

FEI European Reining Championships 2011:

Italy did it again: Manuel Cortesi (ITA) becomes European Champion Young Riders again, Silver medal after run off for Andrea Iannetta (ITA) with Matyas Gobert (BEL) claiming bronze

It's unbelievable: with Manuel Cortesi winning the individual final of the Young Riders, he also took the fifth gold medal at this event for Italy. Manuel who had already become European Champion two years ago, achieved a 222 after a superb ride on ML Great Spirit (Bes. Eugenio Latorre). The stallion was bred and is owned by Eugenio Latorre who gave this horse to Manuel for the EC two months ago. „He is an absolutely honest, strong and very smart horse who loves to be in the show ring. I'm so happy about the success I could achieve for Italy. I'd like to thank Eugenio and his wife Bonny for giving me this amazing horse, and my father who supported me so much!“

The fight for the silver medal ended in a run off between Andrea Iannetta (ITA) aboard Little Sugar Speedy and Matyas Gobert (BEL) aboard Chicy Smart Jac. Both had scored a 219.5. In the run off, Iannetta's 9-year-old stallion proved to be the stronger horse. 2010 AIQH Futurity Non Pro Champion and multiple Rookie Champion Iannetta scored a 222 earning the silver medal. Three times Belgian Champion and 2009 FEI EC silver medal winner (team) Matyas Gobert earned a 219 claiming bronze. "I'm so happy about it", he said. "I had a lot of stress in the run off as I knew Andrea and how good he is. It was difficult for my mare as well as this was her first big event, and the run off was very close to the final ride. She gave all she could for me. A big thank you to my father who trained Chicy Smart Jac." Chef d'Equipe Susy Baeck said: „It is simply unbelievable! Matyas is Belgium's big future talent and we are looking forward to him riding in the senior!“

Tripple German Champion Andre Zschau (GER) and Jacs War Leo placed fourth scoring a 217.5. The two had achieved the second highest score in the team competition, but it was obvious that the gelding was tired now. „Jacs War Leo did a great job,“ said Andre afterwards. „He gave all he had today.“

Three riders tied for fifth place scoring a 216: Gloria Spiaggi (ITA) astride Smart Zen, Nina Zinsli (SUI) astride Major Lena Ciello and Natalie Van Den Broeck (BEL) astride Juans Stolen Gun. Giverny Cappoen (BEL) and Hesa Juicey Juice placed 8th (214.5).