

WHY DO THE BREEDERS ALL **COME BACK EVERY** YEAR? WHY DO THEY **INVEST THEIR HOPES** AND DREAMS IN THE **OUTCOME OF THIS** ONE EVENT? WHY ARE THE ACCOLADES AND **AWARDS RECEIVED** AND CELEBRATED WITH SUCH DELIGHT AND ENTHUSIASM? COULD IT BE A YEARNING FOR 'AYAM ZAMAN', THE GOOD OLD DAYS, A TIME WHEN AN ENDEAVOUR TO DO SOMETHING **GOOD AND LASTING** WAS A VALUE WORTH DISPLAYING, LIVING AND PRESERVING? AND A TIME WHEN THAT ENDEAVOR PRODUCED AND REFLECTED A NATIONAL SENSE OF STABILITY, CALM AND GRACIOUSNESS?







The old time breeders and newer upstarts seek to achieve the same end, simply put, perfection in the Straight Egyptian Arab horse. The crucible for determining the proximity to that ideal is the annual El Zahraa Arabian Horse Championships held at the national stud under the aegis of the Egyptian Agricultural Organisation, this year running from the 13th to the 16th of November.

Once again, the cool white cloth-festooned stands welcomed the top Arabian horse breeders in Egypt and from abroad to contest the best of the breed. While so much is changing outside the grounds, inside the stud the Championships continue as a reminder that some things remain the same. The hospitality and organisation are again top-notch. And the same exacting standards are applied to each aspect of each horse by the expert judges: type, head and neck, topline, legs and movement.









The current continuity of the Championships gives each breeder, new and heritage, the feedback he or she needs to determine whether his or her specific breeding programme is actually meeting an unbiased and uniform standard for the breed. It is not enough to compete among your local peers; it is necessary to assess the fruits of your breeding programme against the highest global standard. This is the purpose of the annual El Zahraa Championships.

El Zahraa Stud lives in the fond memories of so many people connected to show. German Judge Holger Ismer put it best: "Coming to El Zahraa gives one a traditional feeling...when I was a boy I had a pony and his father came from El Zahraa. His name was Ghazal. So my heart is every time placed in El Zahraa". Another Judge Joanne Lowe has a special tie to El Zahraa as well: "It's always a privilege to come back here. My parents bought two horses from here many, many years ago, probably about 35 years ago. So it's like coming back to the birth place of our original Egyptian horses."













EL ZAHRAA 20th SHOW

الله العادية الدوائية السادسة

الله المحطة الزهراء العشرون

العرابية السادسة

المحطة الزهراء العربية

المحلة المح

In the picture, Gen. Bakr El Sherbini of the Police Academy with the legendary Mrs. Dani El Barbary who was honoured during the Cahmpionships for being an advocate of El Zahraa bred horses

The first two days centred on the national breeding programmes and Friday, in particular, drew a large and enthusiastic crowd. During the second two days, international breeders and owners displayed their best and HT congratulates all of this year's Champions.

It must be acknowledged that these have been difficult years not only for breeders and owners, but for the sponsoring government agencies as well, and in truth it was widely agreed that the quality on the lower end was lacking somewhat. Yes, it has been difficult to focus on the development of the breed and the national stud in these times, but the breeders and owners continue to come back and they continue to try; and just keeping the programme alive and doing what can be done under the circumstances is a tremendous sacrifice and achievement which preserves the line for the future. They come back because owning and breeding these magnificent Straight Egyptian Arabians is in their blood, in their history. While nostalgia won't bring back the excellence of the breed, the sister sentiments of pride, duty, perseverance, and love of the horse will go some distance to meet this end.

About the future, Judge Ismer said: "When I see other horses [at private studs]...then you know that the future of the breeding in Egypt can be great."

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*Congratulations to Al Wafy Stud: Marzouk Al Wafy Stallions gold champion – El Zahraa 20th Championships

**Congratulations to HRH Prince Saud bin Sultan Al Saud - Al Mamlaka Stud PCF Vision Stallions gold champion - 16th International Championship

For full results, see: http://tinyurl.com/lar5wde

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