

HORSE TIMES



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SUMMER 2025

THE LEADING EQUESTRIAN MAGAZINE IN THE MIDDLE EAST



ANEESA AL MAHMOOD

BAHRAIN'S DAWN OF DRESSAGE

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VIEW POINT FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Dear HORSE TIMES readers,

Despite the numerous challenges facing the world today, our hope endures, strengthened by a deep love for horses and all the intricate details that surround them. Our goal is to inspire and motivate everyone out there.

In this issue, we shine a spotlight on Miss Aneesa Al Mahmoud, a talented young dressage rider representing the Kingdom of Bahrain. She is a rising star who could potentially bring back World and Olympic medals for our region. Join us as we follow her journey from now until the upcoming World Equestrian Games next year. Be sure to stay tuned to our social media channels for updates.

The 25th CISM Military Equestrian Championships, held in Cairo last March, marked a significant milestone for the sport in Egypt. The event showcased excellent organisation and took place at a stunning venue. Look out for our video interviews with some of the participants, also on our social media pages.

The Doha Tour at the magnificent Al Shaqab venue, from last January to March, featured some of the world's top-ranked riders and was truly a spectacle to behold.

Read on and enjoy our quick 60 Seconds feature, along with a diverse range of topics and insights in this issue.

All the best,
Khaled Assem

ANEESA AL MAHMOOD BAHRAIN'S DAWN OF DRESSAGE

By Nada H. Abdelmoniem

ANEESAA AL MAHMOOD, A PROMISING YOUNG ATHLETE REPRESENTING THE KINGDOM OF BAHRAIN, IS EMBARKING ON AN INSPIRING JOURNEY OF GROWTH AND ACHIEVEMENT IN THE HORSE WORLD. ANEESA'S PASSION FOR HORSES AND RIDING TOOK HER TO THE NETHERLANDS, A COUNTRY WIDELY REGARDED AS THE HEARTLAND OF DRESSAGE, WHERE SHE NOW TRAINS RIGOROUSLY WITH RENOWNED TRAINER, RIEN VAN DER SCHAFT, AND WHERE SHE INTENDS TO FOLLOW HER DREAMS OF BECOMING A TOP INTERNATIONAL DRESSAGE COMPETITOR. WITH HER DEDICATION AND UNWAVERING COMMITMENT, ANEESA IS STEADILY MAKING HER MARK IN THE SPORT, EMBODYING THE SPIRIT OF MATURE COMING-OF-AGE IN THE COMPETITIVE WORLD OF EQUESTRIAN DRESSAGE.

HERE, SHE TELLS US ABOUT HER JOURNEY THAT REFLECTS BOTH HER PERSONAL DETERMINATION AND THE GROWING PRESENCE OF TALENTED RIDERS FROM THE MIDDLE EAST ON THE GLOBAL STAGE.





THE HORSES:

I currently have two special horses in my life, Skye (Special For You) and Handsome. Skye is a 2015 gelding by Finest x Weltino. My parents and I bought him back in 2022 when he was just 6 years old. He's always been a very special horse to me, I don't think I have ever met such a horse with such a sweet and honest character. Together with him I competed in my first competitions in Europe, both in Germany and the Netherlands.

Handsome is a 2012 gelding by Tuschinski x Farrington, he was bought during the summer of 2023 by my Bahraini Sponsor, Sheikha Noora bint Hamad Al Khalifa, the owner and head of the team at Al Fursan. Handsome is my main competition horse at the moment, I rode my first Prix St. George test and made my international debut in the Young Riders division with him. He's a horse that challenged my riding to the next level and taught me the importance of partnership in training and how that carries over into the show ring. Together we are aiming for the Asian Championships in November.

PURSUING A CAREER IN DRESSAGE:

I have been obsessed with this sport since I watched the 2008 Beijing Olympics on TV! Horses were already my favourite animals thanks to my mum, but watching dressage at that level on the screen was the confirmation for me. Since then, I always knew what I wanted and I never gave up on the dream. The drive to becoming a professional rider only grew over the years, and the more I trained and matured as a rider, the more passion and determination I had to make it come true.

STEPPING UP TO THE PLATE:

Growing up in Bahrain, I was fortunate enough to ride and compete on numerous horses and ponies through Al Fursan. However, I did not have access to advanced training facilities and experienced coaches like riders my age did in the West. Bahrain's dressage community was and still is limited. This disparity meant that I had to be resourceful and dedicated, often seeking opportunities during my summers abroad to enhance my skills.

Securing sponsorship in the Middle East, especially for disciplines like dressage, posed another significant hurdle. Many sponsors preferred investing in more popular sports such as showjumping or endurance racing. This made it challenging to find financial support for my training and competitions. My parents were incredibly supportive, doing their best to assist me, but as many in the sport know, it can be financially demanding. Especially once I moved to Europe in 2021 to chase my dream of becoming a professional rider.

I secured my sponsorship with Al Fursan team in 2023, which I am forever grateful for. Sheikha Noora believed in my dreams and goals of representing Bahrain internationally, and with that belief and support, I was able to make the first steps of my international career with our special horse Handsome.

KEEPING FIT AND EVENT PREPARATIONS:

Both the horses and I train all year round, we are fortunate enough to have access to competitions throughout the full year. The horses have a con-



sistent schedule both for training and recovery. I keep myself fit through running and workouts. Just enough to keep myself feeling good in the saddle and on the ground.

Preparing for a dressage event involves a holistic approach to ensure both horse and I are in optimal condition. First and foremost, it's crucial that the horses are feeling their best. This means prioritising proper recovery post-training leading up to the event. Utilising products like ice boots, circulation socks, and pads can aid in reducing inflammation and promoting circulation.

Additionally, the horses receive consistent

supplements and a supportive feeding regimen tailored to their training needs. We aim to maintain consistency in their diet unless we feel the horse requires extra support leading up to the competition.

Personally, I prefer to keep the routine consistent leading up to the event. This means the horses will get their usual days off and lighter training sessions throughout the week. We aim to make training at home more challenging than the competition itself, ensuring that the horses don't feel additional pressure or difficulty in the ring. Riding the test should feel like a piece of cake compared to practice at home.



I prefer to braid and prepare my horses on my own before competition. This ritual is deeply important to me, as it allows for quality time with my horse and provides an opportunity to assess their energy and mood before the competition. This personal connection helps me gauge how my horse is feeling and ensures we are both mentally and physically prepared for the event, it also gives me time to go through the test in my head over and over again.

HORSE SELECTION AND CHEMISTRY:

Very good point. I do a lot of sales and handling of dressage horses to clients all over the world. Because I have tried so many different horses with and for my clients, it has taught me so many different feelings. I am very much a rider who believes in a "click" with your horse. It's not only about sitting on a horse that's been well educated, or 100%

healthy. It is about the connection and communication I can feel while riding. Every single horse is different, just like every rider is different.

I might sound crazy, but picking a horse is just like picking a life partner, it's about finding one with whom you can share a deep understanding of each other's needs and personalities. It's about finding a connection that goes beyond the surface, and choosing someone who compliments you and helps you become your best self.

As for the chemistry, I spend a lot of time with my horses as I find it to be vital. Whether it is grooming, hacking, hand walking, grazing in the fields, or just hanging around their stable. They are my best friends, even when training is tough, they know how to make me smile. They are my point of peace, and I find it important that they feel the same way about me. Dressage is nowhere without companionship.



