

2008 OLYMPICS

SHOW JUMPING

TOP TEN

INDIVIDUALS

By Aliaa El Tabei



▲ Eric Lamaze, Canada

GOLD MEDALLIST ERIC LAMAZE RIDING HICKSTEAD:

Born April 17th 1968, Eric was originally named to the Canadian team for the 1996 Atlanta Olympics but lost his place and received a 4 year suspension after testing positive for cocaine. In 2000, he again tested positive for stimulants and was therefore again unable to compete, this time at the 2000 Sydney Olympics. Eric's aggressive riding style and ability to bring home dramatic victories have made him a fan favourite. In addition to being a crowd pleaser, Eric has also been pegged as an athlete to watch at the Games by equestrian experts. This individual recognition is especially significant given the fact that Canada has not won an Olympic medal in equestrian show jumping since 1976; he jumped a fast clear round to help give his team the gold. Adding to Eric's amazing comeback tale is the story of how he worked up from the very bottom to get to top of his game. Eric, a junior-high drop out, grew up in a troubled home and had little financial backing. So, in a discipline commonly viewed as an elitist sport, Eric got his start by working in the horse industry in exchange for an opportunity to ride. Some of his achievements include 13th place with his team at the 2006 World Equestrian Games and ranking 27th on the individual level, along with being named 2007 Equine Canada Equestrian of the Year.



SILVER MEDALLIST ROLF-GORAN BENGTSSON RIDING NINJA:

Born June 2nd 1962, Rolf-Goran was one of 21 Swedish athletes who participated in the equestrian events at the 2008 Beijing Olympics. He rides for Flyinge Ryttarförening Club in Sweden and is coached by his father Sven-Erik Bengtsson. He studied mechanical engineering and speaks 3 languages: German, English and Swedish. Some of his achievements are winning the bronze individual medal in the World Cup Championships in Sweden, and the silver team medal at the 2004 Athens Olympic Games. This is the first individual medal for Sweden since Clarence von Rosen won bronze at Los Angeles in 1932.

◀ Rolf-Goran Bengtsson, Sweden





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BRONZE MEDALLIST ELIZABETH “BEEZIE” PATTON-MADDEN RIDING AUTHENTIC:

Born November 20th 1963, Beezie has been riding since the age of 3 and first appeared on the international scene in 1985. She is one of the highly ranked American riders and is trained by her brother-in-law Frank Madden. At the 2004 Athens Olympics, Beezie won the team gold medal together with Peter Wylde, McLain Ward and Chris Kappler. Some of the horses that left a mark in her career are Trudeaux, Medrano and Nortehrn Magic, along with Judgement and the famous Authentic.

◀ *Beezie Madden, USA*

RANKED 4TH, MEREDITH MICHAELS- BEERBAUM RIDING SHUTTERFLY:

Born December 26th 1969 in Los Angeles, Meredith is the daughter of film director Richard Michaels. As a young-adult, Meredith studied political science at Princeton University, continuing to compete during her college years despite a serious accident in 1991 leaving her with 2 broken wrists. She then went to train in Germany with Paul Schockemöhle in 1991 planning to remain only for a summer, which eventually turned into a permanent stay. Following her marriage to the well-known German show jumper Markus Beerbaum in 1998, she changed her citizenship. Her past and current top horses include Shutterfly, Checkmate, Stella, and Quick Star. Some of Meredith's achievements are winning a gold medal at the 2008 World Cup Final in Gothenburg, Sweden, the first woman to have reached the No. 1 position on the FEI show jumping world rankings (December 2004), as well as individual and team bronze at the 2006 World Equestrian Games in Aachen, Germany.

Meredith Michaels-Beerbaum, Germany ▶



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RANKED 5TH, RODRIGO PESSOA RIDING RUFUS:

Like his father Nelson Pessoa who was an accomplished show jumper, Rodrigo was admired by a lot of spectators. Born on November 29th 1972 in Paris, France, he competed in the best international competitions with style and efficiency showing a lot of talent. His first major achievements came in 1996 when along with his team, Rodrigo won the bronze medal in the 1996 Atlanta Olympics. It was topped up with another team bronze 4 years later in the 2000 Sydney Olympics. In the 2004 Athens Olympics, riding Baloubet, he won the individual silver medal. 2005 was the year in which Olympic silver turned into gold; the Irish team of Cian O'Connor and Waterford Cristal got disqualified from the 2004 Olympics due to doping and Rodrigo received the long awaited Olympic gold medal. In 2007, Rodrigo won the individual silver and team gold medals at the Pan American Games, held in his home town Rio de Janeiro.

