



ANDRE SAKAKINI A JOURNEY OF PASSION AND HORSEMANSHIP

By Khaled Assem

I STARTED AS A YOUNG RIDER IN EGYPT AND EVENTUALLY RODE ALL THE NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS. AT MY EARLY ATTEMPTS TO TRAIN ABROAD, I USED TO GO DURING THE SUMMER TO ENGLAND, SAMIR ABDEL FATTAH HAD A BEAUTIFUL FARM IN YORKSHIRE THERE; AT THIS TIME MICHAEL WHITAKER WAS STILL YOUNG AND RIDING FOR SAMIR AS WELL. I USED TO RIDE THERE EVERY SUMMER FOR TWO OR THREE MONTHS.



A FEW YEARS LATER WHEN I TURNED 22 , I DECIDED TO MOVE TO EUROPE TO EVOLVE IN THE SPORT. IT HAS BEEN VERY DIFFICULT BUT MY TARGET AND DREAM IN LIFE WAS TO BE SUCCESSFUL IN THIS SPORT. AND I WAS WILLING TO DO WHAT IT TAKES.

WAS TRAINING IN EUROPE THE RIGHT DECISION?

Well, to become a really good rider, you have to train in Europe. In Europe you have a chance to see really good riders and great coaches who can give you advice. You learn how manage your horse really well. **Europe is the heart of the sport!** Apart from the number of shows available every weekend where you can train your horses, add to your ringcraft and create a better position in the sport.

TELL US ABOUT THE HORSES THAT MADE A DIFFERENCE IN YOUR CAREER

I was lucky with horses; I've had really good ones! I won my first Grand Prix in Milano with an American thoroughbred called Midland and that was a qualifier for another in Rome.

It was a dream for me to ride in Rome where I also had a very good horse in the puissance and I came second.



HOW DID YOU BUY YOUR HORSES?

I didn't have the means to buy **expensive-ready horses**, all my life I've always tried to find a bargain. A horse that was good and got abused for example or a horse who was physically or technically not okay and I try to repair him.

Other than that were the horses that I bought young and produced, like "Careful" and "Casper" who was two of the best horses that I've had in my life. Naturally buying them young was more affordable and in more than one way this created a better bond with those horses.

HOW ABOUT PADDISON?

He was a very good Irish Horse, he was bred from Michael Duffy in Ireland and then he was sold with a very expensive price to someone in Italy where he did not function well. Paddison was a special case; he was a careful horse and people thought he was not a careful one.



I first saw him when he was 13, he was in the stable of a student of mine, I went to train him and his owner was there as well and he said **"Andre when you go back to Germany please take this horse with you because we don't want him in my stable anymore"**

So I took him and the surprise was that I immediately got along with him. After two or three weeks I took him to the small international and gradually we ended up winning the Grand Prix of Royan, he was placed in Hickstead and also came third in the Hamburg Derby.

WHO IS THE ONE WHOM YOU WENT TO FOR ADVICE ?

For daily coaching, I never had a steady coach with me all the time but if I was a bit in trouble and wanted to ask for help I would always call Nelson Pessoa because he's a dear friend to me. He is indeed a real horseman, if I ever had a problem I would sit and talk with him and we always found a way out.

HOW DID THEY AFFECT YOU?

Even if you jump all the Grand-Prix competitions, the Olympic Games change everything. The pressure is completely different, you know that it is a once in a lifetime chance that will not be repeated soon or might not be repeated at all.

On the other hand, one of my favorite riders is Nick Skelton; I mean watching him ride, his style and his timing to the fence has always made him an image. Not everyone can imitate his style because it can go the other way around but he is an amazing horseman who made it to the Olympic Podium with a Gold Medal in Rio 2016.

RIDING IN THE OLYMPICS IS LIFE CHANGING, YOU RODE FOUR OLYMPIC GAMES.

It's an event where the entire world is watching you ride. This pressure is also dependent on the horse that you're riding, but when you are riding an Olympic-quality horse it takes a little of the pressure away.



Even technically it's much more difficult than a Grand Prix, we have seen many Grand- Prix horses fail at the Olympics.

IN OCTOBER 2019, THE EGYPTIAN NATIONAL JUMPING TEAM QUALIFIED TO TOKYO 2021

WHAT KIND OF ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO THE TEAM?

First of all their horses have to arrive with a good moral and they have to arrive very sound because in the Games you take the maximum out of them.

