

ALI AL RUMAIHI

FROM THE ARENA TO BEYOND



Hit Show, owned by Wathnan Racing, won the Dubai World Cup in 2025



IN THE OTHER REALM OF SHOWJUMPING IN THE MIDDLE EAST, OLYMPIC ATHLETE ALI AL RUMAIHI HAS CARVED OUT A LEGACY AS A TRUE GENTLEMAN OF THE SPORT, CELEBRATED AS MUCH FOR HIS UNPARALLELED SKILL AS HE IS FOR HIS INTEGRITY AND QUIET DIGNITY IN THE SADDLE. COMING FROM A FAMILY WITH A DEEP DEVOTION FOR HORSES, HIS WALL OF FAME INCLUDES NOTABLE ACHIEVEMENTS FROM REPRESENTING QATAR NUMEROUS TIMES ON THE WORLD STAGE. KNOWN FOR HIS “RING CRAFT” AND STRONG HORSEMANSHIP, HE HAS DEMONSTRATED A SPECIAL CONNECTION WITH HIS HORSES, INCLUDING NAGANO, GUNDER, AND MOST OF ALL, HIS REMARKABLE RAVENNA.

HE’S MOVED ON FROM COMPETITIVE SHOWJUMPING TO SERVING AS THE SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE QATAR EQUESTRIAN FEDERATION AND, AS OF JULY 2022, HE MANAGES THE WATHNAN RACING STUD FARM, OWNED BY SHEIKH TAMIM BIN HAMAD AL THANI, RULER OF QATAR, AND IS A MEMBER OF THE ORGANISING COMMITTEE FOR THE GLOBAL CHAMPIONS ARABIANS TOUR (GCAT) DOHA LEG.



Ali on Ravenna

Ali, you’ve worn so many hats. We’re trying to keep up! How did you transition from being a competitive showjumper to taking on administrative and management roles?

My responsibilities started to grow and eventually became my primary focus, which led to a natural shift away from the demands of being a top-level competitive rider. There was simply not enough time to train.

What lessons did you learn from your late father, Yousef Al Rumaihi, and how have you applied them to your diverse experiences with horses?

My father was involved in racing, showjumping, endurance, and Arabian horse breeding. Being exposed to all these different things and witnessing his passion for horses was the biggest lesson.

Your early experiences led you up the competitive showjumping ladder, from a team gold at the 2006 Asian Games in Doha to representing Qatar at the 2016 Summer Olympics in Rio. What fuelled your competitive spirit and will to win?

I always had this feeling of wanting to give back to my country in the best way I could for all the support they give us and their vision for all sports in Qatar.

In 2022 you made a major career move, taking over as Stud Manager at Wathnan Racing. What prompted your transition from “16 hands high to two feet on the ground”?

First and foremost, I hope I live up to the expectations for this position. It was always my plan after the Olympics to move into the administrative field and gain knowledge and experience. I also wanted to pass on the knowledge I’ve gained to future generations.

By the way, how did Wathnan get its name?

Wathnan is the name of a famous and celebrated Arabian stallion owned by Al Thani family. The horse, known for his kind and eager disposition, was named “Wathnan,” which means “a crown of ears,” a reference to his pricked ears, the classic sign of a horse that is your friend.



Lazzat, owned by Wathnan, won the Queen Elizabeth II Jubilee Stakes at Royal Ascot in 2025

You've always had horse breeding in your blood. Has this been something you've wanted to focus on for a while?

Breeding is simply something I love to do.

Breeding matters and breeding shows, in particular with the singular successes of Wathnan Racing since its inception in 2022, straight out of the gate earning "leading owners" recognition in 2002 and 2023 seasons and winning the very prestigious 2023 Royal Ascot Gold Cup and Queen's Vase. How did you feel when Courage Mon Ami crossed the finish?

Courage Mon Ami was only purchased a short while before the 2023 Ascot, and while we knew about his success in shorter races, we weren't sure how he would handle the longer distance. The horse showed us his true ability, and we were thrilled with the win. It was truly an unforgettable victory, as was winning the Dubai World Cup this year with Hit Show.

Do you think such successes have more to do with breeding or training, nature or nurture?

It's a combination of all of that, plus making good choices and having some good luck. Do you miss competitive showjumping?

Yes, I do, especially when I attend a showjumping competition.

Of all the magnificent horses you've been around, which one would you like to own if you had the chance?

