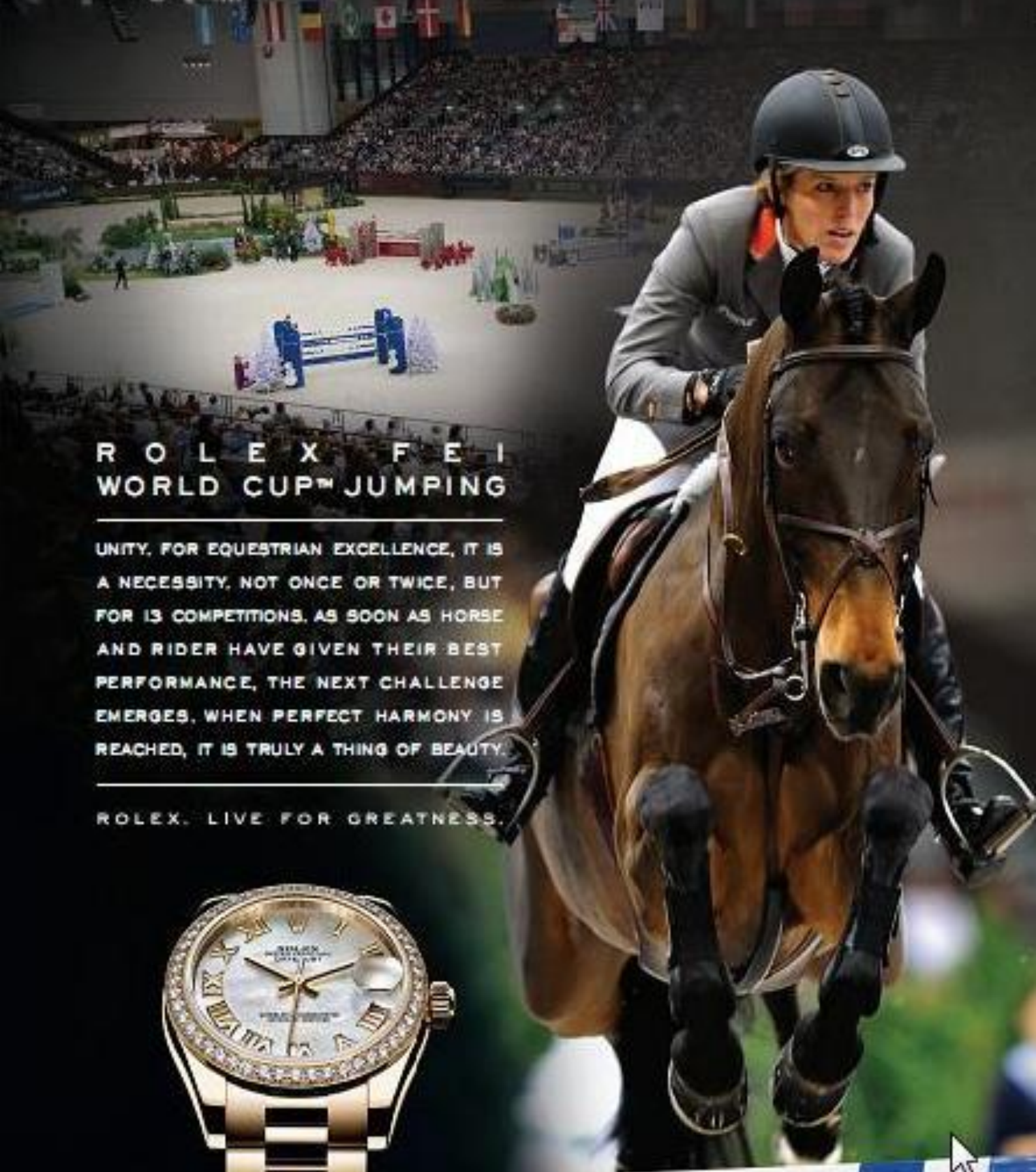


Rolex FEI World Cup™ Jumping 2011/2012 Press Kit



- Series Editorial & Calendar
- About Rolex & FEI World Cup™
- The Rules





ROLEX FEI
WORLD CUP™ JUMPING

UNITY, FOR EQUESTRIAN EXCELLENCE, IT IS
A NECESSITY, NOT ONCE OR TWICE, BUT
FOR 13 COMPETITIONS. AS SOON AS HORSE
AND RIDER HAVE GIVEN THEIR BEST
PERFORMANCE, THE NEXT CHALLENGE
EMERGES, WHEN PERFECT HARMONY IS
REACHED, IT IS TRULY A THING OF BEAUTY.

