

THE FRENCH TROTTING WEEK

BY 24 AU TROT

1 24: THE NEWS

[CRITÉRIUM DE VITESSE DE LA CÔTE D'AZUR | GR. 1]



**ASTONISHING
ETONNANT**

His father had won it four times and here is **Étonnant** who joins his legendary father **Timoko** in the Grand Critérium de Vitesse de la Côte d'Azur after an exceptional effort on the outside of the great favourite and double title holder **Vivid Wise As** (Yankee Glide). From his father, **Étonnant** inherited, among other things, an incredible fighting spirit but also a permanent capacity to bounce back as Richard Westerink underlines: *"This is top level sport. A top player always bounces back. When you start as the favourite in the Prix d'Amérique and finish eighth, it's very difficult to digest. But that's ancient history. Already in the Prix de Paris, he had shown the form in which he was. He was good all winter. And I'm already used to it with Timoko: people have often said 'he's dead, he's dead' but when I say that my horses are good, it's because they are good, you have to trust me."*

Coming into the stretch to land on the outside of **Vivid Wise As**, broadly where no one wanted to come with the headwind and on the outside of the favourite, **Étonnant** kept putting pressure on his rival during a strong straight. Anthony Barrier knew his champion was capable of this: *"It's great because we messed up part of the winter even if he rehabilitated himself in the Prix de Paris. He shows again that he is a top all-round horse who can do everything, go in front, wait, 1600m, 4000m, he is a champion!"*

With this success, **Étonnant** will be officially invited next Saturday for the Elitloppet 2022 in a Swedish TV show. But already this Sunday we can say that the invitation card is in the bag and the answer is a big yes. Richard Westerink explains: *"We were there for that. I wanted to see if he would behave well behind the car, but it's in the plans."* Before that, **Étonnant** is expected to run in the Prix de l'Atlantique at Enghien on April 23. In 2013, his father did the double before taking bronze at Solvalla...

thought I had taken the lead without forcing too much. We all picked up afterwards and in the end we started the race from a distance. Maybe mine is better to come on the others. In front he {Etonnant} just pushed me, took a lead and we went like that to the post. Mine didn't flinch, he didn't demerit, but the effort I made when I left was a violent effort in the end with the 8. Today we had no choice, we had to go ahead. In the future, we will also have to come up against the others."

For her last race in France, the phenomenal **Billie de Montfort** (Jasmin de Flore) took an excellent third place following a perfect race on the back of the leader, orchestrated by the driver of her debut, Eric Raffin: *"She goes out by the big door, she is a real champion. I had a lot of fun. I had the right race, no regrets, really no regrets, as for her career."* Philippe Dauphin, her owner, had the same tone of voice: *"It's a great feeling. Eric drove her perfectly as always. It's a memorable outing."* [Relive this last one in immersion and in pictures.](#)

It was also a last one (at Cagnes) for **Bahia Quesnot** who could not show herself today as a threat and a last one for **Elsa de Belfonds** (Tornado Bello), 8th. All three mares were celebrated with a wreath of flowers by the Cagnes organisers. **Delia du Pommereux** (Niky) performed similarly to last year, trotting 1'10"1. David Thomain: *"She runs clean. Maybe we were too far in front when Vitruvio was too far back. When I went out at the beginning of the straight line, she accelerated well but stayed there a bit in the last 100 metres. She's running the same time as last year so it's not so bad."* The same performance also means that **Delia du Pommereux** has received an invitation for the Paralympiatriavet (Gr.1) on 7 May: she is the title holder.



Behind the winner

Vivid Wise As suffered his first defeat today in Cagnes-sur-Mer. A defeat with honours when we remember that he had to start from the very outside of lane 8, which gave his driver Matthieu Abrivard a headache: *"I went fast at the start and I*

TIMOKO 1'09"1	ETONNANT	IMOKO 1'14"6	VIKING'S WAY 1'15"6
			SEPIA 1'15"6
MIGRAINE 1'13"9		KISS ME COULONCES 1'18"6	AND ARIFANT 1'16"5
			ALLEZ COULONCES
		ALLIGATOR 1'17"5	LE HAM 1'17"5
			JAIA DU CHATEAU 1'23"3
		ALLEZ SUA	GAZON
			PEPITE D'ATOUT

Mark Kentell photo



EXPRESS JET WINS PRIX DE PARIGNY

In a time of 1'11"8 over 2,475 metres, Express Jet won the Prix de Parigny in good fashion. In this event, champion Earl Simon ran cleanly to finish eighth after almost two years without competition.

