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Italy off to a flying start at Jumping Verona 2024



A win for **Emanuele Gaudiano** and runner-up spot for **Luca Coata** got the Italian contingent off to a flying start in the **Two-Phase Special presented by Sitip at Jumping Verona 2024** today.

In a strong starting **field of 50**, Gaudiano and the super-fast 10-year-old grey gelding **Jaja** threw down a brilliant target-time of **29.26** seconds when tenth to go. And it proved too good for the rest of the field with compatriot Coata slotting into second spot with **Cassirana del Rilate** in **30.33** seconds while Austria's **Gerfried Puck** and the 11-year-old stallion Idiaal Special HJ filled third spot when breaking the beam in **31.00**.

Course designer **Uliano Vezzani** presented them with a flowing track for their first test of the week, and while some chose to use the opportunity as familiarisation for their horses Gaudiano meant business from the moment he cantered into the ring.

«*Jaja is a quick horse, I was in the beginning of the class and it was a Two-Phase 1.45m competition and I was quick enough in the second phase to win. It was the first international class and although it was not too difficult there were a lot of other riders trying to win, but today they couldn't beat me!*», said the 38-year-old double-Olympian who is ranked 39th in the world. Today's victory was his seventh in the history of **Jumping Verona** where he is competing for the 17th time.

Quick and fast

So where did he win it? « *I think I was very quick from fence 8 to 9, he is quick and fast! Jaja is a Zirocco Blue horse that belongs to VDL Stud, he has won a lot of classes and this year also a Grand Prix in Italy. He's an interesting horse and I like him!*», Gaudiano said. The pair also cut sharp inside fence six to get a very tight line to the penultimate vertical at fence 11.

Belgium's **Jerome Guery** and Hoselinde produced the second-quickest time of the competition when crossing the line in **29.52** seconds but left the oxer at nine on the floor so Coata comfortably filled second spot.

The 32-year-old rider, whose older brother Simone is also competing at the top Italian fixture this week, was delighted with his result on his debut at Verona.

«*It's a great start for Italy! Emanuele is always really fast, I tried but I was one second slower – maybe next time! I've been riding my mare Cassirana since she was seven years old and she's now 13*», Coata said.

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