ROLEX. LIVE FOR GREATNESS.



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Rolex FEI World Cup™ 2011/2012 - A Measure of Excellence

The 2011/2012 Rolex FEI World Cup™ Jumping season promises super sport as it paves the road to the 30th Olympiad.

Every four years, the winter-long series has an extra edge, as riders carefully prepare their horses for the forthcoming Olympic challenge. But that does not lessen their determination to scoop the crown of indoor international Jumping - the Rolex FEI World Cup™ title.

This is long-established as a coveted badge of honour, standing out as a measure of excellence in a sport that demands astute judgement, split-second decision-making skills, and a unique empathy with that very special creature - the horse.

Rolex FEI World Cup™ Jumping champions are the kings and queens of their sphere, and some, including three-time winners Rodrigo Pessoa from Brazil and Germany's Meredith Michaels-Beerbaum, have become Rolex testimonees.

Long Association

The distinguished watch-making company Rolex has a long association with equestrian sport and began its sponsorship of the Western European League of the FEI World Cup™ Jumping series, and the grand annual Final, back in 2007.

The series itself dates much further back, to the inaugural 1978/1979 season when Austria's Hugo Simon and Gladstone claimed the brand new trophy.

The tournament has highlighted the outstanding talent of many riders over the intervening years, and has also been a major milestone in the careers of some equine superstars - horses who etched their names on equestrian sport's roll of honour through, not only their competitiveness, but their exceptional character. Big Ben, the colossal gelding ridden by Ian Millar to a magnificent double in 1989 and 1990, is a Canadian icon, immortalised with his own postage stamp following his death in 1999 and by a bronze statue erected in Perth, Ontario six years later.

Few will forget the grey gelding Milton, ridden by Great Britain's John Whitaker to back-to-back successes in 1990 and 1991, who acknowledged the crowd's applause by performing his trademark leap into the air. Pessoa's stallion, Baloubet du Rouet and Michaels-Beerbaum's great gelding, Shutterfly, demonstrated extraordinary athleticism and style on their way to triple glory. And the record books show that German horse-and-rider combinations have been the most successful of all.

Thrilling Final

The defending champion is Christian Ahlmann who, riding Taloubet, clinched the title at the thrilling Final at Leipzig (GER) in May 2011 to become the ninth German winner in the 33-year history of the event, and the eighth German champion in the year. He threw down the gauntlet by topping the first two legs of the series, and it always seemed that the trophy would go his country's way as German riders dominated the qualifiers with six wins from 12 starts.

At the Final, Ahlmann shared the lead with Marco Kutscher going into the last day, and when his fellow-countryman faltered it was Ahlmann who stood top of the podium, flanked by reigning Olympic champion Eric Lamaze (CAN) in the runner-up spot and 2000 Olympic champion, Dutchman Jeroen Dubbeldam, in third.

The result confirmed the status of the Rolex FEI World Cup™ Jumping series which, just like the Rolex watch awarded to each winner throughout the series, sets the best apart from the rest.

Rolex FEI World Cup™ Jumping 2011/2012 Calendar

VENUE	NF	START	END	EVENT
Oslo	NOR	12.10.2011	16.10.2011	CSI5*-W
Helsinki	FIN	20.10.2011	23.10.2011	CSI5*-W
Lyon	FRA	26.10.2011	30.10.2011	CSI5*-W
Verona	ITA	03.11.2011	06.11.2011	CSI5*-W
Stuttgart	GER	16.11.2011	20.11.2011	CSI5*-W
Geneva	SUI	08.12.2011	11.12.2011	CSI5*-W
London Olympia	GBR	13.12.2011	19.12.2011	CSI5*-W
Mechelen	BEL	26.12.2011	30.12.2011	CSI5*-W
Leipzig	GER	19.01.2012	22.01.2012	CSI5*-W
Zurich	SUI	27.01.2012	29.01.2012	CSI5*-W
Bordeaux	FRA	03.02.2012	05.02.2012	CSI5*-W
Göteborg	SWE	23.02.2012	26.02.2012	CSI5*-W
FINAL: 's-Hertogenbosch	NED	18.04.2012	22.04.2012	CSI5*-W

To view the complete FEI World Cup™ Jumping Calendar, please click [here](#).

