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Pessoa confirmed for KLGP

WORLD champion Rodrigo Pessoa of Brazil is among the top riders confirmed for the Kuala Lumpur Grand Prix International Showjumping (KLGP) competition in April.

Pessoa, 20, set a world record by winning the World Cup for three consecutive years between 1998-2000.

Pessoa won his first title, Champion of the Pony Class in Belgium, at the age of 12 and retained the title the following year. After winning the Junior Grand Prix in Italy and France, Pessoa shifted his attention to the Grand Prix.

A year later he finished first in the European Junior Championships but did not get the title because of his Brazilian nationality. The competition rules only allow a European to win the title.

This was the start of a string of victories for Pessoa who won several Grand Prix titles in Europe including the Pan American Games and the World Cup.

"It would certainly be thrilling for Malaysians to have a chance to watch a world champion perform and even more exciting for our riders to be competing against him," said Asiapromote Ventures managing director Wan Zaleha Wan Radzi.

"To promote top level equestrian sports in Malaysia is one of the objectives of the KLGP, and this is the start of international events as Malaysia will now be on the international circuit."

Sanctioned by the International Equestrian Federation (FEI), the KLGP has three main components - a series of competitions, a trade expo and other supporting events related to horses.

"We are happy that our honourable Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad has agreed to be the patron of the KLGP. We want to make the event a success."