Pierre Vercruysse could smile after his success with **Express Jet** (Goetmals Wood) in the day's highlight at Caen on Thursday. A mentor in the past to the Hunter Valley Stable representative, the professional did not let his chance to win with the son of **Goetmals Wood** pass him by in this race reserved for horses aged between 5 and 11 who have not won €30,000 since 3 November (**Express Jet** had won €29,740). *"We were embarrassed at the start and it was hot, but on paper I had a very good first chance despite the fact that this is not his favourite string. When he was with me, I never dared to run him on the right-hand rope. It's great to win with him again. And you have to congratulate the track guys, the track was very soft today (read Thursday)."* After having

won the Grand Prix de Gelsenkirchen (Gr.2) last autumn, as part of the European Tour of the French Trotters, **Express Jet** remains unbeaten on the right-hand side: two races, two victories. Throughout the summer season on flat tracks, the representative of the Hunter Valley stable has not finished making a name for himself.

Earl Simon to be seen again

Not seen again in competition since his disqualification for discomfort in the final of the 2020 Elitloppet, **Earl Simon** (Prodigious) finished in eighth place for his big comeback. If Jarmo Niskanen thought that his horse would be able to take part in the finish on Thursday, his horse showed that he had not yet fully recovered the high rhythm of the competition. It is difficult at this stage to draw any conclusions from **Earl Simon's** comeback performance.

GOETMALS WOOD 1'11"9	AND ARIFANT 1'16"5	SHARIF DI IESOLO (IT)
		INFANTE D'AUNOU 1'16"2
EXPRESS JET	TAHITIENNE	KIMBERLAND (US)
		OLIGISTE
RUN FOR JET 1'10"5	COKTAIL JET 1'11"2	QUOUKY WILLIAMS 1'14"2
		ARMBRO GLAMOUR (US)
	KELITE JET 1'14"5	FULL ACCOUNT 1'13"2
		ELITE D'ATOUT 1'15"1

Mark Kentell photo



JAMBAVATI SCORES AT CAEN

Out of the dam line of Be My Girl (€238,350), Girls Talk (€312,900) and It's Now Or Never (€190,950), Jambavati (Django Riff) opened her record for her fifth public outing last Thursday at Caen.

On the day of her debut, November 11 at La Capelle, Philippe Allaire's trainee had finished third, being beaten by the semi-classic **Jamaïca Turbo** (Charly du Noyer) and **Jeffersonia Mag** (Jag de Bellouet). Disqualified at the start of her comeback on 19 February in Laval, the daughter of **Django Riff** was able to set the record straight in a beautiful way. *"She is a nice filly who is constantly progressing"*, said Simon Rouselle, Philippe Allaire's trusted advisor. *"She should age well and she still has a lot of weight under her feet but she's good in her paces. She should have a good summer."* After the classic **Jazzy Perrine** (€253,250 - 2nd in the Prix Comte Pierre de Montesson) and **Joker Wic**, **Jambavati** is the third offspring of **Django Riff** to win in the 2019-born generation.

Hydra, a right-hander lacking earnings

Unshod from her forelegs for the first time in her career, **Hydra** (Boléro Love) won a third consecutive race. The niece of **Quif de Villeneuve** (Coktail Jet) was formidable on right-hand courses and did not need to draw on her reserves to triumph. *"She's behind in earnings,"* said her mentor Daniel Delaroche. *"If she was left-handed, she would have passed the hundred thousand euro mark in earnings a long time ago! We'll see how she recovers and we'll take the programme as it comes, trying to find good right-handed races."* Yoann Lebourgeois, the winner's driver, said: *"She is in top form. We weren't going very fast until the first turn. She reacted well afterwards and she has a great finish."* **Hydra** easily dominated her younger rivals on Thursday, namely **Isla Mujeres** (Ulysses) and **Ivanjica de Lou** (Real de Lou). With 478 wins as a trainer, Daniel Delaroche is approaching the 500 mark.

DJANGO RIFF 1'11"0	READY CASH 1'10"3	INDY DE VIVE 1'11"9
		KIDEA 1'18"2
JAMBAVATI	RASTA PERRINE 1'12"8	LOOK DE STAR 1'12"7
		JAVA PERRINE 1'17"7
DIFA GIRL 1'15"9	LOVE YOU 1'10"2	COKTAIL JET 1'11"2
		GUILTY OF LOVE 1'17"1
	RIFA RAINBOW	KAISY DREAM 1'12"3
		ICA DU PAS



VINCENNES' WINTER MEETING IN FIGURES

LeTROT invited the press last Friday to a presentation of the technical and sporting results of the winter meeting in Vincennes. *"A satisfactory meeting"* concluded Guillaume Maupas, technical director of LeTROT. A number of indicators are improving (average number of starters per race, stakes figures) but in the context of a previous meeting more strongly impacted by the health crisis. This meeting, organised in the new configuration of a large floodlit Vincennes track, is marked more than ever by the optimisation of events with the hunt for empty races and the development of a new decision-making tool for the design of future programmes.