About Rolex



Presentation of Rolex

Rolex is recognized the world over as the leader in the Swiss watchmaking industry and enjoys an unparalleled reputation for quality and know-how.

The birth of Rolex

The origins of Rolex date back to the beginning of the 20th century. At a time when pocket watches were still the order of the day, Hans Wilsdorf, a young Bavarian just 24 years old, wagered on the future of the wristwatch. The pioneering spirit of the founder is the subject of some of the finest chapters in the history of contemporary watchmaking and was the source of two major innovations. In 1926, Rolex invented the Oyster, the first waterproof and dustproof watch, and, in 1931, the first self-winding mechanism equipped with a Perpetual rotor. Over the years, Rolex created a full line of Oyster watches, with a strong identity and intrinsic features. Recognizable at a glance, this collection includes over 170 models available in a wide number of possible combinations. The Cellini collection later enhanced the choice offered to consumers loyal to legendary Rolex quality. The reliability and performance of the product have built the worldwide reputation of Rolex.

An international company

Today, Rolex is present in some one hundred countries. The company ensures the distribution of its watches and the quality of their maintenance through a network of 30 affiliates and several thousand official Rolex jewellers.

A Rolex watch is made to last. Assembled by hand, it benefits from the company's know-how and decades of cumulative expertise. An after-sales service, unique in its genre, ensures the proper functioning of the watches over time. It is based on the competence of nearly 4,000 watchmakers, trained by Rolex, who work for the affiliates or for jewellers of the Group worldwide. A universal and timeless brand, Rolex continues to conquer new markets and expand its presence worldwide.



State-of-the-art technology

Responding to growing demand while integrating the latest technologies requires constant evolution of the means of production. In the mid-1990s, Rolex opted for a vertical integration of its production facilities, thus ensuring its control over the manufacture of all its watch components and guaranteeing its autonomy. In the interest of consistency and efficiency, the company consolidated all its activities in Switzerland at four functional sites.

In Geneva

The Rolex headquarters is home to all the administrative activities of the company, to those related to the final assembly and sales of the watches, as well as to after-sales service.

The Chêne-Bourg site brings together all the activities related to the development and manufacture of the dial and gem-set elements.

The Plan-les-Ouates site groups all the activities related to the development, manufacture and quality control of the case and bracelet.

In Bienne

The Bienne site is the location of all the activities related to the manufacture and assembly of Rolex watch movements.

An image of excellence

The name Rolex is synonymous with performance. In 1927, Mercedes Gleitze, a young Englishwoman, swam the English Channel in over 10 hours wearing an Oyster. Upon arrival, the watch was still in perfect working order. The company immediately placed an advertisement in the *Daily Mail* proclaiming the success of the waterproof watch and chronicling "the debut of the Rolex Oyster and its triumphant march worldwide". This event also marked the start of a long association between Rolex and exceptional personalities who bear witness to the excellence of the product and are Testimonees of the brand. These associations give rise to numerous partnerships and sponsoring activities in fields as varied as art and culture, tennis, golf, sailing, skiing and equestrian and automobile sports.



Perpetuating the spirit of enterprise

While committed to the principles that are the foundation of the brand, Rolex ventures to break with tradition to respond to changes in an ever-evolving world. The Group has reinforced its position as a leader in the watchmaking industry by conquering new markets and enhancing the image of the brand.

Official website: www.rolex.com



Rolex and Equestrianism

As the crown in equestrianism for over fifty years, Rolex is proud to be a major force at play behind the sport's finest events, riders and organisations. Whether supporting challenges such as the competitive Rolex FEI World Cup Finals or maintaining tradition with the historic CHIO Aachen in Germany, Rolex has cultivated a privileged relationship with the elite world of equestrian sports.

History

Understanding the long-standing relationship between Rolex and Equestrianism requires a glimpse into the past. Rolex was founded by Hans Wilsdorf at the beginning of the 20th century, a time when the pocket watch was the norm. A visionary with an entrepreneurial spirit, Hans Wilsdorf understood the importance of providing an increasingly mobile public with an accurate wristwatch, a difficult challenge that he set out to overcome.

