SEAT Leon CUPRA vs Calgary

**The power of one horse against 300 hp**

* **The SEAT Leon CUPRA measures up against Calgary, a competition show jumper, in speed and obstacle course tests**
* **The horse can reach 70 km/h at full gallop, while the car demonstrates what its 300 hp engine is capable of**
* **Professional rider Virginia Graells steers her jumper around a course with 12 obstacles in under a minute, and driver Jordi Gené races around them at 80 km/h**

**Martorell, 27/06/2018.**– Force, strength… these are just a few of the characteristics that can be ascribed to the SEAT Leon CUPRA and to the show jumper Calgary. Steered and led respectively by racer driver and CUPRA ambassador Jordi Gené, and professional rider Virginia Graells, they meet up at Barcelona’s Royal Polo Club for a twin challenge: a speed race and an obstacle course.

**-Agility and strength, the merits of champions:** Calgary is nine years old and comes from Germany. With his impressive 500 kg frame he is able to reach 70 km/h. Where does his strength lie? Virginia Graells certainly knows: **“He’s a jumping horse and therefore extremely agile and skilled; he’s very accurate and doesn’t knock down any rails”,** she explains.On the other hand, the SEAT Leon CUPRA draws its power from its 300 hp 2.0 TSI engine. **“The best thing about it for me is its resilience after making quick manoeuvres. It’s very dynamic and agile, which enables you to quickly gain a lot of speed”** says driver Jordi Gené.

**-Rituals prior to the starting gun**: Virginia always makes an initial contact with Calgary in the stables: **“I pat him on the back and treat him to a sugar cube before mounting. I also make sure that his bridle and saddle are firmly in place”,** explains Virginia. Likewise, Jordi Gené examines the SEAT Leon CUPRA and inspects the track. **“In this case the terrain is sandy and unconventional. I also check the surface of the tyres to get an idea of how the car is going to respond”.** Before the race he shares his ritual with us: **“I always get in the car with my right foot first. I’ve been doing this since my very first competition”**, he admits.

**-The first challenge – a matter of speed:** The car and the horse begin the face-off by taking their positions at the starting line. Standing side by side, Calgary is going to gallop straight across the polo field while the CUPRA heads down the sandy track. Calgary takes off covers the 100 metre distance in 15 seconds. The SEAT Leon CUPRA crosses the finish line in just under 4 seconds, reaching a speed of 100 km/h. **“Even though I was competing on a very soft, sandy surface with the odds unevenly stacked against me, the car handled magnificently. Thanks to its 300 hp engine and 4Drive traction, I won the speed challenge”**, says Jordi.

**-A dozen obstacles for the second challenge:** On the next track, the competitors are faced with an obstacle course. Calgary has to jump over all of them without knocking down any rails, while the CUPRA has to go around them. Thanks to Virginia’s skill and her horse’s training, they clear the 2-metre high obstacles in 57 seconds. To his credit, Jordi Gené takes a slalom approach, driving around the hurdles at 80 km/h to finish the course in 31.43 seconds. **“There wasn’t much room to manoeuvre the turns, so I cut it close making it around the obstacles. But thanks to the chassis of the SEAT Leon CUPRA, I was able to change directions very quickly”**, he concludes.

**-Afraid? Who, me?:** Virginia Graells was a member of the Spanish team of young riders and competed recently at two international championships at Barcelona’s Royal Polo Club. She says that ever since she mounted her first horse when she was 14, she’s **“never been afraid”**. The same goes for Jordi Gené, who became Spain’s youngest Formula car champion when he was just 16: **“You can’t be afraid or falter for even a second. If you do, you’ll never be able to compete.”**

**-Reversing roles:** At the end of the challenge, they declare the outcome a draw. For a short time, Virginia and Jordi decide to reverse roles, although they both seem to prefer their original steed. **“This car gives me a special vibe and warmth; it gives me an adrenaline rush and enables me to take control”,** says Jordi. Virginia also saddles up to return to the stables: **“At full gallop I get a unique feeling of freedom and connection with my horse. Today I’m going to treat Calgary to a double helping of carrots and apples.”**

**SEAT** is the only company that designs, develops, manufactures and markets cars in Spain. A member of the Volkswagen Group, the multinational has its headquarters in Martorell (Barcelona), exporting 80% of its vehicles, and is present in over 80 countries through a network of 1,700 dealerships. In 2017, SEAT achieved worldwide sales of nearly 470,000 vehicles.

The SEAT Group employs close to 15,000 professionals at its three production centres – Barcelona, El Prat de Llobregat and Martorell, where it manufactures the highly successful Ibiza, Leon and Arona. Additionally, the company produces the Ateca and the Toledo in the Czech Republic, the Alhambra in Portugal and the Mii in Slovakia.

The multinational has a Technical Centre, which operates as a knowledge hub that brings together 1,000 engineers who are focussed on developing innovation for Spain’s largest industrial investor in R&D. SEAT already features the latest connectivity technology in its vehicle range and is currently engaged in the company’s global digitalisation process to promote the mobility of the future.

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