

FEI World Cup™ Dressage 2016/2017





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Cover page photo caption: Hans Peter Minderhoud and Glock's Flirt enjoy a #TwoHearts moment after claiming Reem Acra FEI World Cup™ Dressage 2016 title
(Image: Arnd Bronkhorst/FEI)



FEI World Cup™ Dressage: #TwoHearts put on their dancing shoes

By Louise Parkes

Since the FEI's successful **#TwoHearts** campaign was launched in the countdown to the Rio 2016 Olympic and Paralympic Games, the concept of horse and rider as a single athletic entity has captivated and inspired competitors and fans and, in the discipline of Dressage, that singularity of body and mind is particularly evident.

So there is great anticipation ahead of the first leg of the FEI World Cup™ Dressage Western European League 2016/2017, which gets underway at the [Odense Horse Show](#) in Denmark this weekend.

Few have captured the **#TwoHearts** symbolism as perfectly as the multiple record-breaking partnership of Great Britain's Charlotte Dujardin and her wonderful gelding Valegro, who have dominated the sport in recent years.

Together, they have demonstrated that freedom of movement, lightness, self-carriage and the most pleasing harmony are all achievable through good training and sympathetic horsemanship, but having raised the bar to a whole new level after securing back-to-back Olympic titles in Rio they will retire at London's [Olympia Horse Show](#) in December.

The question now is who is going to step into those dancing horse shoes, and by the time the FEI World Cup™ Dressage Final takes place in Omaha, Nebraska (USA) next March, we should have some answers.

Starting point

Odense is an ideal starting point for the Western European League. The city that was birthplace to the much-loved author Hans Christian Andersen is located on Denmark's second-largest island, Fyn, and is a hugely popular holiday destination with its gently rolling hills, orchards, hedgerows and thatched, half-timbered farmhouses.

Odense Horse Show celebrates its 10th anniversary this year, and several Olympic combinations will be setting out to pick up some early qualifying points on the [#RidetoOmaha](#).

Making it real

Spanish sensations Severo Jurado Lopez and Lorenzo, who finished fifth in the fantastic Freestyle Final at the Rio 2016 Olympic Games and grabbed [global headlines](#) thanks to their love of music by Santana and Bon Jovi, will take the crowds by storm in Denmark.

Also in action will be Denmark's Anna Kasprzak and Donnperignon, winners of their home leg of the FEI World Cup™ Dressage series back in 2013, who topped the Grand Prix at Odense 12 months ago only to be beaten in the Freestyle by The Netherlands' Edward Gal and Glock's Voice.



Each leg of the FEI World Cup™ Dressage series sees riders compete in a preliminary Grand Prix before performing a Freestyle to music, and it is this crowd-pleasing competition that decides the qualifying points that lead riders to the Final.

Popularity

Dutchwoman Anky van Grunsven played a major role in bringing the popularity of Freestyle to where it is today, with her nine FEI World Cup™ Dressage titles over a 13-year period between 1995 and 2008 seeing her become the sport's first real super-star. The Dutch record in this series is highly impressive, and when Hans Peter Minderhoud steered Glock's Flirt to victory in Gothenburg (SWE) at the 2016 Final he moved the Dutch tally onto an impressive 13 titles.

There will be nine qualifiers in the Western European League, with Lyon (FRA) taking place less than a week after the opener in Odense, and Stuttgart (GER) playing host in November.

Salzburg (AUT) will stage the next leg in early December and then the Christmas show at Olympia in London (GBR) is bound to be a sell-out because although Charlotte Dujardin and Valegro won't be competing in the qualifier, Valegro will be honoured in an official retirement ceremony that is likely to be extremely emotional.

The New Year will get underway with the sixth leg in Amsterdam (NED) and then it's on to Neumunster (GER) and Gothenburg in February before the last qualifying opportunity for the Omaha Final at 's-Hertogenbosch (NED) in March.

Fashion designer Reem Acra, who has dressed global icons of style for red carpet appearances, awards ceremonies and weddings, remains closely linked with the FEI World Cup™ Dressage series as official partner for the Western European League as well as the Final in Omaha.

Final - open contest

The dancing shoes will be out in force when the series Final kicks off in Omaha, where the best combinations from all four qualifying regions - Western Europe, Central Europe, North America and Asia/Pacific - will compete, and it is likely to be a wide open contest.

Just two Americans have ever claimed the FEI World Cup™ Dressage crown, Debbie McDonald with Brentina in 2003 and Steffen Peters and Ravel in 2009, and this time around the host-nation favourites for a top spot may well be Laura Graves and Verdades. They finished just off the podium in Rio, slotting into fourth spot behind Germany's Kristina Bröring-Sprehe and Desperados in bronze medal position while fellow-countrywoman Isabel Werth took silver with Weihegold.

Werth of course is quite a phenomenon, one of the most decorated equestrian athletes of all time and a double FEI World Cup™ Dressage champion. It is 24 years since she posted her first victory with Fabienne in Gothenburg in 1992 and since then she has rarely finished outside the top-10. The 2017 Final could be the year for her to make it a hat-trick, but it's a long road from Odense to Omaha for Europe's top riders and their dancing horses.