In 1910, Rolex produced the first wristwatch in the world to receive a Swiss certificate of precision granted by the Official Watch Rating Centre in Bienne. In 1926, Rolex invented the Rolex Oyster, the first *waterproof* wristwatch to keep accurate time. To prove it, Mr. Wilsdorf put an Oyster on the wrist of Mercedes Gleitze, who, on 27 October 1927, swam across the English Channel. Her Rolex survived the 10 hour swim in perfect working condition and this young English woman became the brand's first Testimonee – a witness to the watch's uncompromised performance.

Rolex improved the Oyster in 1931 with the invention and patent of the world's first self-winding mechanism with a Perpetual rotor, an ingenious system that led to the Rolex Oyster Perpetual.

With Wilsdorf at the helm, Rolex continued to publicly test its product, demonstrating time and again its reliability in the most extreme conditions, be they on land, in the air, in the depths of the ocean or on the summit of Mount Everest. With so many record-breaking merits to its name, Rolex became the trusted source for chronometric precision around the world.

At the same time, while remaining true to its identity and the foundation on which it was built, Rolex evolved, as did its product, in a constant pursuit of perfection. As part of this evolution, Rolex watches – made from only the highest quality materials and designed by the industry's best – became symbols of elegance and prestige.

As such, it was only logical that Rolex support equestrianism – one of the world’s finest sporting activities – through an alliance with showjumper **Pat Smythe**, who became the brand’s first equestrian ambassador in 1957. Since that fateful partnership, Rolex’s involvement in equitation has increased significantly.

Events

Today, Rolex sponsors over 30 major international equestrian events in distinct disciplines. **The World Equestrian Festival, CHIO Aachen** is among the top tier and attracts over 360,000 passionate supporters during ten days of competition – a record attendance among equestrian events. CHIO Aachen offers competition in five disciplines. The focal point of the show, the **Rolex Grand Prix**, has been won by some of the most famous names in the sport, including Nelson Pessoa, his son Rodrigo Pessoa, Meredith Michaels-Beerbaum and Eric Lamaze.

Since 2002, Rolex has also sponsored the **FEI World Equestrian Games**, the most prestigious equestrian competition in the world. This first-class event takes place every four years at a different venue, attracting the top riders in jumping, dressage, eventing, endurance, vaulting, driving, reining and para-equestrian sport, the eight disciplines officially recognized by the **Fédération Equestre Internationale (FEI)**, the sport’s governing body. The next FEI World Equestrian Games will take place in Normandy, France in 2014.

In addition, Rolex has also been Title Sponsor, since 2007, of the **Western European League of the FEI World Cup**, which includes indoor competitions from October to March. The annual **Rolex FEI World Cup Final** and the **Rolex IJRC Top 10 Final** are at the forefront of the preeminent jumping competitions, while the biennial **European Championships**, also sponsored by Rolex, bring together Europe’s best equestrian pairs.

Behind the Scenes

Behind the scenes, Rolex participates in the development of equitation through its patronage of the **FEI**; the **Rolex Rankings** in jumping; the **Rolex Grand Slam of Eventing** – an award presented to the rider who wins consecutively at Rolex’s four star yearly events in Kentucky, Badminton and Burghley – and the **Jumping Owners Club**, an organization that brings together and supports the globe’s leading horse owners.

Testimonees

Rolex has also cultivated close relationships with equestrianism's exceptional individuals, counting among its Testimonees Brazilian show jumper **Rodrigo Pessoa**, an Olympic and World Championship gold medallist; German rider of American origin **Meredith Michaels-Beerbaum**, the first woman to be ranked World No. 1 in jumping and three-time winner of the Rolex FEI World Cup Final; and Canada's **Eric Lamaze** who won a gold medal in the individual show jumping event in the 2008 Beijing Olympics and became World No. 1 for the first time in 2009.

In Eventing, Rolex supports British equestrian **Zara Phillips**, the individual champion in 2006 at the FEI World Equestrian Games in Aachen; and Britain's **Pippa Funnell**, the first and only rider ever to have won the Rolex Grand Slam of Eventing. And in Dressage, Rolex Testimonee **Isabell Werth** – world record holder for most titles won in her discipline – has the unique honour of having represented Germany at four Olympic Games (1992, 1996, 2000 and 2008), winning team and individual medals at each.

A realm reserved for true champions, horsemanship requires a passion for excellence and obsession with perfection. Bound by these shared values, Rolex – a true partner to the sport – continues to make a unique and lasting contribution to equestrianism around the world.

About FEI World Cup™ Jumping

Now in 34th season, the FEI World Cup™ series began in 1978 with Jumping.