Less than a week after the close of the 2021/2022 winter meeting, it is time to sift through a sequence that offered:

- 90 meetings (94 in 2020/2021),
- 745 races (778 in 2020/2021),
- 73 Quinté+ (81 in 2020/2021).

As a reminder:

- **Jean-Michel Bazire** n°1 of the trainers (52 victories and €2,557,840 in cumulative earnings),
- **Eric Raffin**, n°1 of the drivers (85 victories and 3,831,965 €),
- **Philippe Allaire**, n°1 of owners under his cap (11 wins and €1,298,450) with **Ecurie Christian Bignon** leading by wins (20).

In its review, LeTROT adds that three owners are closely held by integrating the distribution keys of the association and rental contracts. We obtain:

1. **Philippe Allaire** (553.234 €) 2. **Ecurie Saint Martin** (551,850 €) 3. **Ecurie Christian Bignon** (546.448 €).

In the breeders' ranks, the podium is made up of **Jean-Philippe Dubois** (16 wins and €82,990 in premiums), **Scea des Bissons** (5 wins and €81,809) and **Christian Bignon** (18 wins and €74,386).

Amongst the horses, the big winner is **Flamme du Goutier** (Ready Cash) with €464,600 (harnessed + ridden) who finishes ahead of **Davidson du Pont** (Pacha du Pont) with €454,000 and **Granvillaise Bleue** (Jag de Bellouet) with €423,000.

On the sporting side, Guillaume Maupas commented: *"We saw a beautiful, intense meeting with some great finishes. We had some great winners and champions who repeated their performance."* Benoît Fabrega, who is in charge of optimising the programmes, added: *"I note the great diversity of winners, among horses and professionals. We also had some great days, such as the Prix d'Amérique with the two new Group 1s and the closing day, which were appreciated by professionals and punters."*

Average number of starters slightly up and "still a daily concern"

With 9,335 starters during the meeting, we get an average number per race of 12.53, up on 2019/20 (12.44) but below the levels of previous editions (we were at 13.49 in 2016/17). For Guillaume Maupas: *"This remains a daily concern, a major issue and one of the main criteria for measuring an optimal programme."*





LETROT'S FIRST MEETING ON DOPING MATTERS

As a follow-up to the Caen race meeting last Thursday, LeTROT proposed an information meeting on the fight against doping. Hosted by Jean-Pierre Barjon, President of LeTROT, Guillaume Maupas, its Technical Director, and Pierre Préaud, President of the Fédération Nationale des Courses Hippiques (FNCH), this first session of a series of others to be held in the regions brought together around fifty participants, including many trainers who had raced that afternoon.

Guillaume Maupas and Pierre Préaud presented the anti-doping system and commented on the latest figures for anti-doping tests in France in 2021. The aim of this meeting was also to foster an exchange on the subject with the professionals and to answer their various questions.

For better clarity

Guillaume Maupas, technical manager of LeTROT, explains the ins and outs of this approach: *"The aim of our regional tour is to explain the fight against doping. To remind people of the procedures, the actions, the figures, our collaboration with the*

Home office, the Customs, the State. It is to explain how anti-doping control works at the level of the parent company and the National Racing Federation. This allows us to be educational and to silence certain "fake news" spread on social networks. It is also a way of reminding trainers that we are not pursuing an anti-doping policy against them but with them."

Sébastien Hardy is one of the professionals who responded to the call. He was upset about a situation that he considers abnormal and told us that he *"appreciated this constructional gathering. We can see that there is a will on the part of the authorities to find solutions and this is positive for us professionals. I appreciated the presence of many professionals and even the presence of someone like Philippe Allaire."*

Watch the video summarising this meeting [HERE](#).

Next date: Monday 14 March at Angers at 2.30pm. ■



Province Courses photo

ENGHIEN REOPENS WITH A REFURBISHED TRACK

Enghien's racecourse (the other Parisian track) opened its doors to the 2022 season on Friday. Gone are the February meetings that straddle the end of the winter meeting and the spring season. Enghien now takes over in March with two new identities: the calendar and, above all, the track!

It was a reasonable investment that had become essential to give the second Parisian trotting venue a future. The Enghien track had to undergo a major overhaul in its management to satisfy the professionals, avoid starving fields and therefore play a better role in revenue generation. This is why a project was launched at the end of last year for an amount of 35,000€.

The issue at stake is in fact a programme of permanent maintenance rather than major works, as the budget announced here proves.