The Calendar

Odense (DEN)	Date/Start time of Grand Prix Date: Sat 22 Oct 2016 Time: 12.00	Date/Start time of Freestyle to Music Date: Sun 23 Oct 2016 Time: 14.15
Lyon (FRA)	Date/Start time of Grand Prix Date: Thu 27 Oct 2016 Time: 08:00 - 11:00	Date/Start time of Freestyle to Music Date: Fri 28 Oct 2016 Time: 16:00 - 19:00
Stuttgart (GER)	Date/Start time of Grand Prix Date : Fri 18 Nov 2016 Time: 10:30	Date/Start time of Freestyle to Music Date: Sat 19 Nov 2016 Time: 15:30
Salzburg (AUT)	Date/Start time of Grand Prix Date: Sat 10 Dec 2016 Time: 08:00	Date/Start time of Freestyle to Music Date: Sun 11 Dec 2016 Time: 11:30
London Olympia (GBR)	Date/Start time of Grand Prix Date: Tue 13 Dec 2016 Time: 19:20	Date/Start time of Freestyle to Music Date: Wed 14 Dec 2016 Time: 20:00
Amsterdam (NED)	Date/Start time of Grand Prix Date: Fri 27 Jan 2017 Time: 11.00	Date/Start time of Freestyle to Music Date: Sat 28 Jan 2017 Time: 12.30
Neumünster (GER)	Date/Start time of Grand Prix Date: Sat 18 Feb 2017 Time: 8:00	Date/Start time of Freestyle to Music Date: Sun 19 Feb 2017 Time: 10:00
Gothenburg (SWE)	*To be confirmed	
C's-Hertogenbosch (NED)	Date/Start time of Grand Prix Date: Fri 10 March 2017 Time: 13.00 <i>exact time to be confirmed</i>	Date/Start time of Freestyle to Music Date: Sat 11 March 2017 Time: 14.00 <i>exact time to be confirmed</i>
FINAL: Omaha (USA)	Date/Start time of Grand Prix Date: Thu 30 Mar 2017 Time: <i>to be confirmed</i>	Date/Start time of Freestyle to Music Date: Sat 01 Apr 2017 Time: <i>to be confirmed</i>



The Athletes

The world's best Dressage athletes will compete in the FEI World Cup™ Dressage 2016/2017 series to gain precious points for the series Final in Omaha.

Athletes competing in each series qualifier are listed on the Organiser websites in the run up to the competitions – click button below:



Latest series standings, competition results & news

View latest standings, competition results and news via the button below and in the series hub here: <http://bit.ly/2e2Cipi>:





Past Winners

YEAR	RIDER	NAT	HORSE
1986	Anne-Grethe Jensen	DEN	Marzog
1987	Christine Stückelberger	SUI	Gaugin de Lully
1988	Christine Stückelberger	SUI	Gaugin de Lully
1989	Margit Otto-Crepin	FRA	Corlandus
1990	Sven Rothenberger	GER	Andiamo
1991	Kyra Kyrklund	FIN	Matador
1992	Isabell Werth	GER	Fabienne
1993	Monica Theodorescu	GER	Ganimedes
1994	Monica Theodorescu	GER	Ganimedes
1995	Anky van Grunsven	NED	Bonfire
1996	Anky van Grunsven	NED	Bonfire
1997	Anky van Grunsven	NED	Bonfire
1998	Louise Nathhorst	SWE	LRF Walk on Top
1999	Anky van Grunsven	NED	Gestion Bonfire
2000	Anky van Grunsven	NED	Gestion Bonfire
2001	Ulla Salzgeber	GER	Rusty
2002	Ulla Salzgeber	GER	Rusty
2003	Debbie McDonald	USA	Brentina
2004	Anky van Grunsven	NED	Gestion Salinero
2005	Anky van Grunsven	NED	Keltec Salinero
2006	Anky van Grunsven	NED	Keltec Salinero
2007	Isabell Werth	GER	Warum Nicht FRH
2008	Anky van Grunsven	NED	IPS Salinero
2009	Steffen Peters	USA	Ravel
2010	Edward Gal	NED	Moorlands Totilas
2011	Adeline Cornelissen	NED	Jerich Parzival
2012	Adeline Cornelissen	NED	Jerich Parzival
2013	Helen Langehanenberg	GER	Damon Hill NRW
2014	Charlotte Dujardin	GBR	Valegro
2015	Charlotte Dujardin	GBR	Valegro
2016	Hans Peter Minderhoud	NED	Glock's Flirt



FEI Online Resources

Access **athlete biographies**, download **FEI SportApp**, watch **FEI TV live & On the Go**, download **images free for editorial use** and **join us on social media**.

Simply click the logos below:

FEI Biographies Search



**FEI Sport App is available on App Store & Google Play*



www.feitv.org

FEI PHOTO CATALOGUE

www.feiphotos.org



Dedicated series hashtags:

#FEIWorldCupWEL #RidetoOmaha #FEIWorldCupFinals #TwoHearts



Press Officer Contacts

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s-Hertogenbosch (NED)	Press Officer Denise van der Net Email: info@denisevandernet.nl Phone: +31 627031674
FEI World Cup™ Final - Omaha (USA)	Press Officer Marty Bauman Email: marty@classic-communications.com



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