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## AL-SHARBATLY IS THE WINNER OF THE OLOMOUC GRAND PRIX. LUCIE STRNADLOVÁ TOOK BRONZE

**Although none of the riders jumped a clear round in the first part of the Grand Prix CSI2\*-W with 155cm fences, four horse and rider pairs made it through to the jump-off including the Czech rider, Lucie Strnadlová.**

The Brazilian course designer, Leandro Andreoli Balen, built a challenging course for the World Cup Grand Prix at the Banka CREDITAS CSI2\*-W in Olomouc. After the first half of the riders had completed the course it looked as if the spectators would have to miss the jump-off.

One of the horse and rider pairs that did not complete the course was Aleš Opatrný with his gelding Cross Over SR, who is gaining experience and was twice scared off by a solid fence. Kamil Papoušek and his stallion Vivano Blue rode a clear course until the fifth fence when the rider involuntarily left the saddle after a small collision at the touchdown. Four riders were disqualified, and six riders decided not to continue due to repeated mistakes.

Nine riders completed the course with only one mistake and almost made it to the jump-off. Among them were the last year's winner of the Olomouc Grand Prix, Sára Vingrálková, with her gelding Kas-Sini DC, as well as members of the Slovak team, Dominika Gaalová with her gelding Senjor Catello, and Bronislav Chudyba with his mare Jojo JK SR.

The local fans, who traditionally fill the stands of the Equine Sports Center in large numbers, were delighted to see the Polish rider Maksymilian Wecht with Cassiopeia and the Czech rider Lucie Strnadlová with her stallion Solidat mastering all the challenges of the course. Gábor Szabó junior with his mare Mezohegyes Chabala, and the favourite of the competition, Abdullah Al-Sharbatly from Saudi Arabia, currently ranked 65<sup>th</sup> in the FEI World Ranking, with his stallion Atome des Etisses, also jumped clear rounds.

The four riders entered the jump-off in the above order to compete on a shorter course with higher fences. Wechta, Strnadlová and Szabó all jumped a clear round, each one a little faster than the rider who started before them. The same was expected of the last rider to start, and he did not disappoint.

"I'm excited! I went to see the horses before the competition, and I was a bit nervous afterwards. I did not feel a lot of certainty before the competition, but my team colleagues, including Aleš Opatrný, managed to raise my spirits in the warm-up arena. Many riders made mistakes in the red combination and at the end of the course in the triple combination and the last fence. However, I was more worried about the first part of the course, because Solidat is very careful with solid obstacles, so I was relieved when we passed this part of the course," admitted Lucie Strnadlová.

**"I was amazed, the show and the atmosphere were unbelievable, as were the crowd and the organisation. With a little support from partners, it could be a super five-star show," praised the organisers Grand Prix winner Abdullah Al-Sharbatly at the final press briefing. For more information visit [www.csiolomouc.cz](http://www.csiolomouc.cz).**

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- Acronyms: CSI2\*-W: concours de saut international, two-star event (1 to 5 stars) with a competition that is part of the World Cup series – W (world); additional acronyms: J (juniors), YR (young riders), YH (young horses)
- ESC Olomouc – Equine Sport Center in Olomouc Lazce opened in 2013
- Banka CREDITAS a.s. – general partner of the event