

AN EXCEPTIONAL YEAR

# HOME OF THE 2015 ALGERIAN TOUR

By Engy Adham



ALGERIAN TOUR 2015 IS ORGANISED BY HARAS HOCINE EL-MANSOUR EQUESTRIAN CENTRE IN COLLABORATION WITH THE ALGERIAN EQUESTRIAN FEDERATION (AEF) UNDER THE PRESIDENCY OF MR. M'HAMED ZOUBIR METIDJI. THE MINISTRY OF YOUTH AND SPORTS AND THE WALI OF MOSTAGANEM M. HOCINE MANSOUR METIDJI SUPPORT THE TOUR IN ITS THIRD RUNNING, WHICH WAS HELD OVER TWO SUCCESSIVE WEEKENDS: FROM 29 OCTOBER TO 31 OCTOBER 2015 AND 4 NOVEMBER TO 6 NOVEMBER 2015. IT HOSTED 150 HORSEMEN AND HORSEWOMEN FROM COUNTRIES ALL AROUND THE WORLD: ALGERIA, GERMANY, SAUDI ARABIA, AUSTRALIA, BELGIUM, BRAZIL, COLOMBIA, SPAIN, FRANCE, ITALY, LIBYA, PALESTINE AND TUNISIA.

One last surprise from the year 2015!

Here is a clue.

A beautiful mare

Full of poetry covered with silk

A strong stallion

Awaiting his release

Both are ready

For show-jumping

And a ride to sunset

In a beautiful land on the Mediterranean shores

Have you guessed it yet?

Mostaganem- Home of the 2015 Algerian Tour Jumping International

2015 – A perfect year where riders put their hearts into competitions; they strived for excellence and carved their way breaking world records to sculpt a new victory in the history of the equestrian sport.

Before leaving, the year 2015 had one last challenge.

On the coast of the Mediterranean, the city of Mostaganem was swathed in a cold morning breeze and soft rays of sunshine. Step by step, every street introduces a new part of the city and each alley tells a story. Following its paths, Mostaganem led us to the heart and soul of the city: Haras Hocine El Mansour Equestrian Centre housing the 2015 Algerian Tour.

### Background

"On behalf of the Algerian Equestrian Federation (AEF), members of the Federal Bureau and on my own behalf, I express our warmest thanks." These were the opening words of The President of The Algerian Equestrian Federation (AEF) M'hamed Zoubir Metidji.

An international friendship competition was the first international experience organized in 2013, followed by a CSI 1\* in 2014. These two competitions gathered a large number of riders coming from many nations and were very successful. But "this year is exceptional," says Metidji "an exceptional year for Algeria organizing a CSI 2\* and CSI 3\*" - the latter being a World Cup qualifier.

"I am proud and happy to supervise such events, which undoubtedly allow riders from different nations to excel in a healthy competition and share their experiences with fair play and in strict compliance with the rules issued by the International Equestrian Federation," says Metidji.

In celebration of the development of the equestrian activity and fostering a culture of sporting excellence, the Algerian Minister for Youth and Sport, his Excellency ElHadi Ould Ali, attended the 2015 Algerian Tour. Metidji accompanied him in the remarkably well-equipped spaces of Haras Hocine El Mansour Equestrian Centre.

The Minister of Agriculture Rural Development and Fisheries and local authorities of the Wilaya of Mostaganem headed by the Wali of Mostaganem were also a vital support in the preparations for this competition.

### Join the Action

One hundred and fifty horsemen and women attended the 2015 Algerian Tour. Three days of excitement, intense competitions and almost non-ending thrills from the best riders from all around the world.



The President of the Algerian Equestrian Federation (AEF) Mr. M'hamed Zoubir Metidji and Abdullah AlSharbatly, Grand Prix Winner

The President of the Algerian Equestrian Federation (AEF) Mr. M'hamed Zoubir Metidji and Fahima Sebiane FEI International Show Jumping Judge

For three consecutive days, every morning riders, judges, sponsors, breeders, family members and horse lovers gather in the arena getting ready for a marvelous show.

For the first time in Algeria, the Algerian Tour adopted a CSI 2\* and a CSI 3\* World Cup qualifier. Metidji says, "The objective of the Algerian Tour is firstly to allow Algerian riders to reach top levels and prepare for the next international deadlines including the Mediterranean Games in 2021 in Oran/Algeria, and also to discover the equestrian world in Algeria."

As for Algerian riders, this competition is a great opportunity for them to compete against international riders; an opportunity that prepares and qualifies them for World Cup championships. Algerian rider Anis Smati is based in France and joined the Algerian Tour for the first time. Smati told Horse Times, "I am really glad to be here for the Algerian Tour; this is the third year they have organised this show, but this is my first time it is very exciting to be part of such competition."

One by one, each rider performed at his/her best jumping over 1.30 meter fences. A spectacular event marked by international and national efforts

to produce the best show. We were all watching the competitions very closely with special anticipation being paid to the big event ... Yes, the Grand Prix, but first, I will take you to the warm-up arena moments before the Grand Prix.

The feeling in the warm-up arena: Horses were strong, agile with enough space on their back to carry a human, as they have done for centuries. Impatiently waiting their turn to prove their efficiency, speed, strength and ability to communicate with their riders. As for riders, you can imagine! Tense, excited, focused and anxious to experience the moment and capture victory. Both riders and horses were ready for a run against the clock.

### The Grand Prix

During the Algerian Tour 2015 Abdullah Al-Sharbatly with Talan won the CSI 3\*W Grand Prix in Mostaganem. The Saudi Arabian Olympic silver medallist held with a double clear and came in the second round with 62.31 seconds at the finish.

Al-Sharbatly was pleased with his victory. "There are a lot of good riders here. This has been a great experience and a tough competition. Talan is a great

horse and I am really happy with his performance," Al-Sharbatly told Horse Times.

Second place went to the French Dorothee Amar. She stayed with the fourteen-year-old Nemo De Belou clear in the second round, but in 63.54 seconds. Four faults for Rowan Willis with Blue Movie put them in third place. As for Philippe Putallaz from Switzerland, he ended with Quessant De Perhet in fourth place. Last but not least, Faye Schoch, who collected thirteen penalty points with the Ravisante De Pleville ranking fifth place.

### Meet the Jury

I have to introduce the superb jury. This show wouldn't have been the same without them. It included Fahima Sebiane assisted by Djamel Hamadoune Kerdjadi Youcef, Alya Mencheri Youcef Mehiri, Moroccan Badr Fakir and French Jean-Philippe Ohye.

Yes, it is 2016, but..

Reminiscing on 2015 memories; a spectacular event and strong competitions brought people from all around the world. It is time to leave you with final words of Metidji.

"The AEF intends to make the Algerian Tour an annual event that will, for the next editions, and if the infrastructure-related conditions permit, include a stage in other cities of the country, including the capital, Algiers." 🇩🇿

### Results:

- 1) Saudi Arabia - Abdullah AlSharbatly with Talan
- 2) France - Dorothee Amar with Nemo De Belou
- 3) Australia - Rowan Willis with Blue Movie
- 4) Switzerland - Philippe Putallaz with Ouessant De Perhet
- 5) Switzerland - Faye Schoch with Ravisante De Pleville

For full results, kindly check Horse Times website.

All photos by Hamada Hamdy

