jumps with his heart and it's an incredible partnership to have a horse like that. He loves to go fast! You know you have a chance to win every time you come out."

Also highlighting the Longines Masters of New York, the Riders Europe team scored a fourth consecutive title in the exciting Riders Masters Cup series. In a concept unique to the Longines Masters, the Riders Masters Cup pits five-member teams from Europe and the United States against each other in two rounds of head-to-head speed battles.

It all came down to the last match-up for the Riders Europe team of Darragh Kenny, Edward Levy, Olivier Philippaerts, Pius Schwizer, and Harrie Smolders to maintain their lead over the Riders USA team of Laura Chapot, Lillie Keenan, Devin Ryan, Kristen Vanderveen, and McLain Ward. "With just a couple things going differently we could have won it," said Riders USA team captain Robert Ridland. "The format, I think, is tremendous. It's unique and we will

be back again in Paris and we hope for a different result."

The thrilling action of the Riders Masters Cup and the Masters One CSI5* classes kept the crowds cheering all week, and riders in the Masters Two CSI2* division showed that the future of the sport is bright with big wins in an electric atmosphere. Fans were also entertained by the AKC Agility Premier Cup, where top canine athletes competed over an obstacle course of their own. Younger riders got their chance in the spotlight in the IHSA Metropolitan Equitation Invitational, where collegiate riders competed in front of judges Brianne Goutal-Martreau and the legendary George H. Morris.

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