TRAINING STRATEGIES:

We are very focused on the basics of riding, and the importance of riding one's horse in a "natural" and efficient way. Being able to use one's seat and feeling to ensure the horses are moving in the correct direction and making the correct connection. Starting in his hindlegs and ending in his ears, you want that connection going forward through your hands and between the horse's ears. We believe in using a forward aid to find the horse's balance and "pull" forward. Correct riding over using too many helping aids to help the horse find its natural strength.

Each horse is different, and not all strategies work on every horse. But our concept of riding remains the same.

A ROLE MODEL IN THE MIDDLE EAST:

I'd love to bring my representation of Bahrain and the Middle East to another level. I'd love to bring back the importance of partnership in the sport, and build a pathway for future young Middle Eastern riders, both girls and boys. I'd love to show that there is a possibility to turn passion into a "successful" career. Be a correct example of how one can reach the top of the sport, without making any shortcuts.

I want to be a good example of how riding and training should go, especially during these times when there is such a negative look towards animal welfare in dressage. Horses will always and forever be number one for me, and I find it crucial to promote how important it really is.

PRACTICING OTHER SPORTS:

I played many sports growing up. I was that kid that was always outside. I used to train and compete in the National U16 football team in Bahrain, where I participated in two Arab championships over the course of three years. After my football career was over due to an injury, I decided to follow my older brother Siddiq's footsteps into Triathlon where I spent two years on the National team and competed at two Asian/Arab Championships. I made two podiums.

Alongside football and triathlon, I was always riding. It wasn't easy juggling multiple sports at the same time, and going international for dressage at that time was just a faded dream. Riding was always what I enjoyed most. Although I have many

fond memories of my time in football and triathlon; I learned so much and made many good friends. To be honest, my times in football and triathlon make me a better rider - much of that training carries over to the saddle. Rider fitness is hugely underrated.

My daily life was incredibly busy. I was enrolled in the full IB (International Baccalaureate) programme in high school, which was demanding. Mornings began with swimming practice before school, followed by a quick breakfast in the car on the way to school. Lunchtime was spent in the car again, heading to the stables. After riding, I'd either go running or cycling with the triathlon team. It was a hectic time of my life, not always easy to balance. But on the bright side, I never had to worry about fulfilling my CAS Hours for IB.

My career in triathlon came to a stop once the COVID pandemic hit, the only place I was still allowed to be during the quarantine was the stables. So once restrictions opened up again, riding had become my main priority.

ADDITIONAL INTERESTS:

I have a liking towards Formula One, and am a fan of the sport. I've worked part time in the past for Red Bull Bahrain at the Formula One Grand Prix. I absolutely enjoy the sport and being able to be so close to the circuit. I also enjoy playing Padel with friends and family (whenever I have time in my schedule).

I also enjoy my time in the kitchen, cooking and baking. Something I learned very early on from my mother. Trying different recipes, but also seeing how friends and family enjoy it always brings a smile to my face.

ASPIRING AND ADVANCING:

I see myself making tough decisions, I see myself changing and evolving over and over again. Because if there is anything I have ever learned from the sport, it is that you never stop learning. There is always something you don't know, and you will be humbled over and over again. I have many dreams and plans for the future; competition wise we are working towards the Asian Championships in No-



BEST RESULTS:

One of my biggest achievements so far was being able to represent Bahrain and the Middle East for the first time at an International Young Riders competition in Aachen, called Aachen Youngstars. It was an amazing feeling to be able to ride in an Arena I've only ever seen online, and to represent my country and region.

We have many more memorable results at local shows in the Netherlands, with scores over 68%. I guess one of the things we are most proud of is our growth through the levels last summer. Starting the summer in Z2 and ending the summer in our first local Young Riders shows (PSG). We took our time growing through the levels, and let our training show how easy it can be to fly through the classes once you are ready.

FAMILY AND SUPPORT:

My family plays a big role in my career, they have been my number one supporters since day one. They helped me source horses, groom at competitions, watch training at home, etc. Even though we all live on different sides of the world, they never fail to show up for me when I need them.

My mum has always been my main source of support and inspiration, she has taught me everything I needed to know to be the person and athlete I am today. Even though I don't come from a "horsey" family, she always stood behind me and helped me with all the opportunities that have been presented to me. She is my best friend, and my cheerleader. She taught me to always be positive, loving and most importantly a good person. 🐾

Aneesa was born on 15th of September 2003.

Photos courtesy of Madushots

vember 2025 in Thailand and the Asian Games in 2026 in Japan. Between these big competitions, we also look forward to making our way in the U25 class here in Europe. Long-term goals are the World Equestrian Games, and of course the big dream of competing at the Olympics for my country.

Career wise, I'm looking towards expanding my team. Creating my "own" base here in Europe, training with young horses and sales horses. I'd love to extend my dressage sales, and take on more clients. Build up my career and name in the sport, and who knows, maybe head back to the Middle East in the future to set up an equestrian facility and training stable for riders in the region.



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25TH CISM MILITARY EQUESTRIAN CHAMPIONSHIP ROMANIA AND ITALY DOMINATE WHILE EGYPT GOES FOR TEAM GLORY

By Nada H. Abdelmoniem and Merit Fanous

UNDER THE PATRONAGE AND ATTENDANCE OF HIS EXCELLENCY ABDEL FATTAH EL-SISI PRESIDENT OF EGYPT, THE 25TH CISM WORLD MILITARY EQUESTRIAN CHAMPIONSHIP KICKED OFF AND CONCLUDED IN AMPLE CULTURAL STYLE AT THE MUCH-CELEBRATED NEW DEVELOPMENT IN CAIRO'S NEW ADMINISTRATIVE CAPITAL, KAYAN EQUESTRIAN CLUB.



Nour Hazem



Team Egypt

Much organisation and tremendous logistics were put into the hosting of such an international sporting event given that more than 40 military showjumping riders – some of which are Olympic and seasoned athletes - travelled to Egypt to compete on borrowed horses. A big number of mounts were provided by the Egyptian Armed Forces whilst some were lent by civilian horse owners, with nine extra horses put on reserve. Selection of horses for each nation was done through a fair draw in front of the Chefs d'Equipes of each Team, the riders, the President and members of the Ground Jury and the Veterinary delegates on the 4th of May, 2025.

CISM – FRIENDSHIP THROUGH SPORT:

The International Military Sports Council (IMSC) or in French, 'Conseil International du Sport Militaire' (CISM) – was founded in 1948 in Nice, France and today it is one of the largest multidisciplinary organisations in the world. The organisation arranges a variety of sporting events for the Armed Forces of its 141 member countries and is one of the global sports organisations in which the largest number of disciplines is represented. Soldiers, who may previously have met on the battlefield, now meet in friendship on sports competition field in accordance with the philosophy and the ideals which were set in CISM's mission statement in 1998, signed by all the member countries.



