



Světový pohár v parkurovém skákání FEI World Cup Show Jumping

J&T Banka CSI***W Olomouc 2022 | 22. – 26. 6.

Press Release, Olomouc – 15th March 2022

“I HAVE ALWAYS BEEN INTERESTED IN COURSE DESIGN,” SAYS BERNARDO COSTA CABRAL; THIS YEAR HE IS COMING TO OLOMOUC

Bernardo Costa Cabral is one of the elite of show-jumping course design. This year, he was invited to the J&T Banka CSI3*-W Olomouc World Cup event, which will take place later this June. “I am looking forward to meeting Czech riders,” he said.

The organisers of the J&T Banka CSI3*-W Olomouc World Cup managed to attract another distinctive personality for this year’s event, which will be held from the 22nd to 26th June. Bernardo Costa Cabral will take on the role of the course designer, which is one of the most important tasks for the success of the event. The 47-year-old Portuguese achieved a four-star rating, the highest course builder qualification of Federation Equestre Internationale (FEI). He started riding and competing at the age of nine, but soon drifted into a career as a course designer.

“I have been interested in course designing ever since I was taking part in junior competitions. I found course design very interesting. Designer Bob Ellis very much influenced me. I was fourteen when he started coming to Portugal,” Bernardo Costa Cabral recalled. During his career, he has designed courses in many countries all over the world – in the USA, Canada, United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom, Spain, Poland, and of course, in Portugal, his home country. He has participated in dozens of events as a course designer.

Bernardo completed the FEI training before contributing to the equestrian events at the 2008 Beijing Olympics which were held in Hong Kong, as well as the one before the 2012 Olympic Games in London. He was the sole course designer for the 2018 Youth Olympic Games hosted by Buenos Aires. In the Equine Sport Center in Olomouc, he will be assisted by Brazilian designer Leandro Balen, holder of the FEI three-star qualification. The role of assistant to the chief designer will be given to Robert Smékal, who works for the event organiser in Olomouc every year and is poised not to miss this year’s event which is part of the World Cup series. “I see the changes of designers in Olomouc as a positive thing. Of course, I look at it from the perspective of a course designer. It’s always a wonderful experience for me, as I spend five days straight in a close contact with some of the most prominent designers. I have a chance to observe what they do and how they think about individual courses,” explained Robert Smékal.

His favourite memory is that of his cooperation with Olaf Petersen who was invited to Olomouc in 2014 and 2016. In 2017, Olaf Petersen was succeeded by Peter Schumacher who again took on the role in the Equine Sport Center in 2018. The special guest of the event in 2019 was Uliano Vezzani of Italy; riders are familiar with his work from the prestigious Global Championship series. In 2020, the CSI courses in Olomouc were designed by Eduard Petrovic of Croatia, who has been popular with the equestrian community in the Czech Republic and Slovakia. Last year, Irish designer Alan Wade was in charge of the course design. “In addition to Olaf, I have fond memories of Uliano, he is very open-hearted. He managed to visually enlarge the small arena in Olomouc. He showed that the approach to barriers can be designed from other directions. I discussed with him even the slightest details, like when he built a series of jumps into an arch. I asked him why one of the jumps was ten centimetres more diagonal. He replied that if riders approach the jump in a straight line, the space is wider, and they are more likely to make a mistake. On the other hand, if they make a bigger curve, they will not meet the time limit and get a penalty. I found the information really useful,” revealed Robert Smékal.

This year, he will have the opportunity to meet Bernardo Costa Cabral. “I have never been to the Czech Republic before, and I’m really looking forward to it. I’ve heard so many remarkable things about your country,” said Bernardo, who has not even had a chance to work with anyone from the Czech Republic so far. He will also have to get to know Czech riders. “I don’t know any of them personally, but I’ve seen a couple of them competing on my courses. There are many young talents in your country. I am looking forward to seeing your riders on the course and getting to know them better,” concluded Bernardo Costa Cabral.



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- Press contact: Josef Malinovský (PR Manager J&T BANKA CSI3*-W Olomouc), e-mail: equinet@equinet.cz, phone: +420 606 382 315
- Abbreviation CSI3*-W: concours de saut international – international show jumping event, *** category (star system from 1 to 5 stars), with a Show Jumping World Cup competition – W (world); other codes: J (juniors), YR (young riders), YH (young horses)
- ESC Olomouc – Equine Sport Center in Olomouc – Lazce opened in 2013