

EVENTS/CAUSES

Longines targets global equestrians with Masters series

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Longines ambassador Ms. Richard

By JEN KING

Swiss watchmaker Longines is working to expand awareness on three continents through the EEM Longines Masters series.

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The Masters series includes equestrian events in Europe, Asia and the United States and is recognized by the Fédération Equestre Internationale (FEI). Extended participation in a prestigious equestrian competition will help Longines target affluent consumers in those three key markets.

"We are proud that Longines, which believes in our vision and has assisted us to succeed in Asia and then in the U.S., has renewed its trust in us," said Christophe Ameeuw, founder and CEO of **EEM**, Ecaussinnes, Belgium.

"This trust is further strengthened today as Longines becomes the title sponsor of the Longines Masters on three continents," he said. "This is a new era for the Masters, and together we would like to continue to bring a new perspective to equestrian competitions through exceptional events that attract new audiences in France and abroad."

New deal

EEM created the Masters concept in 2009 with the first edition being the Gucci Paris Masters. Having now been renamed the Longines Masters of Paris, the equestrian event aligns with the watchmaker's participation in a number of horseback riding events.

Inspired by Grand Slam tennis tournaments, the concept was then extended to include the Longines Masters of Hong Kong in 2013 and the Longines Masters of Los Angeles in 2014, which gathered 30,000 equestrian fans.

The trifecta of equestrian Masters events combines at the Longines Grand Prix where riders and horses will compete for \$1 million in prize money at each part of the series. If a rider wins all three events they will receive a \$1 million Grand Slam Bonus.



Longines' Masters Los Angeles poster

For two consecutive wins, the rider will \$500,000 and winners of two non-successive victories during the Longines Grand Prix will receive a bonus of \$250,000.

The Longines Masters of Los Angeles will begin the Longines Grand Prix Oct. 1-4 at the Los Angeles Convention Center.

During the three-day event riders will compete in Friday's Longines Speed Challenge, a test of speed, agility, power and precision while Saturday is reserved for "glamour, entertainment and generosity" with the Gucci Gold Cup and the Charity Pro-Am Style and Competition. This event calls for riders and celebrities to dress up to raise money for charity with last year's famous riding participants including Kaley Cuoco, Jessica Springsteen and Jennifer Gates. Sunday closes with an Olympic-level class with a jump course.

The Longines Master of Paris will be held Dec. 3-6, and the Longines Masters of Hong Kong will occur Feb. 19-21.

Each of the events will be broadcast in more than 120 countries reaching approximately 550 million viewers. The events will also bring together sports enthusiasts, celebrities and corporate decision-makers.

A horse of course

Longines is active in many international equestrian events where it acts as sponsor and timekeeper.

For instance, In 2013, the watchmaker targeted affluent equestrians through a partnership as the official timekeeper of the 38th Annual Hampton Classic Horse Show in Bridgehampton, NY.

The long-lasting relationship between the watchmaker and equestrian sports is likely to establish brand enthusiasts of various age as the sport is appealing to a wide age demographic ([see story](#)).

Longines also uses digital tactics to ensure its brand followers are aware of its involvement

For example, Longines fortified its relationship with equestrian sports through a social video that highlights the watchmaker's involvement with the FEI Nations Cup.

Organized by the Fédération Équestre Internationale, the FEI Nations Cup is the most prestigious show jumping series for international equestrian teams. With many watchmakers sponsoring or acting as official timekeepers of equestrian sports, the partnership with the FEI will likely benefit Longines due to its notoriety in the sport's circuit ([see story](#)).

A brand comes off as more authentic if it continuously aligns with similar events that showcase interest and heritage.

"Through this historical partnership, Longines is increasing its visibility in this amazing international trilogy and expresses its commitment to this original concept and to this discipline with which Longines has aligned its values for many years" said Juan Carlos Capelli, vice president and head of international marketing for [Longines](#), Saint-Imier, Switzerland.

Final Take

Jen King, lead reporter on Luxury Daily, New York

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