





ALAA MAYSSARA

I HAVE THE OLDEST & THE GREATEST

By Nada H. Abdelmoniem

KING'S RANCH IN ALEXANDRIA ORGANISED AND HOSTED THE 2010 NATIONAL EGYPTIAN SHOW JUMPING CHAMPIONSHIP WITH THE POLICE SPORTS UNION'S ENG.

ALAA MAYSSARA RIDING KARTA AND CLAIMING THE TITLE OF THE A1 CLASS. FOLLOWED BY DR. SAMEH HATTAB AT SECOND, AHMED ALAA RAGAB AT THIRD AND DR.

SAMEH EL DAHAN AT FOURTH - THE FINAL ROUND OF THE COMPETITION SAW MAYSSARA LEADING AFTER A CLEAR ROUND, EXCEPT ALL WAS DEPENDING ON WHETHER HIS FRIEND AND FELLOW RIDER HATTAB CLEARS OR NOT. WITH TWO

FENCES DOWN BY HATTAB, THE WIN WENT TO THRILLED MAYSSARA WHEN RESPECTIVELY AND DESERVINGLY HE GENERATED COUNTLESS AND POSITIVE COMMENTS BY COMING UP WITH THE LINE, "I HAVE THE OLDEST AND THE GREATEST."

The 2010 National Egyptian Champion Mayssara, a horse-aholic in his own right, calls Karta his second wife, with his wife calling Karta her rival! When the first Mrs. Noha Abdel Zaher was asked on how she manages to keep up with being present at all competitions Mayssara and Karta compete at, and how she deals with her husband's absence given the continuous training, she answered, "This is an off-limits topic that I don't discuss with him. This is his love and I love that."

Karta, an 18 year old mare ridden by Mayssara for the past nine years is familiar to many Arab riders. He cited that upon his annual arrival to compete at CSI (4*) Syria, the first question asked by fellow riders is, "How is Karta?!" Among all the troubles they faced in previous years, and with the mare putting extra years on her back, pressure from peers and friends did not impede Mayssara from believing in her. "My father taught me

that the more life pushes you down, the more you have to aim higher and fight harder to achieve results. I had two very tough experiences in 2009; my father's passing away and being prevented from riding the whole season. During that time, my father allowed me to relocate to Holland to be based there in order to continue with my career. I worked very hard however upon his loss, I relocated back to Egypt to manage our family business. Discontinuing my riding and my father's passing made me insatiable to work harder seeing that he had the greatest impact on me as an individual and a rider. Still, he is very much involved in my life; in my thoughts, in how I should work hard, and in my wishes for future success. My riding and my training hard comes to me as passion and a career; I manage part of my family business and I ride all the time, but I never sit at home thinking about work as much as I think about horses!"

What is the secret behind Karta's pleasing

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▼ Mayssara & Karta during CSI**** Syria 2010





▲ Mischievous Adam demands to be with his father during the prize ceremony

win this season? "Naturally, I plan my season according to my horses. I have five: Karta, Levantos at 11 years old, Hitch at six, then young Welono and Animo. During the Championship, I rode Karta in the Top A1 and Levantos in the A2 Class with Karta winning in the former and Levantos coming third in the latter. For the C Class, I was not expecting much from the other two horses as they are still inexperienced, but simply wanted to prepare them for next season. We all did very well since we were placed between first and fourth. Planning is hard especially with Karta as she tells me what to do and never the other way around! As expected she has had many ups and downs, but I truly believe I can depend on her; she is such a great mare that taught me plenty, some of which is how to understand and manage her character, how to be patient, and how to be brave. She looks simple and pretty, but she is more complicated

than what she seems. They say this mare would not get along with anyone else.....and I like this saying; I wouldn't want to see my wife with another man!"

On their way to the Arab League's CSI (4*) Syria this year, Karta was hit during travel however the couple were still placed throughout the whole event and came in seventh during the Grand Prix. Since they were already qualified for the Egyptian finals before heading to Syria, Mayssara jumped Karta in only one of two Egyptian Championship qualifying events. He mentioned that he was very careful with their training, "Everybody tells me she is old and that she has to be ridden only three days a week, but she has her own way of doing things...she has to work out like we all do. I believe that horses just like the elderly need to work out and stay fit. We are athletes; we need to concentrate and relax. At some stage of my training, I completely isolated myself from my mischievous son Adam

and my wife, and I also had some sort of belief that I was going to prevail.

On winning, Mayssara emotionally concluded, "It's an entirely special win this year given that 60% of my happiness is usually composed when my father sees me succeed...I do not have that now. I am very happy of course, but this win goes to him, not me."

Karta has much mileage and wins on her account. Locally, out of nine competing seasons, she has jumped six in which she was placed either first or second in the Top A1 and C1 Classes over several seasons. Internationally, Karta has won seven Grand Prix in CSI (4*) Syria, Faqra in Lebanon, CSI Abu Dhabi, Balbona in Hungary, Arab League Alexandria, Nations Cup of Latakia in Syria, the Police Grand Prix, and competed in the Olympic qualifier in Aachen. 🏆