Unfortunately on October 4th 2008 the FEI stated that the B sample of Rufus has confirmed a positive test for a banned substance; novamide, a pain reliever. Rodrigo was fined 2,000 Swiss Francs and both he and Rufus were disqualified from the entire Beijing Olympics.



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▲ Rodrigo Pessoa, Brazil

Mclain Ward, USA ▼

RANKED 6TH, MCLAIN WARD RIDING SAPPHIRE:

Born October 17th 1975, Mclain is the son of accomplished rider Barney Ward, winning the Grand Prix of Devon 20 years to the day before McLain won it in 2002. When Mclain was 14 years old, he became the youngest rider to win the United States Equestrian Federation Show Jumping Talent Derby. He then went on to win the medal finals. The 2 victories made him the youngest rider to win both in 1 year. In 1999 Mclain became the youngest rider to top the \$1 million mark in grand prix earnings. Mclain returned to his second consecutive Olympic Games coming in 6th place at the 2008 Beijing Olympics riding an excellent mare that jumped impressively helping him to win a silver medal along with his team mates. Since 2004, McLain and Sapphire have been successful together in the show jumping ring; building off their team gold medal from the 2004 Athens Olympics, McLain and Sapphire went to the 2006 World Championships and contributed to a team silver. In 2006 and 2007, Mclain won the prestigious Grand Prix of Devon, making it his 5th win overall at the event.

