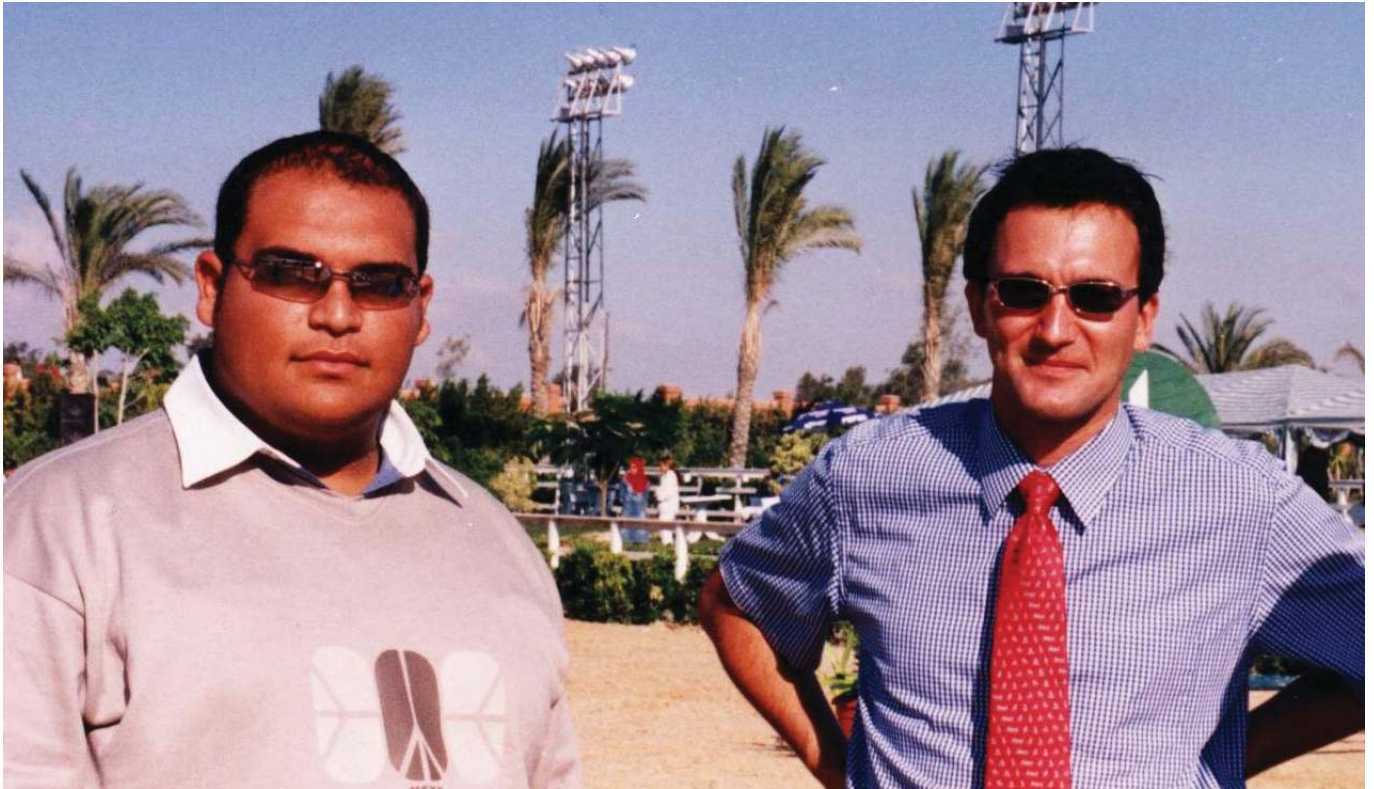


Straight From The Heart

By: Ahmed Talaat



Ahmed Talaat and the international course designer Mr. Olaf Peterson Junior

This summer I went to Hungary with the Egyptian team during their training, where I also had the chance to work in the Hungarian championship with Olaf Petersen junior, our last season's course designer. During one of my friendly conversations with Mr. Peterson, we talked about show jumping in Egypt; Mr. Peterson mentioned that show jumping advanced to a great degree that we could easily say "show jumping in Egypt and Hungary are on the same level of competition".

Moreover, he also thinks that the Egyptian show jumping national team improved during the last period. When Mr. Peterson saw the team for the first time, here in Egypt he felt that they need way more training to be able to compete. However, when he met them in Germany during the last summer training, he was fascinated by the progress they have achieved in show jumping in general and in passing his dad's tough courses. Although some of them faced some difficulties with the 'water jump', this could be justified, since they did not practice it during the season in Egypt. However, he believes that overall the team is doing very well.

Asking him about the courses he designs in Egypt, Mr. Peterson joked about the fact that "most of the riders here in Egypt don't like him and hate his courses!!" as they believe his courses were too tough and technical. However, he is also sure that the riders will start liking his courses when they compete internationally since they won't find the big difference, they always faced, between the courses they are used to in their training, and the courses designed in the international shows.

Designing an easy course is not a problem at all for any course

designer, but he believes that the Egyptian plan is to upgrade the courses designed nationally to be up to and even similar to the European standard. During the first show in king's ranch, Mr. Peterson designed a tough course for the A2-class with which Eng. Abd El Fatah Ragab, President of the Egyptian Equestrian Federation, was very proud, and he told Mr. Peterson that this is the kind of technical design that they need here in Egypt. Mr. Peterson also added that no one in charge in the Egyptian Equestrian Federation ever asked him for easier courses which only means that this is what they needed.

Thinking about my significant conversation with Mr. Peterson, I

found out that I totally agree with what he said and that if I was in his place I would do the same i.e. technical courses. Mr. Peterson is one of the best course designers I ever worked with, and he actually taught me a lot. I consider him my role model in course designing as well as his father. Moreover, world wide, the number of the riders in the jump off is approximately one sixth of the total competitors in that class, and honestly this is the same ratio here in Egypt.

I would like to add a very important fact which has really improved this year; there wasn't a big gap between the c-class and the b-class as in the past years, where it was hard for the horses who jumped clear rounds in the c-class to come out with 4 or 8 faults in the b-class and it wasn't easy for the riders as well; and that has changed today. Finally, I would like to thank Mr. Peterson so much for all what he helped me learn and for his continuous back up for the Egyptian team ■

“The Egyptian plan is to upgrade the course's designs to be up to and even similar to the European design”