Ismaiel Mohamed Elboraie



COMPETITION FORMAT – TRUST AND TALENT:

As in all the previously held Military Equestrian Championships, the host nation is to provide the necessary number of horses for each participating nation through a draw. Each day of competitions sees a classification in which the top three Teams and Individuals compete against each other to accumulate as many points as possible in order to be placed in the Final day. The Chef d'Equipe of each Team is then given the opportunity to visually scope out their draw-selected horses as 57 riders test them on Day One – however get the benefit to select a specific horse to match up with a certain rider depending on technical abilities as a shift in draw happens during Day 2 and Day 3 of competitions and the horses switch between nations.

On Day One of individual competitions, Bahrain's Cadet Sami Mohammed delivered a great performance by gaining 58 points to take the early lead. Close behind was the event's young star, Romania's Lieutenant Corporal Stoica Stefania Alina, who secured second place by clearing soundly and gaining 56 points, followed by Oman's Sergeant Madian Alyusfi with 55 points.

Rounding up the top five Individuals were Brazil's Major Estevao Grossi and the UAE's 1st Lieutenant Saeed Mohamed Almaazmi with scores of 54 and 53 points.

Given that riders needed to rise to the occasion and accommodate themselves with the horses only hours before the start of the competitions, it was evident that they displayed brilliant technical skills, talent and adaptability, to test and trust these unfamiliar horses.

The momentum continued into Day Two over a more challenging course designed by international Course Designer, France's Michel Ismalun. The Accumulator course was another test for the riders who were again, obliged to familiarise themselves with new selected horses. But with discipline and high attention, 56 riders showcased impressive instinct and poise under pressure.

Day Three, the Final, would determine who would be the winning Team and winning Individual through a course designed over two different Rounds. Following Round Two, a classification takes place with points from Day One and Day Two being accumulated in order for Judges to make first, second and third placements.



CISM Secretary General, Navy Captain Roberto Recchia



CISM President, Col. Nilton Rolim



Team Italy





Course Designer, Michel Ismalun

THE FINAL RESULTS:

Once again, Romania's Lieutenant Corporal Stoica Stefania Alina Stoica excelled by displaying remarkable consistency and composure, accumulating a total of 159 points and securing the individual gold medal. Although she finished eighth in the Final, her strong performances in over 3 Days ultimately secured her the top spot in the overall standings.

Italy's Graduate Adjutant Filippo Di Cigala cleared the two Rounds and eventually earning the silver medal with a total of 158 points. Bronze was claimed by the UAE's 1st Lieutenant Saeed Mohamed Almaazmi, who from the first trot into the arena, displayed a desire for a double clear, the fastest time of 41.22 seconds and a total score of 150 points.

Egypt's Cadet Ismaiel Mohamed Elboraie, who secured third place on Day Three by riding with accurate skill, significantly contributed to Egypt's overall Team ranking.

As for the Team results, Italy once again reasserted supremacy in military equestrian sport by claiming the gold medal with a total of 405 points, marking their third consecutive victory.

Egypt went for Team glory and achieved a historic silver medal with 388 points, while Qatar, with a very consistent performance, finished third with 370 points.



Team Qatar



DOHA TOUR 2025

A PREMIERE EQUESTRIAN EVENT



Abdel Said

THE DOHA TOUR 2025 HELD AT THE STUNNING AL SHAQAB VENUE MADE A SIGNIFICANT MARK ON THE INTERNATIONAL EQUESTRIAN CALENDAR. SPANNING FROM THE 8TH OF JANUARY AND UNTIL THE 1ST OF MARCH, THIS YEAR'S TOUR ATTRACTED ELITE RIDERS FROM AROUND THE GLOBE TO COMPETE ACROSS VARIOUS CLASSES. THE TOUR FEATURED MULTIPLE HIGHLIGHT EVENTS, INCLUDING 'HH THE AMIR'S SWORD INTERNATIONAL EQUESTRIAN FESTIVAL' FROM THE 13TH OF FEBRUARY TILL THE 15TH, 'CHI AL SHAQAB PRESENTED BY LONGINES' FROM THE 20TH OF FEBRUARY TILL THE 22ND, AND THE 'LONGINES GLOBAL CHAMPIONS TOUR' CONCLUDING THE SERIES FROM THE 27TH OF TILL THE 1ST OF MARCH.



Scott Brash

The Tour featured multiple rounds culminating in the highly anticipated CSI5* 1.60m Grand Prix on the 25th of January where Great Britain's Scott Brash and his remarkable mare, Hello Folie, emerged victorious. Competing against a field of 33 horse-and-rider combinations, Brash and Hello Folie clinched the title with a jump-off time of 43.21 seconds. Brash expressed his delight, stating, "I've always felt like she can win a five-star Grand Prix, but to win on her first attempt, I'm over the moon with."

The competition was fierce with Abdel Said representing Belgium and securing second place riding Bonne Amie with a time of 45.24 seconds. Portugal's Duarte Seabra claimed third place aboard Dourados 2, finishing in 46.69 seconds. Aussie Edwina Tops-Alexander and Nadja Peter Steiner from Switzerland rounded out the top five with impressive rides, showcasing the depth of talent present at the event.

The 'HH The Amir's Sword International Equestrian Festival' showcased impressive performances across various classes. Saudi's Abdullah Alsharbatly showcased his talent by winning the CSI1 Grand Prix Jump-Off at 1.30m, while Ital's Emanuele Gaudiano from took home the victory in the CSI*3 Grand Prix Jump-Off at 1.50m, with South Africa's Oliver Lazarus finishing second and Jennifer Hochstaedter from Liechtenstein in third.



The Tour culminated with the Longines Global Champions Tour where Sanne Thijssen from the Netherlands claimed victory in the overall CSI5* standings. She was followed by France's Alexa Ferrer in second place and Germany's Kendra Claricia in third. In the CSI5* Grand Prix Abdel Said took home the top prize, with Daniel Deusser and Abdulrahman Alrajhi rounding out the podium.

Beyond the competition, the Doha Tour 2025 fostered cultural exchange and community engagement, reinforcing Qatar's position as a global sports destination. The event blended tradition with modernity, offering spectators a chance to experience the rich heritage of Qatari equestrian culture alongside thrilling equestrian sports. 🏆

At CHI Al Shaqab, Emanuele Gaudiano was on fire, winning both the CSI3* 140m and the CSI5* 150m events. In the 140m competition, he was joined on the podium by Mariano Martinez Bastida in second and Qatar's Fahad bin Jasim bin Hamad Al Thani in third. In the 150m event, he again took gold, with Germany's Daniel Deusser and Austria's Gerfried Puck following him.

Finally, in the CSI3* Grand Prix - 150m, Scott Brash delivered a flawless performance in the jump-off, securing victory ahead of Abdullah Alsharbatly and Abdulrahman Alrajhi.



Emanuele Gaudiano

60 SECONDS WITH MAJOR ESTEVÃO GROSSI



COUNTRY: Brazil

DATE OF BIRTH: 18 June 1978

STAR SIGN: Gemini

DESIGNATION: Military showjumping rider and Veterinarian

WHAT IS YOUR BEST ACHIEVEMENT?

Probably my two times winning the CISM World Military Equestrian Championships Individual Finals; in Fontainebleau, France, in 2017 and in Doha, Qatar, in 2024. I was also pleased to be placed 4th at this year's edition in Cairo.

WHO IS YOUR FAVOURITE ATHLETE?

