



# PERISCOPE ON SAMEH EL DAHAN

**Country:** Egypt  
**Club:** Police Sports Union  
**Date of Birth:** 28/01/198

By Khaled Assem

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SAMEH EL DAHAN IS A RIDER & MEDICAL STUDENT AT EIN SHAMS UNIVERSITY, CAIRO. HE STARTED RIDING AT THE AGE OF 5 AND HAS BEEN DOING SO EVER SINCE. SAMEH IS VERY PASSIONATE ABOUT RIDING AND HAS SIMPLE & REALISTIC DREAMS; TO BE THE BEST RIDER THAT HE CAN POSSIBLY BE. WITH A FULL & BUSY SCHEDULE, SAMEH IS TRYING HIS BEST TO GRADUALLY FULFIL HIS ASPIRATIONS. HE ATTENDS UNIVERSITY 6 DAYS A WEEK FROM 9 AM TILL 1 PM AND WILL GRADUATE THIS YEAR IN DECEMBER. THE BEGINNING OF THE 2008 SEASON BROUGHT SAMEH SOME SUCCESS; FOR THE FIRST TIME HE ENTERS & WINS THE GRAND PRIX OF THE A1 CLASS LEVEL OF THE NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS. HE ALSO CAME IN SECOND PLACE IN THE B CLASS, AND FIRST IN THE C CLASS. INTERNATIONALLY, HE CAME IN FOURTH AT SEIF AL SHAM GRAND PRIX QUALIFIER (CSIO\*4 SYRIA 2008). AS A JUNIOR, SAMEH CAME IN 7<sup>TH</sup> PLACE AT LE TOUQUET INTERNATIONAL JUNIOR CHAMPIONSHIPS (FRANCE).

**How many horses do you ride per day and for how long?**

I nearly ride daily; 6 days a week and a minimum of 4 horses a day. They are my horses, but every so often friends ask me to ride their horses, so I end up riding 5 to 6 horses on average per day; I mainly focus on my 4 though.

**What can you tell us about your club?**

I have been riding for the Police Sports Union club since I was 9 years old. Only for 3 years, I switched to the Army Sports Union, but then I went back to my original Club. We have a very good team and we have a healthy atmosphere. Even though the management is renovating the club & providing new arenas, the facilities are quite complete; we have a clinic and one of the best vets in Egypt, Dr. Ashraf El Kalla. We leave the worrying about the horses to him; he is excellent at his job. On top of things, we have a good system

managed by Lieutenant Colonel Sameh Niseem and Stables managed by Brigadier Ayman Fahmy. Credit is also due to both General Hamada Sameda, the General Manager of the Club and General Mahmoud Salah who regularly assist our team, but never appear in the picture.

**Does anybody help you with supervised riding as opposed to riding on your own without coaching & do you choose your own horses?**

I try to train on my own, but I am mainly assisted by my friend & fellow rider Alaa Maysara every week; I think he is a fantastic rider who follows a very strong & technical system. I am also supervised by General Ehab Abdelaziz everyday; he is the Team Manager of my club. Gen. Ehab Abdelaziz is a very perceptive Team Manager who helps me with choosing horses & knows when to create a good horse & rider combinations. Before the start of the 2008



▲ Sameh El Dahan

season, he gave me 2 horses; Cairoboy who helped me win the A1 Class level of the National Championships, and Mashallah, helping me win the C Class level. I also came in 2<sup>nd</sup> place in the B Class level (with Honeymoon).

**If you are approximately competing with 4 horses at National shows every weekend, how many rounds do you jump per season multiplied by the number of horses, and how many weekends did you compete this season?**

To make it easy for you, let's put it this way: it is 10 shows per season; every show goes on for 2 days. I ride 4 horses every day so that is basically a minimum of 4 rounds except for the jump offs. Throughout each & every competition, there has to be at least 4 jump offs...meaning every horse has to jump a round & a jump off. So per show (provided that the horses jumped

clear), I have to complete 12 rounds per show; 12 multiplied by 10 (season) is 120 rounds per season before the finals. The finals have 20 rounds, so all in all, I complete 140 rounds per season. Moreover, I compete during the summer season; for the 2008 summer season, we just bought new horses that will need training and preparation for the 2009 season

**What can you tell us about family support & future aspirations?**

My family has been supportive all the way, financially, physically, mentally, and psychologically. I would like to thank each and every one of them, especially my brother because I really made him suffer during my training for the National Championships (smiling). He would wake up with me so early on daily basis for riding and support. He was always there, and he did a great job throughout the season.

Regarding my future plans, I would like to go to Europe for training in order to become a better rider. That would be through riding bigger shows, competing with tougher riders, consequently gaining more experience, then finding out if I will be able to be an international rider or not. Unfortunately, I cannot find that out if I will be based in Egypt.

**It is a realistic dream, but do you realise that in order for you to compete, get better mileage, become a better rider, you need a very good horse. So there is an equation between technicality & work versus a good horse, which means financial means. How do you see this working out?**

My club is currently helping me with the horses, so my plan is to get the best out of the situation I am in now; to ride during the Arab League, to make a good name for myself, and to try my best to win lots of Grand Prix. If I gain more exposure, maybe I will be able to go to Europe. From there, perhaps I can ride for a well known stable that would help me with horses at the beginning of my career. It is a gradual stage that requires perseverance.

**Do you think that your club would be at all interested in funding you with a horse without being allocated in Egypt, but in Europe where you would still compete under their name?**

They did that in the past, but they based the riders & horses for a couple of months in Europe, but not permanently. This could possibly be a start, and it is somehow possible for the club to support us this way, but not possible to keep us there permanently. **HT**

