

# Long live our Egyptian Arabian !

By YASMIN EL HABASHY

On the 22<sup>nd</sup> - 23<sup>rd</sup> of October 1999, the Egyptian Agricultural Organization (E.A.O), El Zahraa stud, held its sixth National championship for the Egyptian Arabian Horse.

'It was a great success,' says El Zahraa Director General, Dr. Khalil Soliman, proudly. All in all approximately 60 prizes were distributed besides the champions and the reserved champion prizes.

In this yearly show, two different competitions are held. First the local Egyptian Arabian, and secondly, the exported, or internationally, one. For both types, the same procedures take place in terms of judging methods and scale of points.

There are 5 different classes that compete in this event; the one year olds (class 1), the 2 year olds (class 2), the 3 year olds (class 3), the 4-7 year olds (class 4), and the 7-and up year olds which are classified as class five.

In every class a 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and a 3<sup>rd</sup> prize is distributed, while sometimes if the class has more than 8 horses, a 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> prize are included. These prizes do not include the champions and the reserved champions from each class.

While talking to Dr. Khalil Soliman, he gave a brief explanation as an international judge what to look for in the Arabian horse, and how there are five categories each marked from 10 to 20 leaving the total out of 100.

First the horse is judged upon its overall

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positive and beauty which is referred to as the type, then the expected dish faced

head and long arched neck. The body topline expresses the whole upper body of the horse with respect to muscles and how evened out the horse is.

As for the legs, which is the most difficult area to judge if the person is unexperienced in field, alignment is the key point.

Last but not least the movement of the horse takes the final 10 to 20 points upon character as well.

'To our honor this year we were lucky to have the judges Mrs. C Chazel from France, Mrs. Joan Ratchiff from England, and Major Pat Maxwell from England. HRH Princess Alia Bint Al-Hussein from Jordan could unfortunately not make it this year,' Dr. Khalil said.

As for the organizers of this event, El Zahraa Director General Dr. Khalil Soliman, he has been in the business at El Zahraa for 41 years. He is a member of ECAHO and WAHO organizations, as well .... and an international judge. He organizes 2 auctions every year at El Zahraa stud and on the overall he's responsible for the 400 Arabians at the stud as well as monitoring 185 private farms which brings the total number of Arabians to 3500 horses in Egypt.

In this last show only one Libyan farm participated as opposed to our 45-50 Egyptian farms, but even though most countries were invited, none of them could make it due to transportation difficulties.

In general these shows for the past six years have had an amazing impact on the market of our Egyptian Arabians, both locally and internationally. Dr. Khalil Soliman proudly said, 'in abroad shows like 'Salon de Cheval' last year, most of the winners had Egyptian blood in them.' He explained how in Egypt we concentrated on the whole of the horse, while in other countries the facial beauty of the Arabians is more important.

Of course he also mentioned how hard it can be as a business since it's a sport of money. People with money buy best blood and in 2-3 years they try to wipe out competitors

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that have been in business for 30-40 year. Before we closed the conversation, Dr. Soliman made a point in that the health of the horse is the most important. The cleanliness of the place, and the punctuality and quality of food should be at the utmost importance to a breeder who wants to be successful.

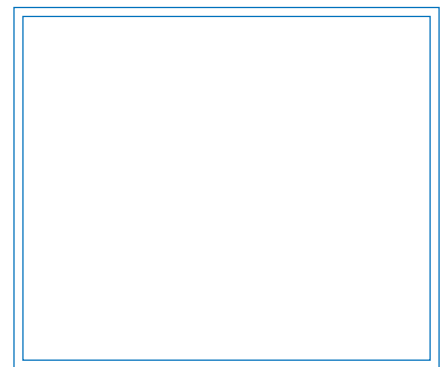
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