Can I have three favs?! I admire a great military equestrian; General Mario O R Sampaio (who was the first attaché of Brazil in Egypt in 1976), and Victor Teixeira, an Olympic rider who is also the most decorated in Brazilian championships, and finally, Stephan Barcha, also a Brazilian showjumping rider.

DO YOU KEEP ANY PETS?

A puppy dog called Charlotte and currently the three horses: Salvatore, Panama and Global do Rincão.



WHAT IS YOUR FAVOURITE MOVIE?

Gladiator starring Russell Crowe and Braveheart starring Mel Gibson.

WHO IS YOUR IDEAL CELEBRITY?

I am sorry. I have two! Brazil's F1 driver: Ayrton Senna and Football Player Pelé.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVOURITE GADGET?

My iPhone!

WHAT IS YOUR FAVOURITE MUSIC RECORD?

Again. I don't do just ones! I like Brazilian music from Paralamas do Sucesso and Caetano Veloso. Also, Hans Zimmer, Frank Sinatra, Middle Eastern soprano Farah Aldibani, and finally, Hiba Tawaji.

WHAT IS YOUR SECOND FAVOURITE SPORT?

Light running and swimming in the pool.

DO YOU LIKE TO COOK?

I'm an expert in making cheese sandwiches.

CAN YOU DANCE?

I've danced a lot (in the past) and I'd like to dance more.

WHAT IS YOUR STRENGTH AND WHAT IS YOUR WEAKNESS?

My strength is the determination and passion for horses and equestrian sports, which also ends up being my weakness in some situations.

WHAT MAKES YOU HAPPY AND WHAT MAKES YOU SAD?

Seeing the horses healthy and achieving good results makes me happy. The absence of my family and their direct support sometimes makes me feel sad.

TO YOUR CLOSE FRIENDS AND FAMILY, YOU ARE KNOWN TO BE?

Or close friends: Estevão and for my family: Dedé

WHO WOULD YOU CALL IF YOU'RE IN TROUBLE?

My mother, thank God.


IF YOU HAD THE POWER TO CHANGE SOMETHING, WHAT WOULD YOU CHANGE?

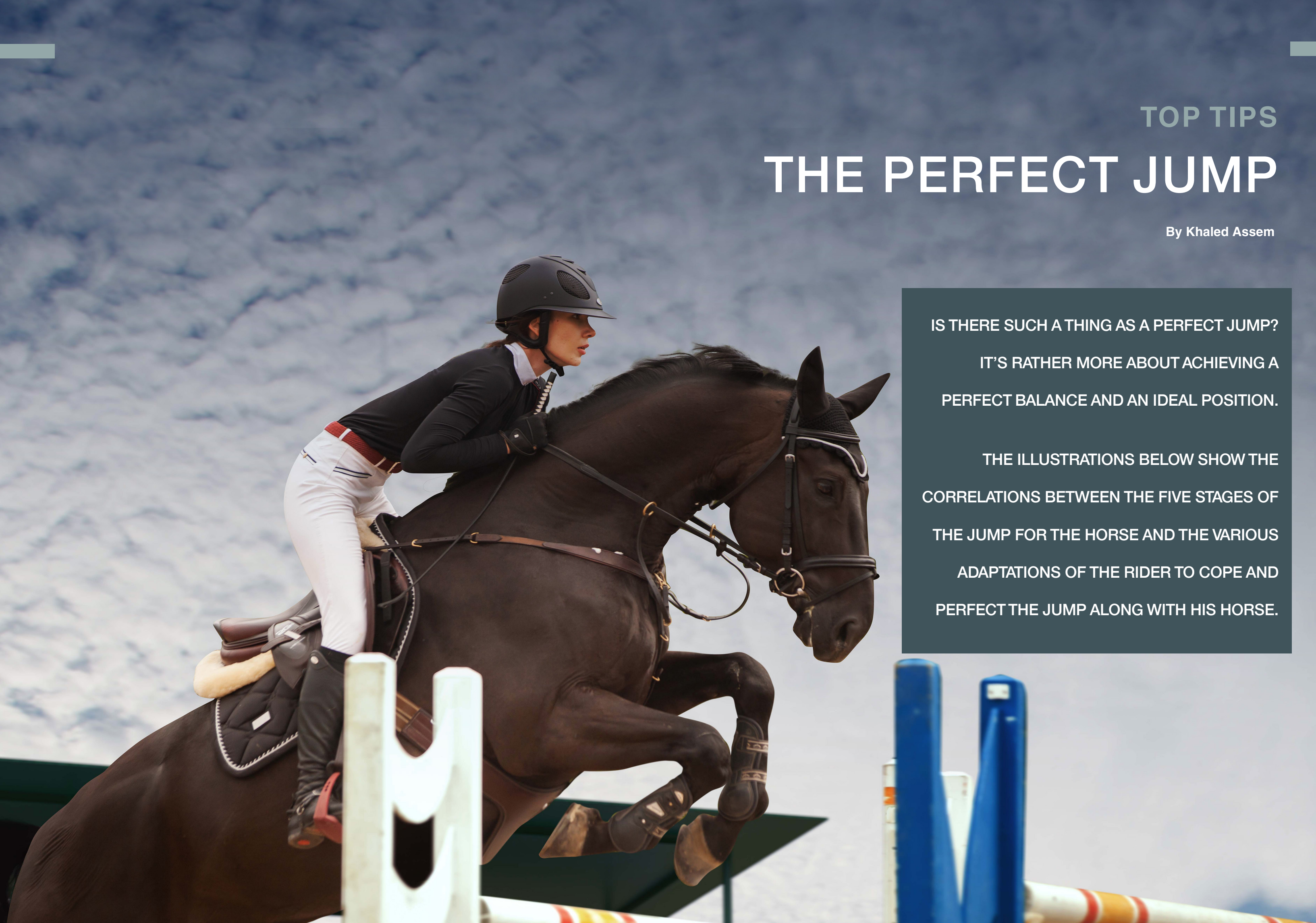
Improve human nature and bring them closer to God.

DO YOU SUPPORT ANY CHARITABLE ORGANISATIONS?

My family dedicated much of their life to support the Fabiano de Cristo Home, with units spread throughout Brazil.

DO YOU THINK THERE IS ANY OTHER QUESTION WE SHOULD HAVE ASKED BUT DID NOT?

Yes, you should've asked me more about the CISM Military Equestrian Championships that took place in Doha and Cairo. 



TOP TIPS

THE PERFECT JUMP

By Khaled Assem

IS THERE SUCH A THING AS A PERFECT JUMP?

IT'S RATHER MORE ABOUT ACHIEVING A
PERFECT BALANCE AND AN IDEAL POSITION.

THE ILLUSTRATIONS BELOW SHOW THE
CORRELATIONS BETWEEN THE FIVE STAGES OF
THE JUMP FOR THE HORSE AND THE VARIOUS
ADAPTATIONS OF THE RIDER TO COPE AND
PERFECT THE JUMP ALONG WITH HIS HORSE.



