

Vincent Deller instead of Daniel Etter

Just only a year ago the European Team Champion 2009 was in the Swiss Team at the CSIO St. Gallen. This time Daniel Etter is missing during the most important outdoor tournament in Switzerland, as well as his wife Marie Etter-Pellegrin who rides for France. The top-horses of the rider-family from Muentschemier are injured or not yet so far to compete in the high classes in the Gruendenmoos.

Chef d'Equipe Urs Gruenig reacted immediately and replaced Daniel Etter through Vincent Deller, who was born in the French part of Switzerland. The 44 year old former kitchen chef from Jussy, who learned his job at the well-known star-cook Fredy Girardet in Crissier, has earned his first nomination for St. Gallen with his victory with Casha in the Grand Prix in Le Mont sur Lausanne. This Grand Prix counts for the qualification for the Swiss Championship end of June in Schaffhausen. During the Championship 2008 in Basel Deller won the second competition and surprised everybody.

Ireland in front of Belgium

The FEI Nations Cup on Friday will be very thrilling. St. Gallen is the third station of the team-competition after La Baule and Rome. The Netherlands won the Nations Cup on the Piazza di Siena in Rome, followed by Belgium and Ireland. That means Ireland, winner in La Baule, is leading with 16 points in front of Belgium (14) and the Netherlands (13.5). World Champion Germany is with only 10 points fourth in the ranking list. Last years winner France has disappointed so far and is only sixth in the position table. However, with Kevin Staut, leader of the world ranking, Pénélope Leprevost, Simon Delestre and Olivier Guillon, the Tricolore-team is coming to St. Gallen with a top-team, that certainly will do their best to repeat last years first place in the Gruendenmoos.

Switzerland is participating with a wild card. Their result will count for a position in the field of nine nations, but not for the Nations Cup. Last year Switzerland fell out of the Top League, but is on their best way to get back up again. In the ranking of the Promotional League, they have taken over the lead after being second in the Nations Cup during the CSIO Lisbon. Switzerland's Team, which was in Portugal with Steve Guerdat, the youngsters Martin Fuchs, Jessy Putallaz and the veterinary Marc Ortly, is first with a short lead in front of Spain, Sweden and Italy, the hardest rivals for going up to the Top League again.

Is Switzerland strong enough?

The strongest at the moment available Swiss team will be in St. Gallen. Pius Schwizer, fifth in the world-ranking is joining with his top-horse Carlina, Steve Guerdat with Jalisca Solier, Werner Muff with Kiamon and the young Janika Sprunger has Uptwon Boy for her first attendance in St. Gallen. Chef d'Equipe Urs Gruenig is convinced: "a top ranking is possible. The second place in Lisbon gave our riders a lot of motivation. They want to prove themselves, are aiming for a ranking at the European Championship and want to know where they stand in comparison with the best riders of the world". Switzerland was fifth last year in the Nations Cup with its prize winning money of 200 000 Euro. The same seems absolutely possible again.