

PERISCOPE ON NAEL NASSAR

Country: Egypt

Date of Birth: January 21st 1991

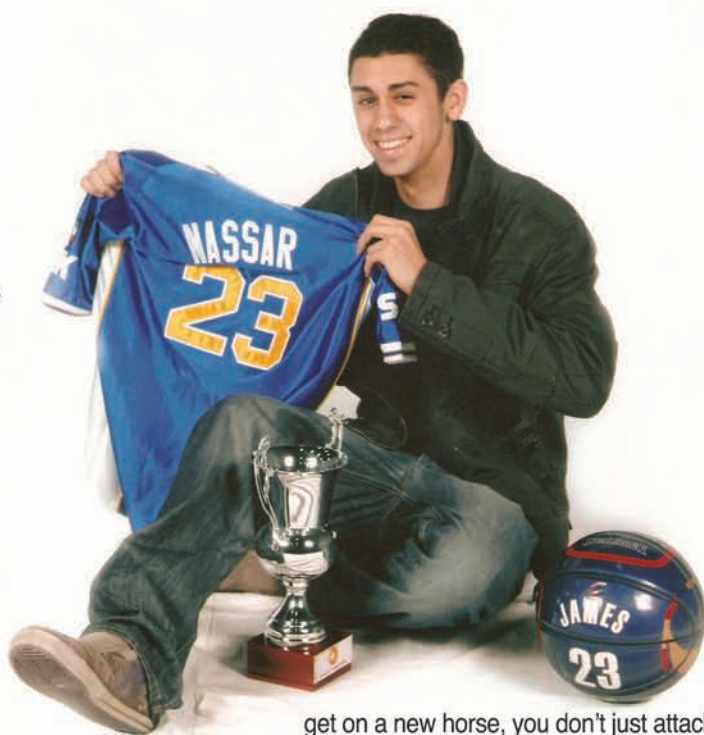
By Nada H. Abdelmoniem





First place winner of Al Wafaa show jumping event CAT A competitions, Syria 2009

A passion for
slam dunking! ▶



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PERFECT BUT I LIKE TO THINK
THAT THEY ARE. WITHOUT
THEM, I AM NO ONE. THEY ARE
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Trainers:

In Kuwait Linda and I are our own trainers, and my parents are our managers. Sometimes when I travel, one of my German coaches comes to train me at international shows. If not, when I need advice, I seek it from Linda and other riders or coaches. Diaa Beshir and Samir Abdelfattah have been a great help the past few years; I owe a great deal of my success to them. In the summer I train with Markus Beerbaum, Jorg Naeve or Lars Meyer Zu Bexten, depending on their availability. I have been seeing Markus in the summers since I was quite young so I've known him the longest. Jorg coached me when I lived in Germany when I was 12. Lars only began training me last year. However, he is usually the one who comes to the Middle East, although Jorg has come a couple of times.

Achievements & horses:

Ughh I hate answering this question Nada! Well, most recently and importantly, I won the Mini Grand Prix at CSI*** Syria and Bahrain 2009. My horses? "I'm lovin' them like McDonalds". Many people call my horses bicycles, but I think having smallhorses just makes it more fun and challenging. Getting through a 1.45m course with a horse almost small enough

▼ *Linda Algeborg*



Nael Nassar:

An 18-year-old young man with plenty of potential; certainly, charming and very eloquent along with being a very charismatic rider that we will surely hear a lot about in the future.

Nael's Education:

School has always been important to me. Although I've missed a lot of days for riding shows, I force myself to stay on top of my school work. I just graduated from the American School of Kuwait and now I'm off to Stanford University in California; can't wait!