Both the horse and the rider have to be fit and by fit I mean physical and mental fitness.

The horse has to arrive with the least bad experiences possible in order to have full confidence.

As for the team, they have a responsibility to attain.

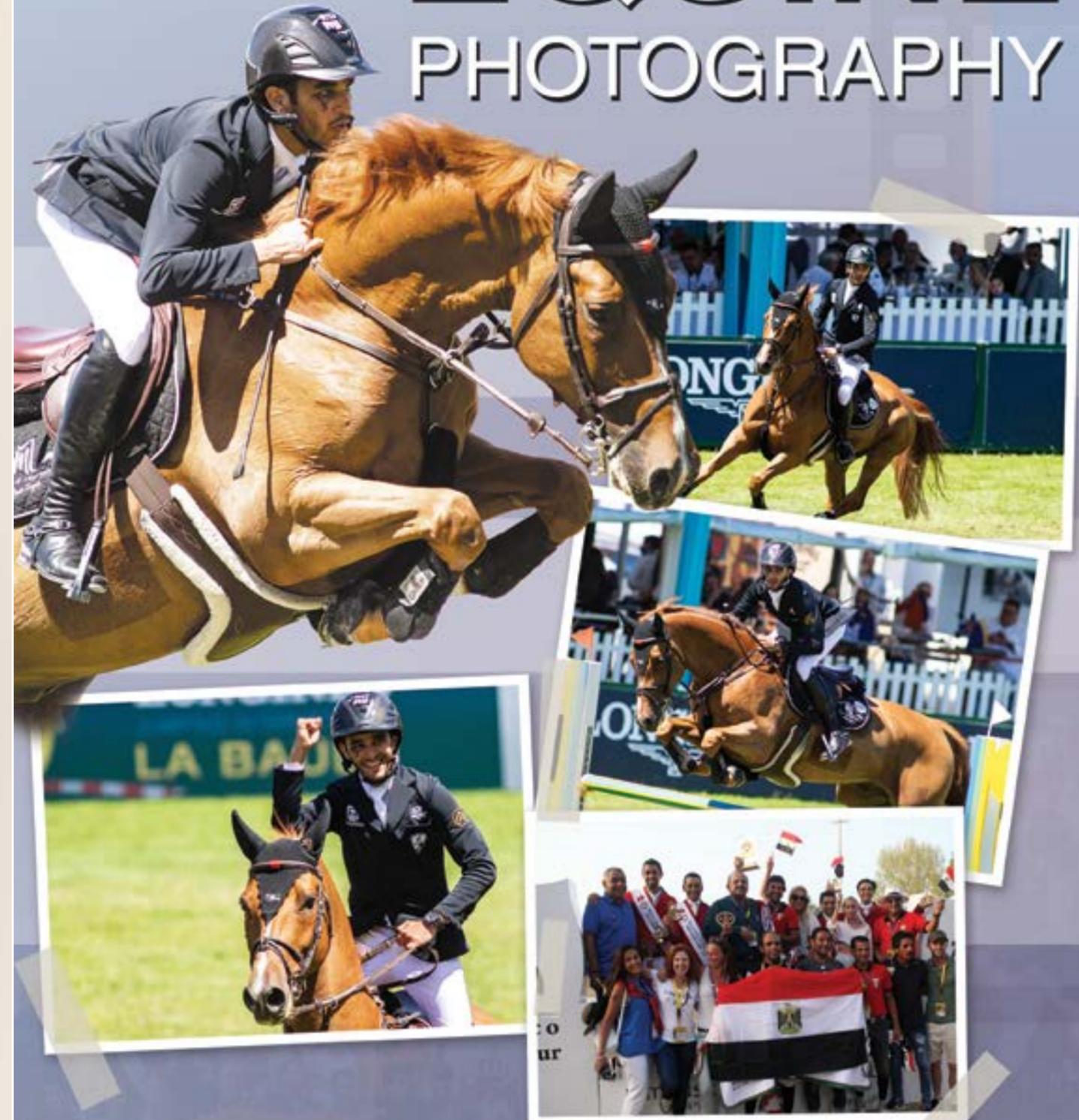
They have the responsibility of the country, they have the responsibility of the team then you have the responsibility of yourself.

And this of course takes the pressure to a whole new level.

FINALLY, I WISH THE TEAM ALL WELL AND I AM SURE THAT THEY WILL MAKE US PROUD. 🇪🇬



EQUINE PHOTOGRAPHY



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