1. APPROACH: where the rider has to have his weight all through his legs/on his heels when looking at the fence.

2. TAKE-OFF: while the weight is still on the heels, the rider should open his knee and hip joint.

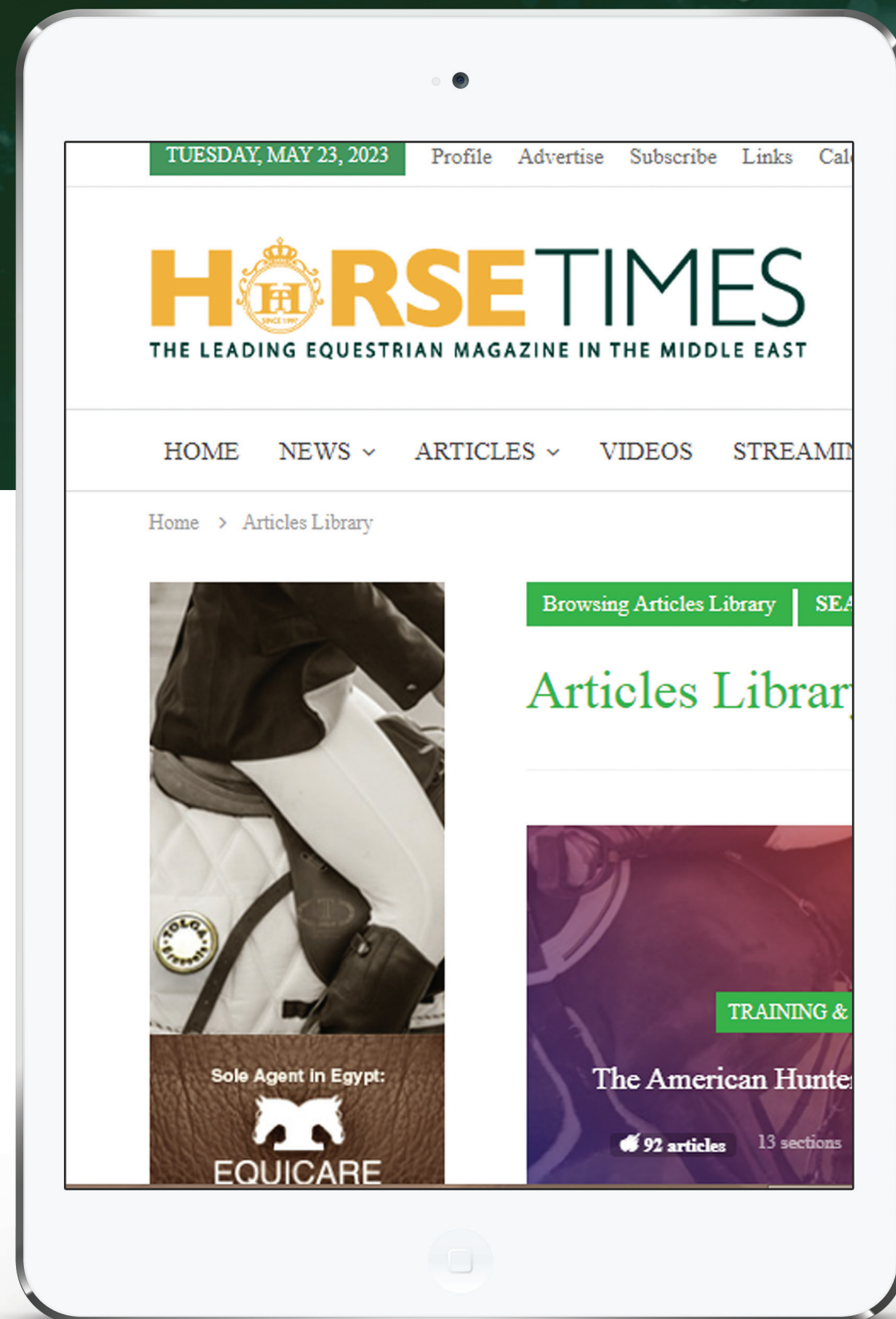
For the ascent, the rider must let the horse rotate around the knee.

3. SUSPENSION: the rider has to keep his body over the centre of gravity of the horse with his spine aligned with that of the horse. With his knees and hips closed.

4. LANDING: the rider should keep his knees open along with his hip joint in order to stay subtle for the next stage.

5. GET AWAY: the rider should start to readjust his balance bringing back his upper body to an upright position while looking at his next fence. 🐾

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HORSETIMES
THE LEADING EQUESTRIAN MAGAZINE IN THE MIDDLE EAST



JUNIOR PROFILES

YASSIN KHALIFA

DATE OF BIRTH: 13 MARCH 2014

COUNTRY: EGYPT

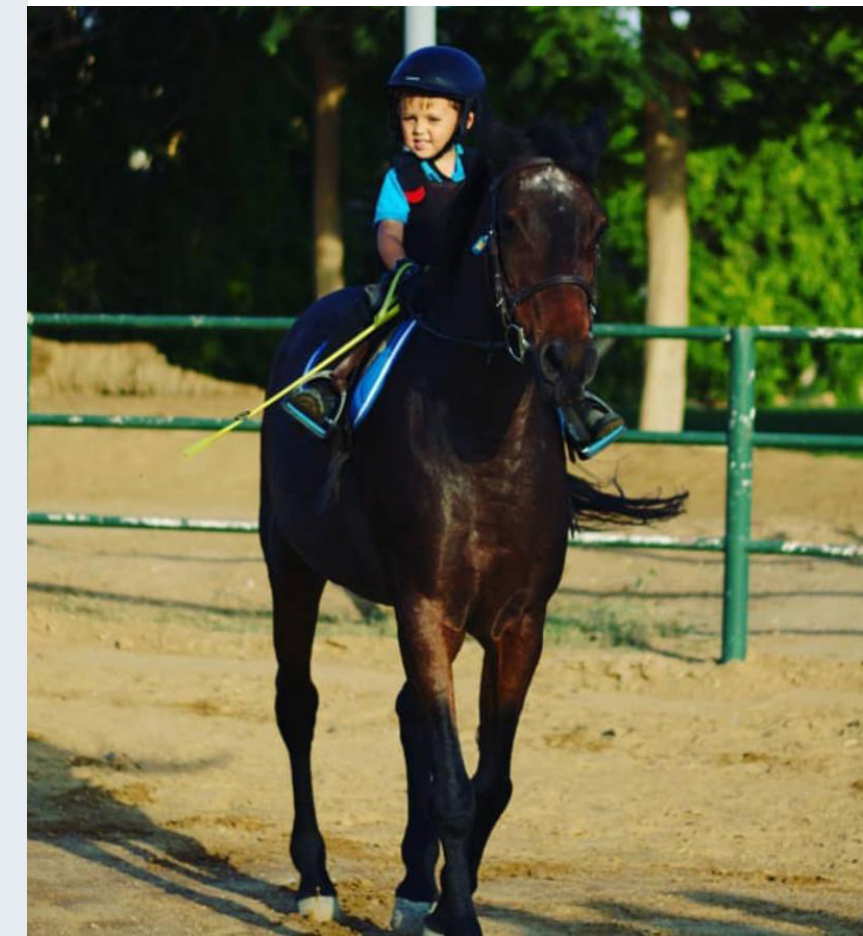
MEET 11-YEAR-OLD EGYPTIAN PRODIGY WITH A HEART FULL
OF DREAMS AND A SPIRIT AS FIERCE AS THE DESERT SUN.
WITH HIS SEEMINGLY UNWAVERING DETERMINATION AND
EXTRAORDINARY TALENT, HE MIGHT BE DESTINED TO MASTER
SHOWJUMPING SPORT AND INSPIRE YOUNGSTERS THAT WILL
FOLLOW. HIS FEARLESS PASSION FOR THE SPORT COULD
JUST, POSSIBLY WIN HIM MEDALS.



