

World Cup Finals in Las Vegas

Las Vegas, 2003

Marcus Ehning of Germany won the 25th annual FEI Show Jumping World Cup Final when the world's best show jumping horses and riders met to do battle at Budweiser World Cup 2003, April 16-20 at the Thomas & Mack Center in Las Vegas, Nevada. The international event featured 41 riders from around the world who competed for the prestigious title of World Cup Champion. Spectacular presentation of the sport with laser light shows, Las Vegas show acts, and the world-famous Budweiser Clydesdales made the World Cup a hit with everyone.

Ehning put in a faultless performance in the final round of Budweiser World Cup competition on Sunday, April 20, riding his Oldenburg mare Anka to victory. Three-time World Cup Champion Rodrigo Pessoa of Brazil had to settle for the runner-up position this time aboard Baloubet du Rouet, owned by Diago Pereira Coutinho. Third went to Malin Baryard of Sweden riding Christina Larsson's H&M Butterfly Flip. The Top U.S. rider was Laura Kraut, who tied for fifth aboard Anthem, owned by the summit Syndicate.

Ehning received a wonderful birthday present a day late, as he had celebrated his 29th birthday on Saturday. "I can't believe it" he said. "I never thought I would win. If you think too much about it, it can hurt you; you need to go day by day." There was much to think about going into the last rounds of competition on the final day. Competition was fierce, and the top three were less than a rail apart in the placings. Going into Sunday's first round, Ehning and Pessoa were tied for second place with two faults, and Baryard was in the lead with a perfect score of zero. Ehning, a Sydney Olympic team Gold Medalist, went clear, Pessoa had a rail down to give him a total of six faults, and Baryard dropped a rail for four faults total.



Pessoa on 'Baloubet du Rouet'.

The second and final round saw Pessoa go clear, putting pressure on the remaining entries. The atmosphere was thick as Baryard entered the ring. If the young Swede had even one rail down, there would be no chance to win, as that would give her a total of eight faults to Pessoa's six. Unfortunately, she had a rail down and dropped to third place.

Ehning was the last to go and had no room for error. One rail would tie him with Pessoa and force a Jump-off. Two rails would give Pessoa the title. Ehning and Anka rose to the occasion leaving all the rails up and claiming the title of World Cup Champion. He threw down the reins and raised his arms in the air as the crowd rose to their feet cheering for the pair. It was a spectacular finish for the most prestigious show Jumping competition in the world this year.

Ehning's win made it two in a row for Germany, following Otto Becker's win at Leipzig last year. Germany now has three wins overall with Ludger Beerbaum having at Gothenburg in 1993. The U.S. leads all nations with seven World Cup titles ■



Ehning on 'Anka'.



The Opening Ceremony.

Results

Placing	Rider	Horse	Country	Placing	Rider	Horse	Country
1	Marcus Ehning	Anka 191	GER	6	Markus Fuchs	Tinka's Boy	SUI
2	Rodrigo Pessoa	Baloubet du Rouet	BRA	7	Ludo Philippaerts	Parco	BEL
3	Malin Bayard	H&M Butterfly Flip	SWE	8	Ludger Beerbaum	Gold Fever	GER
4	Lars Neiberg	Fighting Alpha 3	GER	9	Meredith Michaels	Shutter Fly	GER
5	Laura Kraut	Anthem	USA	10	Gerco Schroder	Euro commerce Geneve	NED

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