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Schomberg?s Lamaze triumphant at RBC Grand Prix of Canada

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Schomberg's most famous equestrian has returned to the top of his game.

Eric Lamaze won first place at the prestigious RBC Canadian Grand Prix at Spruce Meadows Riding Club in Calgary on Saturday, reaching the top of the podium in spectacular fashion.

Aboard his prized Chacco Kid, the 51-year old Lamaze took the top spot in the event for the first time since 2010, besting an elite field of riders in a seven-way jump off at the end of the competition.

It marks the most momentous feat for the prized equestrian since his return to the sport from a diagnosis with a brain tumor some eighteen months ago. Widely known throughout Canadian equestrian circles, the grandstands erupted when Lamaze's score showed on the board as seven-tenths of a second faster than world number-one rider Steve Guerdat.

?At one point it was a dream for me to come back here (to Spruce Meadows) and compete,? said Lamaze after the event to a throng of reporters in a press conference. ?But with the help and a lot of support from great friends, like Steve Guerdat, my clients, staff, people around the world, the dream came true and this is just the icing on the cake.?

Guerdat, a longtime friend of Lamaze's, called his fellow rider ?a superhero.?

?Normally I don't like to be beaten, but when I saw the number two next to my name I was very happy because I knew Eric had won,? said Guerdat. ?He is an inspiration for us. You talk about superheroes in football and other sports, but I don't think anybody has ever done what he just did.?

Lamaze, who holds close ties to the Caledon Equestrian Park, now holds the record for most prize money won at the prestigious Spruce Meadows, accumulating over $3-million in earnings on the track over a long and illustrious career.

Having battled this illness publicly for the past year and a half, it was only in recent weeks leading up to the Grand Prix that Lamaze announced the gravity of his illness, and the uncertainty of his future in the sport.

?I am happy to have won, but I am missing a little beat here or there,? said Lamaze. ?...I am not sure what level I will be riding at for the rest of the year or for how long, but I will fight every day to keep doing this.?

Winning gold at the 2008 Beijing Olympics in individual jumping, as well as a silver finish in the team category, Lamaze returned to the worldwide podium in the 2016 Rio Games with a bronze medal in individual, and most recently took home the top prize at the 2018 Masters in Calgary.

He also earned a gold medal in team jumping at the 2015 PanAm Games held in Toronto.

Despite his ongoing battle with no timetable, Lamaze still holds out hope in representing Canada at the 2020 Olympics in Tokyo: the next chapter of what he calls his ?long journey.?

Originally from Montreal, Lamaze now makes his home in Schomberg at Torrey Pines Stables, with connections to stables in both Florida and Belgium.