On Tuesday, four representatives of Gilles Curen's team and as many of Pierre Belloche's came to test the track, in two batches, with Matthieu Abrivard also called in to get his feel. The driver from Angers told us: *"The track material will be much easier to work with, especially as the subsoil has been reopened and the track will be able to air out more. First test, new track, perfect. Between the two batches, the hoops were put through and it tightened up immediately: we saw with Julius Le Tutour and his track manager to change the tool for between races and it will be fine."*

To see the progress made by the track, we had to open our eyes and hatches as Pierre Belloche explained: *"We tried to see how the track reacted in resonance and for the moment it is rather conclusive. We were in a new track configuration, we'll have to see as the horses and tractors pass by, but for a first test it's satisfactory. We had to make sure that the bottom of the track was decompacted and that the track was more*

homogeneous and regular. It's still Enghien, but you can tell there's a difference by the noise. When the foot hits the ground, you hear a better sound, more muffled."

As the second racecourse in Paris, Enghien must therefore regain its standing, and even more so with its big brother Vincennes, which has not ceased to draw praise throughout the winter. It is also one of the four French racecourses to organise a Group 1 race with Vincennes of course, but also Caen and Cagnes-sur-Mer. With a rich programme of Quinté+, six this spring alone, plus those of the summer season, Enghien must also restore the confidence of the professionals, as Gilles Curen's explained to us: *"To the eye it's the same, but there is more sand and there is less resonance. We found it softer, especially against the rail and up to three quarters of the width. Enghien must be a reference racecourse to host high level races like the Prix de l'Atlantique and beautiful Group races in the summer for young horses. The aim of the professionals above all is not to break the horses and we know that it happened here before."*

Enghien in spring

98 races
12 meetings
6 Quinté+ meetings
5 daytime meetings
5 in the second half of the day (1st race at around 4.22pm)
2 night meetings (Friday 11 and 18 March)
Highlight: Prix de l'Atlantique (Gr.1) - 23 April
Earnings up: +11%, average per race from €39,602 to €43,939



STUD FARMS AT HONOUR AT LAVAL THIS TUESDAY

Laval Racing Society is organising an operation to promote regional stud farms next Tuesday, at a meeting offering the Grand Prix du Conseil Départemental de la Mayenne (Prix Charley Mills). The seven other races of the meeting will bear the name of a partner stud and in each of them the said partner will offer a covering (or two) to the winner's entourage. The seven studs will also have a stand in the indoor hall adjacent to the scales. The following list of studs will be offered:

- Haras du Lion d'Angers (49) : **Garibaldi** (Love You),
- Haras du Plessis (53): **Shadow d'Odyssée** (Urfist des Prés) to the trainer and **El Diablo d'Aut** (Saxo de Vandel) to the breeder,
- Haras de Bannes (72) : **Ricimer** (Hermès du Buisson),
- Haras de Vaiges (53): **Séduisant Fouteau** (Gazouillis) to the trainer and **Artiste de Joudes** (Prodigious) to the breeder,
- Haras d'Haufor (53) : **Paris Haufor** (Vivier de Montfort) to the trainer,
- Haras de l'Audoirie (53): **Get Happy** (Bird Parker),
- Haras de la Potardière (72) : **Speedy Blue** (Echo). ■

UET RELEASES FUNDS FOR UKRAINE

The UET held its first Board meeting of 2022 last Saturday in Nice, on the eve of the Grand Critérium de Vitesse de la Côte d'Azur. The agenda was dominated by the situation in Ukraine and the 21 member states of the UET agreed on the release of an envelope of 30,000€ to date for the representatives of Ukrainian races. At last count, twenty-five people are currently gathered at the Kiev racecourse where four hundred horses are reportedly stationed, including just over one hundred trotters. *"We have been in touch with our contacts on the spot and are waiting to know what they want: to stay or to leave for Poland? How do they want to go? We will do what we can and we are very worried"*, summarised Marjaana Alaviuhkola, the President of the UET. The subjects of harmonisation of rules, animal welfare and the introduction of a new format for the UET Masters Series were also discussed. The latter topic will be discussed at the General Assembly in June. ■

JOCONDE TURGOT WINS ON DEBUT

Daughter of the champion **Scarlet Turgot** (1.4 million euros in earnings and 2 Group 1s) and **Prodigious**, **Joconde Turgot** won on her debut at Avignon yesterday, associated with her mentor Yannick-Alain Briand who told us: *"She's a carbon copy of her mother in terms of physique. We'll see about the clock later, but if she does a tenth of her mother's career, we'll already be doing very well! We take our time with her because she is not precocious. But we like her, of course."*

See her pedigree underneath. ■

JOCONDE TURGOT	PRODIGIOUS 1'11"1	GOETMALS WOOD 1'11"9	AND ARIFANT 1'16"5
		IMAGINE D'ODYSSEE	TAHITIENNE
	SCARLET TURGOT 1'10"6	DAHIR DE PRELONG 1'14"2	BUVETIER D'AUNOU (US) 1'14"4
		NOELLA DE MASSY 1'23"3	BATTANTE D'ODYSSEE 1'23"3
			FAKIR DU VIVIER
			MARIEVA
			CAPITOLE 1'12"7
			FINLANDE 1'15"7