STARTED RIDING: my father owns the oldest private riding school in Egypt, so horses have been part of my life since before I could walk. As my mother likes to say, “instead of blood, you have horses running in your veins”. I sat on a horse for the first time at just two years old, practicing simple exercises on our trusted school horses. By the age of three, I was already jumping mini fences! My parents encouraged me to try other sports, but none could compete with the bond I had with horses — every new sport ended as quickly as it began. Equestrian sport isn’t just my sport, it’s my heritage, my lifestyle, and my passion.

TRAINERS: throughout my entire riding journey, I’ve only had one coach — my father. Mohamed Shaher Khalifa is not just a father to me, but a true mentor and horseman. He is an FEI Level 3 Coach, FEI Official Tutor, and FEI Coaching Expert. His coaching goes far beyond technique — he’s always focused on bringing out the very best in me, while making sure I never lose the “real horseman attitude” toward the sport, the horses, and the people around me. What I admire most is how he challenges me constantly, yet trusts me enough to make my own decisions — especially in the competition arena. Whether it’s managing pressure, taking responsibility, or facing setbacks, he’s taught me to grow through every experience. Under his guidance, I’ve learned that being a rider isn’t just about winning — it’s about respect, dedication, and lifelong learning.

HORSES: over the years, I’ve been lucky to ride many incredible horses, but each one has held a special place in my heart. It all began with Maximus, a miniature pony who is exactly my age, 11. He was the first to carry me over tiny jumps and introduce me to the thrill of jumping. Today, Maximus is still with me — growing old in our stable, a beloved part of the family who started it all. Currently, I compete



with three exceptional horses: Quansini, Garcia and Imalia. Quansini is a 17-year-old stallion, competes in the Medium Tour and is the most polite gentleman I’ve ever met. The moment I sit on him, he tunes in — focused, calm, and ready to give his all. He has a heart of gold, always trying his best, even when the distance isn’t perfect. My mother and sister adore him and spoil him endlessly. Garcia, my mare competing in the Small Tour, is elegant and precise. She does everything asked of her with grace — but she values her space and doesn’t tolerate pressure. She’s taught me one of the most valuable lessons in riding: patience. A real lady with a strong character. Both horses give me everything they have, and I ride every course with deep gratitude for their trust and partnership. Imalia is a stunning mare owned by Mr. Hany Amin, who has entrusted me with the honor of competing with her. She’s a true athlete—full of scope, heart, and determination. Her powerful canter stride and her consistent willingness to give her best make her a standout partner in every arena. I’m proud to ride such a talented and brave mare who’s always ready to rise to the occasion.



SPONSORS: my journey as a sponsored rider began early. At age six and seven, I proudly served as a brand ambassador for ‘Aztec Diamond Equestrian’, representing their elegant and functional riding apparel for young riders.

In the following years, I was sponsored by ‘Sir Lancelot Body Protectors’, a brand that supported me through several seasons of development and competition.

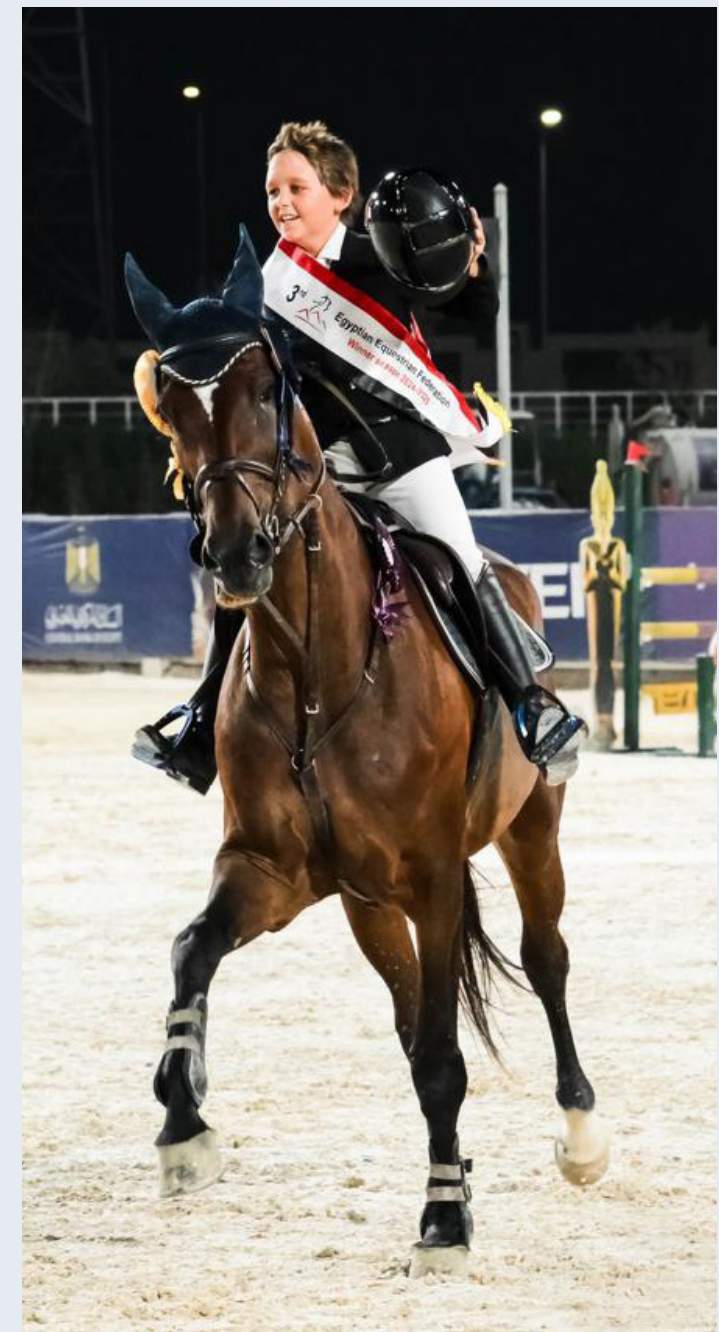
Currently, I am honoured to be sponsored by the Egyptian brand ‘Excellence’; they support the wellbeing and care of my horses — making sure they receive the best nutrition, maintenance, and support to perform at their best.

BEST RESULTS: due to my young age, I haven’t yet had the chance to compete abroad as often as I’d like — but I’m proud of the experiences I’ve already gained on international soil. At just five years old, I won 1st place at a beginner-level competition in Italy, and in January 2025, I earned a Bronze Medal in Qatar. The majority of my career so far has been built on Egyptian soil, where I’ve developed my riding, grown through each season, and collected a number of meaningful victories.

FAVOURITE ATHLETE: growing up, I was deeply inspired by Marcus Ehning. I watched his competitions and interviews over and over again — always learning, always admiring. I’m a huge fan of his calmness in the ring, his effortless style, and the way he approaches even the most difficult courses with quiet confidence and deep knowledge.