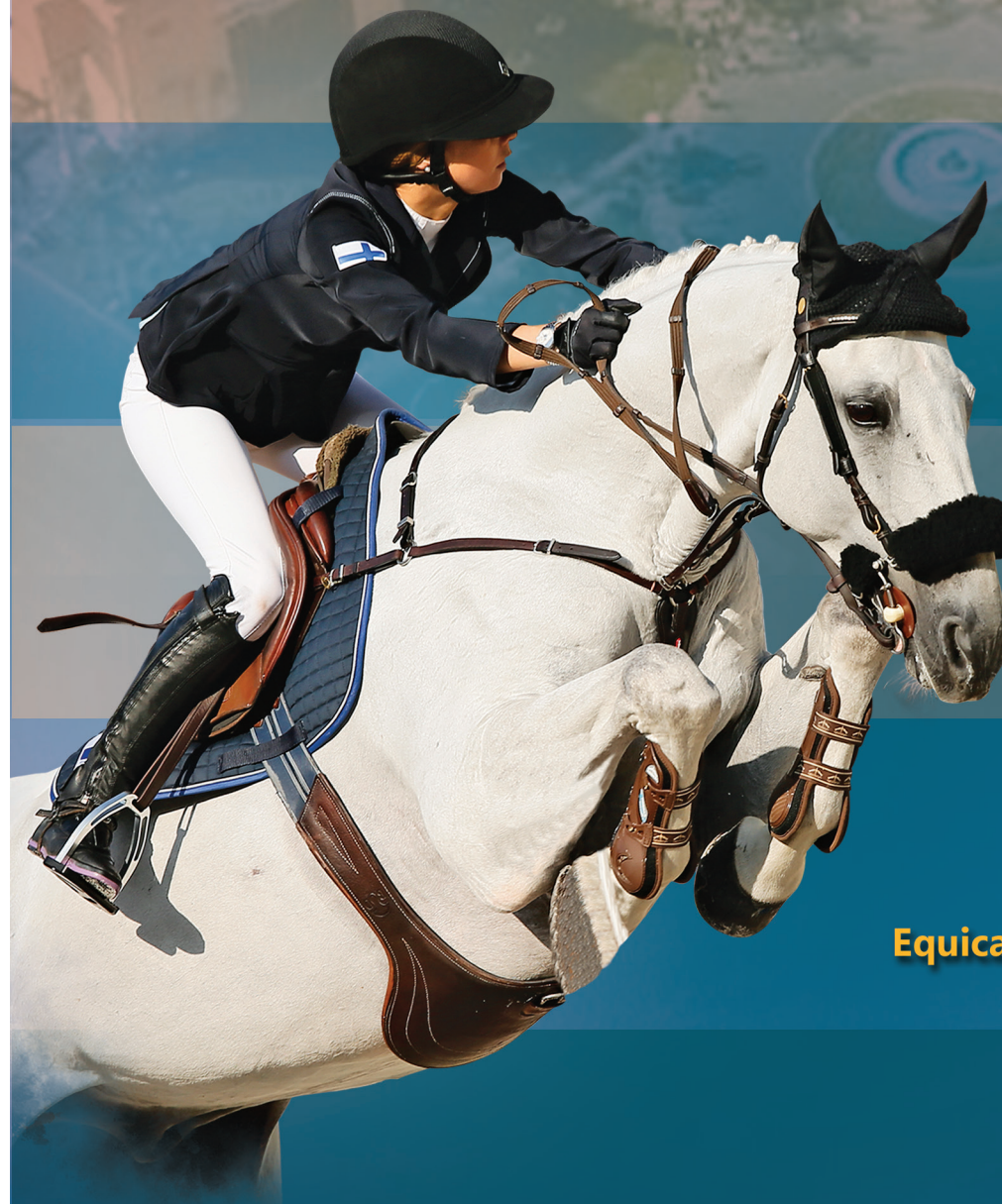
That's a difficult question because there are too many magnificent ones to choose from. But my old mare, Ravenna, will always be close to my heart.

Al Rumaihi won the 2006 Asian Games individual gold medal with Negano. He rode Ambinete 55 at the 2010 World Equestrian Games. He won the 2011 Pan Arab Games individual gold and team bronze with Ravenna 323, and was placed 16th individually and 9th in the team competitions with Gunder at the 2016 Rio Olympics.

Ravenna photo by Jacques Toffi

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