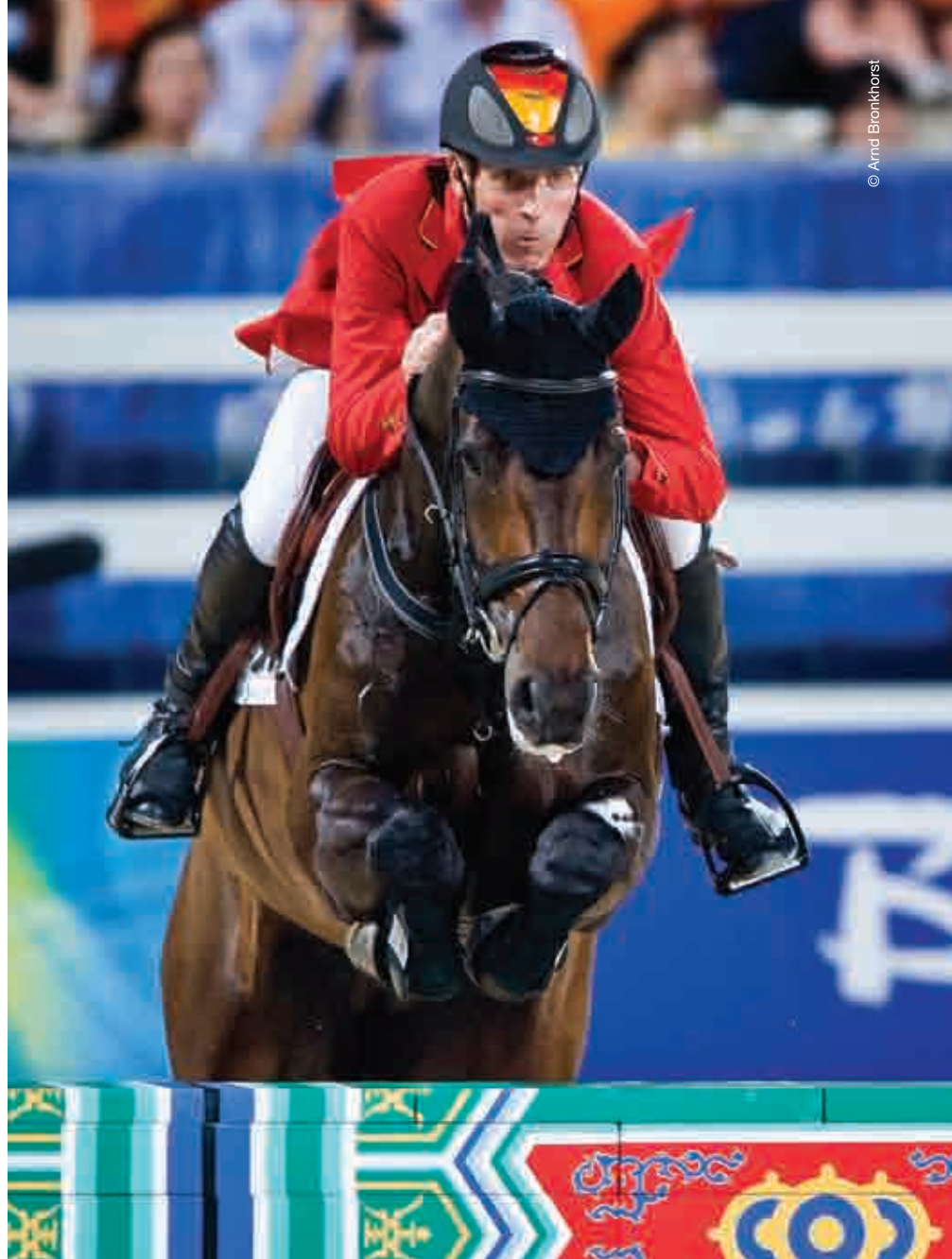


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RANKED 7TH, LUDGER BEERBAUM RIDING ALL INCLUSIVE:

Born August 26th 1963, Ludger started studying business administration but did not finish due to seeking a career in show jumping. He began riding at the age of 8 and had a very successful career as a junior. His most notable accomplishments include winning 4 Olympic gold medals (his first at age 25) and numerous European and World Championship medals: team gold at the 1988 Seoul Olympics, individual gold at the 1992 Barcelona Olympics, team gold at the 1996 Atlanta Olympics, and team gold at the 2000 Sydney Olympics. During the 2004 Athens Olympics, Ludger and his horse Goldfever managed to finish with only 4 penalty points, helping Germany earn the team gold medal. However, following the competition, Goldfever tested positive for the prohibited substance betamethasone. The FEI found Ludger guilty of breaking the rules, stripping both him and his German team of their medals, dropping Germany down to bronze. Ludger believed the substance to have been present in an ointment administered to the horse due to a skin irritation, and the FEI agreed that the substance provided no competitive advantage. However, in accordance to the rule, Ludger was disqualified.

Ludger Beerbaum, Germany ▶



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RANKED 8TH, MARC HOUTZAGER RIDING OPIUM:

Born January 9th 1971, Marc Houtzager competed in the 2002 Show Jumping World Cup and won the meeting in Dublin. After that he kept on riding international tournaments, but never succeeded on World Cup level again. In 2008 he and his team mates became Dutch national champions in Mierlo. Marc himself won an additional silver medal at the event in the individual competition. He was selected to represent the Netherlands at the Super League meeting in Rome where they finished 4th. At CHIO Rotterdam he came in 5th on the individual level. Later that year he finished 4th at the Grand Prix in Aachen with his horse Opium. Due to injuries of former Olympic champion Jeroen Dubbeldam and Albert Zoer, Marc Houtzager was selected by coach Rob Ehrens to represent the Netherlands at the 2008 Beijing Olympics.

▼ *Marc Houtzager, the Netherlands*



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RANKED 9TH, ANGELIQUE HOORN RIDING O'BRIEN:

Born April 25th 1975, Angelique came in 4th place at the 2000 Dutch National Show Jumping Championships, announcing her appearance for the upcoming years. Together with her horse Hascal she won the 2001 Championship in Papendal. She was selected to compete in the Show Jumping World Cup circuit and managed to win a silver medal at the meeting in Jerez in 2002. A few years of less successful years followed, however in 2006 she finished 3rd at the Dutch nationals behind Gerco Schröder and Harrie Smolders. In Mierlo in 2007 she won her 2nd national title with her horse Blaudendraad's O'Brien, finishing in front of Gerco Schröder, Erik van Vleuten and Ben Schröder. Angelique was also selected by coach Rob Ehrens to represent the Dutch team at the 2008 Beijing Olympics along side Marc Houtzager.



▲ Angelique Hoorn, the Netherlands

RANKED 10TH, JEAN-CLAUDE VAN GEENBERGHE RIDING QUINTUS:

Born November 17th 1962, Jean-Claude is a Belgian-Ukrainian equestrian who started to ride at the age of 12. At the age of 14, his first horse, an Irish mare named Kimono helped him win 15 national classes. Jean-Claude won the Belgian Cup, became national champion, came in 4th place during the European championships, and closed his junior time as unofficial world champion in Le Vaudreuil. With horses as Osta Carpets Queen, Omnistor Freestyle, Osta Carpets Carrera, Omnistor Avontuur and many others, all major victories were achieved. Jean-Claude competed in 3 Olympic Games including Seoul and Barcelona, however during those 2 games he rode for the Belgium team. As a Belgian, Jean-Claude won the 1987 Aachen Grand Prix, and the 1989 and 1993 Rome Grand Prix. In the 2008 Beijing Olympics, Jean-Claude rode for Ukraine finishing 10th in the individual rounds and 12th with team Ukraine during the first final but failing to reach the second final.