The beginning of a career:

I first sat on a horse when I was 5. Actually, I think I was forced on a horse when I was 5! No toddler in his rightful mind would choose to sit on those giant school horses. I didn't start show jumping until I was around 7 I think. My parents always wanted me to try new things and so riding was one of them, along with piano lessons, tennis, baseball and a bunch of other random activities. They signed me up at a riding school here in Kuwait where my first coach was Noaf Al Essa, and it just started from there. It began as a once or twice a week thing where I would just sit on a horse and be leaded round and round the arena until I got bored or dizzy. And then, like a good T.V show, it grew onto me more and more, until I got my first horse when I was around 11.

Nael familiarising himself with a new horse:

Hahaha that's a tough one It's like sitting for the SAT exam all over again! I'd say it always starts with the flatwork. When you

get on a new horse, you don't just attack the fences right away. You begin with feeling the canter under you, so that you have a slight idea of what you will be dealing with when fences come into play. Some horses are very handy and comfortable in the stride, others are elephants. Some have the blood of a thoroughbred; others are as cold as an ox. If you're able to get a good feeling of the horse as a whole and have roughly good control on the flat, your job already becomes that much easier. When jumping, while you continue to familiarise yourself with the horse's temperament, you start to concentrate on the feeling of the jump itself. You want to feel the horse's mouth, acceptance of pressure from the leg, tidiness, scope, light - footedness, concentration, and joy. The most successful horses are those who you feel enjoy jumping. Most importantly however, a good rider must be able to point out the horse's flaws and habits. A good rider can adapt to them on the spot, and fix them as much as possible later at home.

Training:

I ride practically every day. The days when I'm busy with schoolwork, sports or events, Linda works the horses or takes them out. My groom Linda has been a life-saver. To be honest, she's the best any rider could ask for. I am so grateful to have her. I now have 5 mares and I never have time to ride them all, especially during the school year. So I ride 3 everyday, and she rides the other 2. I jump the horses that need it once a week. The ones I felt really comfortable with throughout the previous week just go straight to the show. In Kuwait, the competitions are usually just one day; I compete with all 5 mares.

to be deemed a pony is very rewarding. 'Tulipan', 'Amazon' and 'Leandra' were all bought as ignorant, one-meter-jumping 5 year olds. They are now 9. It's a great feeling to be able to call your mares entirely your own. 'Ophelia' has been with our family for 8 years now. She's currently 13. I give all the credit to my brother Sharaf for bringing her up. And 'Poly' is our recent 10 year old addition. I am very thankful.

Future aspirations:

It would be a dream to be able to ride the Olympics one day. My first goal was 2012 in London but that might be too unrealistic considering the fact that I'm off to university soon. But yes, any Olympics would be amazing...I'm definitely going to need an upgrade from the rides I have now.

Family support:

I owe everything to my parents. I wouldn't even be in this sport if it weren't for them and I wouldn't even be near as successful as I am now. They have always been there for me and have always supported me in every aspect possible. They say nobody's perfect but I like to think that they are. Without them, I am no one. They are without a doubt the source of my success.

Everyday Nael:

I've been really lucky with the people I've met throughout my childhood. When I lived in Germany my friends were great and we still keep in touch after 4 years. Right now my friends here are irreplaceable. Some from Pakistan, Palestine, the U.S., Egypt, Lebanon, Saudi, Kuwait, Panama, India, Columbia, Italy, Germany and many more...we really have the whole bunch! Some have come to the stables to watch me compete and they even attempted riding my horses. I play volleyball and basketball in school, which are the reasons as to why I'm absent at some international competitions. I'm a huge basketball fan. It goes so far that I would pick playing basketball over riding a horse! I love them sports, which is the reason I love those 2 so much. My favourite athlete is Lebron James, but I'm sure only a handful of people in the riding world know who that is. Forget it; nobody in the riding world knows who that is! I love comedy; naturally, you can catch me watching "Two & a Half Men" at 3 a.m. For fun I just hang out with friends – from going to parties to catching a movie to just chilling at home. Besides that, I watch T.V, play video games, play sports...I'm really just a regular kid at the end of the day! **HT**