The series was extended to Dressage in 1985, Driving in 2001 and Eventing in 2003.

Last year, the inaugural FEI World Cup™ Vaulting Final took place in Leipzig sharing the spotlight with Jumping, Dressage and Driving and this year the very first season of FEI World Cup™ Vaulting will take place.

The FEI World Cup™ series, which is now outranked only by the FEI World Equestrian Games™ and the Olympics in importance to equestrian sport, was created with the idea of producing a unified series of equestrian competitions similar to the Formula One Championship.

FEI World Cup™ Jumping - early years

The event was an instant success, largely due to the support of the first sponsor, Volvo, which ensured a world-class venue and well-qualified staff, and sufficient financing to cover travel expenses and prize money. This allowed the organisers to attract the very best horses and riders from Europe and North America.

A regional league system was established so that riders could qualify in competitions in their own region. Then, only the very best would come together at a grand finale to compete for the top honours.

The first season of the FEI World Cup™ Jumping competitions consisted of nine indoor events in Europe and seven in North America, with the Final held in Gothenburg in 1979. Although other continents also took part from the early days of the competition, rivalry between European and American riders dominated the 1980s.

Following the success of the inaugural series, riders from Australia were invited to compete in the FEI World Cup™ for the following season, and in 1980-1981 a South American league was established.

In the following year, the United States was split into East and West to form two separate qualifying regions, and then a Canadian League was created.

Since then, New Zealand, Eastern Europe, Japan, Central Asia, South Africa, South East Asia, and the Persian Gulf States have also joined the FEI World Cup™.

FEI World Cup™ Jumping today

The FEI World Cup™ Jumping now comprises 14 leagues across the globe.

In the 1995/1996 season Austria's Hugo Simon won the very first Final, riding Gladstone. He went on to jump to victory again in 1996 and in 1997, making him the first rider to win the FEI World Cup™ three times.

From seasons two to 11, the series winners all hailed from North America - seven from the United States and three from Canada. Canada's Mario Deslauriers, who took the title with Aramis in 1984 at age 19, remains the youngest-ever winner.

Germany holds the record for the greatest number of victories, winning nine out of the 33 seasons, while the United States has won seven. Next comes Austria with four.

Hugo Simon's three victories were an undoubtedly impressive feat, although in recent years the achievements of Rodrigo Pessoa and Meredith Michaels-Beerbaum have eclipsed the records of previous riders.

Rolex Testimonee and Brazilian champion Rodrigo Pessoa's partnership with his stallion Baloubet du Rouet produced three consecutive wins: 1998 in Helsinki, 1999 in Gothenburg and 2000 in Las Vegas.

German rider Meredith Michaels-Beerbaum, another Rolex Testimonee, and her mount Shutterfly – retired at 2011 CHIO Aachen - have also been a highly celebrated partnership, equalling the three victories of Rodrigo Pessoa and Hugo Simon by winning in 2005, in 2008 and 2009 in Las Vegas.

With the singular exception of Rodrigo Pessoa, all FEI World Cup™ Jumping winners until now have come from either Europe or North America.

However, the series continues to evolve around the world, and in 2006 the Final was held in Kuala Lumpur.

In the course of the 2007-2008 season, the event's 30th anniversary, Rolex became the title sponsor of the series.

Through the commitment and support of Rolex, now in its fourth year of sponsorship, the Rolex FEI World Cup™ competition has continued to grow in influence and stature.

FEI World Cup™ Jumping Rules

FEI World Cup™ Jumping riders and horses are put to the test on courses that are highly technical requiring courage, scope, accuracy and control.

Athletes and their trainers always walk the course on foot before the start of the competition in order to learn the course and work out the best route between the 10 -13 knockable obstacles, which can have double and treble combinations and features such as water jumps.

The fences are often eye-catching and perfectly suited to television and on-site fans and the course designer will often incorporate a national flavour featuring local landmarks and attractions.

Penalties

The obstacles are numbered and horse and rider must jump them in the correct order, aiming to complete the course without lowering any of the fences or landing in the water.

Knockdowns and refusals, when the horse stops or runs out at a fence, are penalised. A knockdown is only penalised if the horse lowers the highest part of the fence, so if a lower pole is knocked there is no penalty.

If the horse or rider falls they are eliminated.

The winner is the horse and rider combination with the lowest number of penalties, but the clock is also a deciding factor.

To view the FEI World Cup Jumping™ 2011/2012 rules please click [here](#).

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