▼ Jean-Claude van Geenberghe, Ukraine





▲ Steve Guerdat, Switzerland



▲ Edwina Alexander, Australia



▲ Camila Benedicto, Brazil

RANKED 10TH, STEVE GUERDAT RIDING JALISCA SOLIER:

Born June 10th 1982, Steve is the youngest rider on the top 10 list coming in 10th place with several international names such as Jos Lansink and Jean-Claude Van Geenberghe. Despite his young age, he has had many achievements; 2003 European Championships team bronze and 2005 team silver. He was also ranked 5th with his team in the 2004 Athens Olympics. In 2005, he came in 6th place in the final of the World Cup in Las Vegas, and shortly thereafter won the Grand Prix of Cannes and the Prix des Nations Rotterdam. Two years later he achieved his 2 victories in both Grand Prix World Cup Geneva and Vigo riding Jalisca Solier. In April 2007, he returned to Las Vegas to take a fantastic 3rd place with his reserve horse. Steve is also Grand Prix winner of many international competitions, including HSBC Grand Prix at CSI-W Geneva, the 2004 World Cup Rolex Grand Prix at the 2006 CSI-W Geneva, and the 2007 Grand Prix de Vigo. Steve was also the youngest member of the top 20 riders of the World as of August 12th 2005. After leaving the stables of Jan Tops in the Netherlands, he returned to Switzerland to ride in the stables of Mr. Urs Schwarzenbach which was an ideal framework for himself and his 6 horses. Steve then had the chance to ride 4 horses belonging to Yves G. Piaget, his new sponsor. Steve is also one of the 3 riders sponsored by the Little Dreams Foundation, which helps young talent, along with Rodrigo Pessoa and Malin Baryard-Johnsson.

RANKED 10TH, EDWINA ALEXANDER RIDING ITOT DU CHATEAU:

Born March 29th 1974, Edwina's coach and partner is former Dutch champion Jan Tops. She moved 10 years ago to Europe to improve her riding and now uses the Netherlands as her base for most of the year. Edwina began riding at the age of 8 and in 1996 was named Australian Young Rider of the Year. In 2006, she became the first Australian to make the final of the individual jumping competitions at the Aachen World Equestrian Games, where she finished 4th place.

RANKED 10TH, CAMILA BENEDICTO RIDING BONITO Z:

Born December 7th 1977, Camila was a reserve and was selected after one of the Brazilian riders dropped out due to a horse injury.

RANKED 10TH, JOS LANSINK RIDING CUMANO:

Born March 19th 1961, Jozeph "Jos" Johannes Gerardus Marinus Lansink is an equestrian from the Netherlands, but currently representing Belgium. Jos started riding at the early age of 3. In 1982, he worked for Hans Horn. Jos previously coached the Dutch jumping team but is currently coaching the Qatari team. He first competed in the Cup of Nations of the Netherlands in 1986. In late 1987, a new horse came to their stud which helped him move up the ladder. Felix, the new horse, came in 7th place at the 1988 Seoul Olympics and won a bronze medal in Rotterdam in 1989. Since then, Jos is usually ranked in the top 3 in international competitions with different horses. Jos won team gold at the 1992 Barcelona Olympics alongside Piet Raymakers, Jan Tops and Bert Romp. He competed in 4 consecutive Olympics for his native country, starting in 1988. In

2001 Jos became a citizen of Belgium, for which he competed at the 2004 Athens Olympics. Jos won the gold medal in the 2006 FEI Aachen World Equestrian Games riding Cavalor Cumano and is currently the World Champion.

▼ Jos Lansink, Belgium





SHOW JUMPING TEAMS

◀ USA, Team gold

GOLD MEDALLISTS: The United States team of Beezie Madden riding Authentic, Mclain Ward riding Sapphire, Laura Kraut riding Cedric, and Will Simpson riding Carlsson Vom Dach won gold in the team show jumping with 3 clear rounds in a dramatic jump-off with Canada.

SILVER MEDALLISTS: The Canadian team of Mac Cone riding Ole, Ian Miller riding In Style, and Eric Lamaze riding Hickstead, who had finished equal on 20 points with the defending champions after the allocated jumps, had to settle for silver.

BRONZE MEDALLISTS: The Norwegian team of Stein Endresen riding Le Beau, Morten Djupvik riding Casino, Geir Gulliksen riding Cattini, and Tony Andre Hansen riding Camiro secured bronze with 27 points, their best score at an Olympics. In another case of doping, Tony Andre Hansen has been provisionally suspended from the Olympic Games after his horse Camiro returned a positive dope test. **HT**



▲ Norway, Team bronze

◀ Canada, Team silver