ASPIRATIONS: my ultimate goal in showjumping is to qualify for the FEI World Cup Final and, one day, represent Egypt at the Olympic Games. It’s a dream I’ve carried since I was a child — one that drives me every day in training, in competition, and in every challenge I face. I ride not only for personal success but to honour my roots, my country, and everyone who has supported my journey.

DREAM EVENTS: I dream of one day competing at the legendary CHIO Aachen, a place where the best of the best have made history — and would love to compete beneath the Eiffel Tower in Paris, one of the most breathtaking stages our sport has ever seen. For me, these aren’t just venues. They represent excellence, passion, and everything I strive for in this sport. 🏆



Some of my most memorable achievements include:

- 2nd Place – 2022 Egypt Cup (Overall & Under Age Category)
- 2nd Place – 2022/2023 Junior D Level Egyptian Final
- Team Winner – 2023 JCL Final
- Team Winner – 2024 JCL Final
- 1st Place – 2023/2024 Junior Small Tour Final
- 1st Place – 2024/2025 Junior Medium Tour Final

I look forward to growing further and representing Egypt internationally in the years to come.

MENTORS: my greatest mentors are my parents — my mother and father. They’ve guided me not only in sport, but in life — teaching me values like respect, resilience, and integrity. I owe everything I am, both in and out of the saddle, to their love, support, and example.





JUNIOR PROFILES

DILETTA MARCHIORO

DATE OF BIRTH: 10 JUNE 2011

COUNTRY: ITALY

MEET DILETTA MARCHIORO — ONE OF ITALY'S MOST
PROMISING YOUNG SHOWJUMPING STARS!
WE HAD THE PLEASURE OF CONNECTING WITH
HER TO DISCOVER MORE ABOUT HER JOURNEY,
HER PASSION FOR THE SPORT, AND WHAT EXCITING
ADVENTURES LIE AHEAD IN HER COMPETITIVE
FUTURE. STAY TUNED FOR AN INSPIRING GLIMPSE
INTO THE RISING TALENT SHAPING ITALY'S
SHOWJUMPING SCENE!

STARTRED RIDING: in 2020 because it was a passion I had since I was little.

HORSES: Up till now I have had many horses but the most important ones were Coco Moro and my current mare Limelight II. With Coco Moro I participated in my first major competition and she was a horse that made me learn and mature a lot. While Limelight II for me is still a great teacher to whom I will always be grateful, with her I got my first win, competed in my first Italian Championship and my first International one. We jump small tours, 125/130cm heights.

SPONSORS: Italian-made Equus brand has been my sponsor for a few months. Their clothing line is a necessary and comfortable part of my every day.

BEST RESULTS: I was once placed 9th at the Italian Youth Championships with my mare Limelight II.



TRAINER: I train with Marco Innocenti from the 'Scuderie del Vento' riding school in Sesto Fiorentino (Florence). He is a very qualified trainer and a person who is very attentive to my possibilities and potential.

FAVOURITE ATHLETE: current showjumping World no. 1 Kent Farrington is my favourite athlete. His results are amazing, and I like his technique in the saddle.

ASPIRATIONS: My dream goal this year would be win at the Arezzo Equestrian Centre in Tuscany in October with Limelight. I would like to be able to learn more about the technicalities of showjumping courses.

DREAM EVENTS: I would like to start touring Europe of course! To ride in France, Belgium, Spain and Holland, as well as the best circuits in the showjumping world. 🏆



EQUINE THERAPY

ASHVA YOGA

'ASHVA' IS SANSKRIT FOR HORSE, SO ASHVA YOGA BASICALLY MEANS HORSE YOGA, OR EQUESTRIAN YOGA. EQUESTRIAN YOGA INTEGRATES AN ANCIENT TRADITION INTO MODERN LIFE, DEEPENING ONE'S CONNECTION WITH BOTH ONESELF AND ONE'S HORSE BY COMBINING THE PRINCIPLES OF YOGA WITH THE MOVEMENT AND ENERGY OF THE HORSE.




With poses practiced both on and off your horse, you'll find improved strength, flexibility, and balance. The yoga poses are specifically geared towards the athlete's body, and include hip openers, shoulder stretches, deep twists, and lateral stretches. Stretches designed for the horse mirror those for the athlete.

Breathing with intention brings clarity and awareness to your own body while strengthening the bond with your horse. Equestrian Yoga compliments any riding discipline and is suitable for horses and riders of all ages and abilities with no previous yoga experience required.

Danny Chapparo, the founder and owner of Ashva Yoga, is a Yoga Alliance E-RYT certified teacher. She provides equestrian yoga clinics in the greater Denver, Colorado area and hosts yoga and equestrian yoga retreats. Her teachings with step-by-step instructions, as well as modifications and variations, make equestrian yoga accessible to all.

Both yoga and riding are timeless studies – explorations of self-discovery and growth. “We, equestrians, work super hard to be a good horse mom or dad, constantly developing our knowledge and skills,” says Danny. “Practicing Equestrian Yoga is another opportunity to gain more knowledge about ourselves, our own energy, our strengths, weaknesses, and imbalances, physically and mentally. It’s part of becoming the best partner we can be to our horses; it’s advancing our horsemanship skills”.

She adds, “Unlike a horse show where athletes compete against each other, practicing Equestrian Yoga together with other riders builds a powerful supporting community, where we all want the best for our horses and ourselves. You don’t come to an Equestrian Yoga practice to “show off” your horse; you come to connect deeper with your horse and to build more trust in each other.” 

About the Author:

Danny is the co-author of the book Equestrian Yoga - Yoga with, on, and for your Horse, which was the winner of the 2021 EQUUS Winnie Award and the 2021 Living Now Book Award. She was a clinician at the Rocky Mountain Horse Expo and a two-time presenter at the Yoga Journal LIVE! in Estes Park, teaching Equestrian Yoga. Danny was featured in a podcast with RAMM Horse Fencing & Stalls, speaking about her own journey into Equestrian Yoga. She was also featured in Equine Journal and Horse Illustrated magazine with ‘Mind-Body-Horse’. She was a speaker at the National North American Trail Ride Conference (NATRC) in Denver and the Parker Elizabeth Riding Club (PERC).

If you wish to contact Ashva Yoga for more information or to host a clinic at your facility, reach out to info@AshvaYoga.com or check out the website www.AshvaYoga.com.



THE IMPORTANCE OF A BALANCED DIET FOR HORSES

By Farah Rezeika

A HEALTHY HORSE IS A HAPPY HORSE AND THE KEY TO THEIR WELL-BEING LIES IN A BALANCED DIET TAILORED TO THEIR SPECIFIC NEEDS. WHETHER YOU HAVE A SPRIGHTLY YOUNG FOAL, A HIGH-PERFORMING ATHLETE, OR A WISE OLD COMPANION, UNDERSTANDING THE DIETARY REQUIREMENTS OF HORSES AT DIFFERENT STAGES OF LIFE AND ACTIVITY LEVELS IS CRUCIAL.



FOALS AND YOUNG HORSES: Young horses are filled with bundles of energy and are conceived with rapidly growing bodies. Their diet should be rich in high-quality proteins, vitamins, and minerals to support growth and development. Fresh pasture, quality hay, and a specialised feed can ensure they get the nutrients they need to build strong bones and muscles.

