

Gaspard Maksud, 31

FRA

It will be a first Defender Burghley for British-based French rider Gaspard Maksud (31) and his two rides, Kan-Do 2 and Zaragoza II.

Gaspard, who is based in Surrey, has represented France in international teams. Last year he was a member of the European Eventing Championships bronze medal-winning team and finished eighth individually and in 2022 finished sixth individually at the World Eventing Championships at Pratoni in Italy – on both occasions he was riding Zaragoza. He finished 28th on his five-star debut at Pau in 2023 riding Kan-Do 2. Gaspard also competes in international showjumping up to CSI4* level.

Originally from Laval in France, Gaspard began his riding career aged 11 and five years later, at the age of 16, he won the French junior eventing championship. After winning a 'Sports Ambassador of the Year' award in 2011 and 2013, Gaspard made the decision to move to the UK to pursue a career in eventing.

He spent time based with Andrew Nicholson before going on to work for Sam Griffiths. Gaspard then worked for the Morelands Stud before setting up his own yard.

Gaspard trains with Andrew Nicholson and when not riding, he enjoys playing golf and watching Netflix.

Kan-Do 2 (breeding not recorded), owned by Gaspard Maksud, is a 10-year-old 15.3 gelding, bred by Lee Middleton. Although his breeding is not recorded as he was a mistake, he is by a son of Kannan, who jumped out of his field and covered a pony mare. Gaspard broke Kan-Do2 as a three-year-old and in 2021 was given a half share. He bought the second half the following year. They finished 28th on both horse and rider's five-star debut at Pau in 2023. More recently, they finished sixth in the CCI4*-S at Thoresby Park in April 2024.

Zaragoza II (Cevin Z-Saracen's Pride (Saracen Hill)), owned by Martin Thurlow and Jane Young, is a British-bred AES-registered 11-year-old mare, who was bred by part-owner Jane Young. "Zoe", who has been produced through the levels by Gaspard, was named the EquiRatings Horse of the Year in 2022 and was the top-rated nine-year-old horse in the world that year too. Last year she was a member of the European Eventing Championships bronze medal-winning team, finishing eighth individually and in 2022 finished sixth individually at the World Eventing Championships at Partoni in Italy. More recently she was 16th in the five-star at Luhmühlen and sixth in the CCI4*-S at Burnham Market in April 2024.