



ABELKADER SAID

THE EGYPTIAN RIDER
WHO TOOK EUROPE BY STORM

By Khaled Assem

ABDEL, A VERY TALENTED YOUNGSTER RUNNING AROUND FROM ONE CLASS TO THE OTHER IN CAIRO, ESCORTED BY HIS MOTHER AND MOVING TO HOLLAND, GROOMED BY A VARIETY OF COACHES UNTIL HE LANDS WITH EMILE HENDRIX AND MOVES ON FROM THERE TO A GLORIOUS PROFESSIONAL LIFE THAT INCLUDES GRAND INTERNATIONAL WINS.

1-A DIFFICULT WIN THAT HAS SPECIAL VALUE TO YOU.

I think winning the **World Cup in Verona** was very special for me as it was my first World Cup win especially in the Western European league and on a horse who gives all for me and we produced her in my stable from a *young horse!*

2-HORSES THAT YOU FELT WERE GREAT PARTNERS AND WHY?

Sky high was a very special horse for me because she brought me to my first major results, such as 4th in the CSIO Grand Prix of Dublin, 5th Grand Prix of Gelderland, clear in the World Cup and Grand Prix of Oslo and also placed in the CSIO Grand Prix of Barcelona. *I was only 19* then and she was a trier. She also brought us the Bronze Medal at the Young Horse World Championships in Lanaken.

I also enjoyed my partnership with **Avenir**. He was qualified for the World Championships in Kentucky, 2nd in the 4* Grand Prix of Antwerp and 5th in the Grand Prix of Olympia. He was a very careful and competitive winner! I also remember one of his *fastest jump-offs* when he beat Edwina with Itot du Chateau to win the big class one evening in London Olympia.

Of course I also have to mention **Hope**. She did the most out of all of the horses for me. We won the World

Cup of Verona, King's Cup in Windsor (which enabled me to meet the Queen of England), the World Cup of Abu Dhabi, the Grand Prix of Zandhoven, the Sunday Grand Prix of Monaco, and many more. *I owe her a lot.*

3- WHAT DO YOU LOOK FOR IN A HORSE FOR YOUR CAREER?

If I have a choice I like **cooperative horses** that want to win and am competitive. I don't mind blood as well! The brain is most important for me and of course some talent .

4- TRAINERS THAT LEFT A GREAT IMPACT ON YOUR CAREER.

Emile Hendrix

5- WHAT IS YOUR DAILY ROUTINE?

I manage my stable and business which means I have to ride, train, and scout for new horses for our clients and that's what I do mainly every day and night.

6- ARE YOU PREPARING FOR 2020?

Yes for sure!!!

Inshallah, we can get Egypt qualified for the Olympic Games. I think this is a realistic but hard target that all the team is working towards and hopefully we get it done. We have to.



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7- WHO IS YOUR ROLE MODEL IN SHOWJUMPING AND WHY?

I have a lot because I feel they all have different qualities!

I respect **Ludger Beerbaum** a lot. His professionalism and that he managed to stay at the top sport for so long! I think *he covers most aspects of a professional show jumper.*

8- IN YOUR OPINION, AT THE TOP LEVEL OF THE SPORT, IS IT MORE ABOUT THE TALENT OR THE PRACTICE?

I think a mix of both. I don't believe one goes without the other. But *practice above talent*, if I have to choose.

9- DO YOU BENEFIT FROM YOUR PEERS IN THE GAME OR DO YOU STILL COACH WITH SOMEONE OR ATTEND CLINICS AT SOME POINT?

Not really, but I speak a lot with my peers and colleagues! **Sameh** and I are good friends and sometimes we discuss things and training together. Also **Cian** is a good friend of mine and sometimes we discuss things

together and analyze rounds. But I am lucky I also have the co- trainers at my stable, **Philippe de Balanda** and **Samuel Hutton**, and they help if I need it.

10- DO YOU HAVE A TEAM WORKING WITH YOU? WHO ARE THEY AND WHAT DO THEY HANDLE? HOW IMPORTANT IS THAT?

The team is very important in my opinion. We have a big team. Behind the scenes and without them I wouldn't be where I am today and, of course, first my parents for the sacrifices they made to support my career. I have Samuel Hutton as our stable rider and assistant trainer, Philippe de Balanda as scout and trainer, and, of course, our grooms and flat riders.

11- AT THE TOP LEVEL , ESPECIALLY WITH SO MANY HORSES, DO YOU STILL KEEP THAT BOND WITH THE HORSES OR DO THE GROOMS SHARE THAT PART IN THE NEW INDUSTRIALIZED SPORT?

I like to keep the bond. I really love and enjoy training and seeing the progress with my horses. Of course, my grooms, especially my main show groom, spend most time with them! 🐾