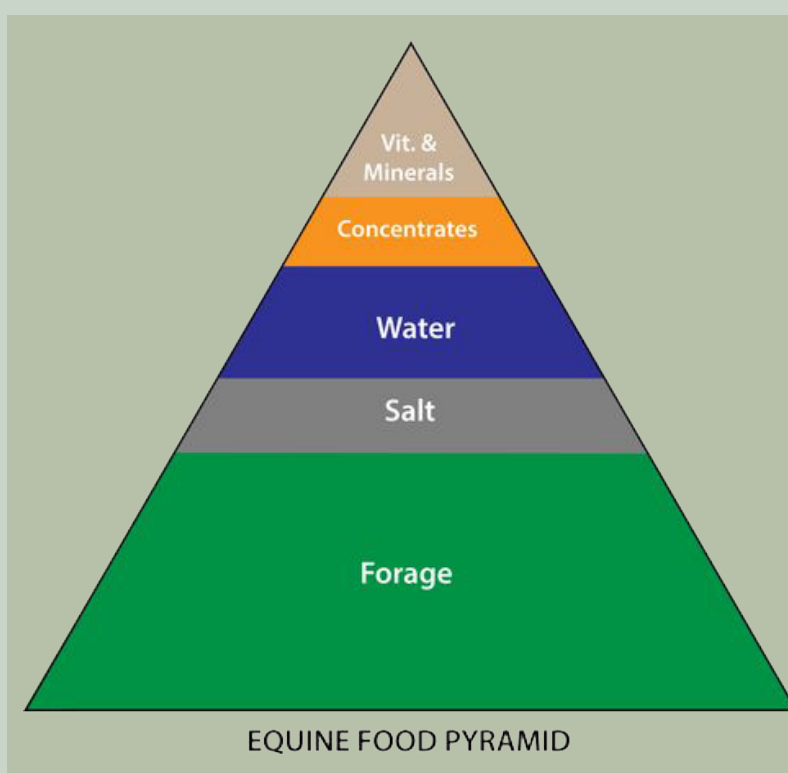
PERFORMANCE HORSES: Athletic horses, whether they're racehorses, jumpers, or dressage stars, require a diet that fuels their intense activity. This means a higher intake of carbohydrates and fats for energy, alongside sufficient proteins for muscle repair. Electrolyte balance is also vital to keep them hydrated and performing at their best.

ADULT LEISURE HORSES: Horses that lead a more relaxed lifestyle still need a balanced diet to maintain their health. A mix of good-quality forage, grains, and a vitamin-mineral supplement usually meets their nutritional needs. Keeping an eye on their weight and adjusting feed accordingly helps prevent obesity.

SENIOR HORSES: As horses age, their metabolism slows, and they may face dental issues or other health challenges. Senior horses benefit from a

diet that's easy to chew and digest, with added nutrients to support joint health and overall vitality. Specialised senior feeds are available to cater to these needs.

All horses need a balanced diet that includes the right proportions of carbohydrates, proteins, fats, vitamins, and minerals. By understanding and catering to the specific dietary needs of horses at different life stages and activity levels, owners can ensure their equine friends live long, healthy, and happy lives. 🐾



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SANDRA BEAULIEU

EXTRAORDINARY EQUINE ARTIST

SANDRA BEAULIEU IS A TRAILBLASING HORSEWOMAN AND ARTIST WHOSE PASSION FOR DRESSAGE AND ART CONVERGE IN A TRULY UNIQUE WAY. INTRODUCED TO HORSES AT JUST SEVEN YEARS OLD, SANDRA'S LIFE HAS BEEN DEDICATED TO ALL THINGS EQUESTRIAN.


WITH HER CREATIVE FLAIR, SHE HAS MASTERED THE ART OF "PAINTING ON HORSEBACK," BECOMING THE ONLY RIDER IN THE WORLD TO CREATE ENTIRE PAINTINGS WHILE RIDING.



Sandra's "Art on Horseback" involves creating large paintings while riding her horse, Rovandio (Rovy). Using dressage movements like piaffe and pirouettes, she expertly lands brush strokes, producing dynamic artworks.



She has performed at notable venues, donating her paintings to non-profit horse organisations. In 2017, Sandra showcased her work at the World Equestrian Games in Tryon, NC, and was set to perform at Equitana 2020 at the Kentucky Horse Park, Equine Affaire and The World Equestrian Center.

Sandra's artistic partnership with Rovandio continues to captivate audiences, proving that with passion and creativity, the possibilities are endless. 

EQUESTRIAN TECHNOLOGY BRIDGING TRADITION & INNOVATION

By Farah Rezeika

EQUESTRIAN SPORTS ARE STEEPED IN TRADITION AND HISTORY AND ARE EXPERIENCING A TECHNOLOGICAL RENAISSANCE. FROM WEARABLE DEVICES TO ADVANCED BIOMECHANICS, THE LATEST INNOVATIONS ARE TRANSFORMING HOW HORSE RIDERS TRAIN, CARE FOR, AND COMPETE WITH THEIR EQUINE PARTNERS.

WE DIVE INTO THE EXCITING WORLD OF EQUESTRIAN TECHNOLOGY AND EXPLORE THE GROUNDBREAKING ADVANCEMENTS THAT ARE SHAPING THE FUTURE OF THIS BELOVED SPORT.



WEARABLE TECHNOLOGY:

One of the most significant advancements in equestrian technology is the development of wearable devices for horses. These smart gadgets, including heart rate monitors, GPS trackers, and motion sensors, provide valuable insights into a horse's health, performance, and behaviour. By tracking vital signs and movement patterns, riders and trainers can make informed decisions about training intensity, recovery, and overall well-being.



ADVANCED BIOMECHANICS:

Biomechanics has gone high-tech, with advanced analysis tools now accessible beyond research labs. Portable force plate systems like the Equine Gait Analysis System (EGAS) measure ground reaction forces in real-time, while 3D motion capture systems provide detailed insights into a horse's movement patterns. Slep markerless technology uses artificial intelligence to detect and quantify asymmetries in a horse's gait, helping identify subtle lameness issues that might escape the naked eye.



GENETIC TESTING:

Genetic testing is opening new doors in equine sports science. Companies now offer DNA tests that predict a horse's aptitude for specific disciplines, helping owners and trainers make more informed decisions about a horse's career path. While genetics don't determine destiny, this information can guide training and management strategies to maximize a horse's potential.

Moreover, genetic testing can identify potential health risks before they manifest. For instance, some tests detect genes associated with recurrent exertional rhabdomyolysis (RER), a condition that causes muscle damage during exercise. Armed with this knowledge, owners can implement preventive measures to keep their horses healthy and performing at their best.



VIRTUAL REALITY AND AUGMENTED REALITY:

Virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) are emerging technologies with the potential to revolutionize equestrian training and education. VR can simulate riding environments, allowing riders to practice skills and overcome fears in a safe and controlled setting. AR can overlay digital information onto the real world, providing real-time feedback and guidance during training sessions.

As technology continues to evolve, we can expect even more innovative solutions to emerge in the equestrian world. From artificial intelligence-powered training aids to robotic grooming tools, the possibilities are endless. By embracing these advancements, we can bridge the gap between tradition and innovation, ensuring that equestrian sports remain relevant and exciting for generations to come.

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