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REVIEW ON MOVENPICK

By: May El Kheishen

One national competition has ended another one has begun and ended; almost the same arenas and participants in each season. DON'T get me wrong; I still strongly believe that the competition season is probably the highlight of the year for all of us, horse fanatics. Whether it is because of the joy of winning, the extreme content of competing or even just watching such a glorious sport, it's always enjoyable. A sport that has brought both man and animal together, working harmoniously side by side to achieve a common aim.

However, this year's competition season had a distinctively different highlight. One must admit that the 9th CSI International Equestrian competition, held at The Movenpick hotel in Cairo last January, has added spice, glamour, excitement and a little taste of what its like to compete in an international show. A real treat to the entire Egyptian Equestrian world!

To those of you who have missed it, here's a round up of this events galore. To those of you who were there, here's a swell chance for you to revive the experience of the greatest event to hit the Egyptian Equestrian world for quite a while. Riders and Horse lovers ENJOY!!!

Sixty one riders from eighteen nations participated in this spectacular three-day event. It was held under the patronage of the Ministry of Interior Affairs, Ministry of Tourism, and Ministry of Youth and Sports; and was organized under the auspices of the Egyptian Equestrian Federation (EEF) and the Police Sports Union. The event was preceded by two days of choosing and training the horses in the police academy. Each of the three competition days hosted a different form of competition with a different set of rules and regulations.

The first class was held on Monday 12th of January 2004, this class was only one round against the clock with a maximum height of 125 cm and a speed of 350m/min. The second and third classes were held on Thursday 15th and Friday 16th of January respectively.

The second class was the very much-awaited for The Grand Prix competition; participants competed over two non- identical rounds where only the second round was against the clock. Its maximum height was 135cm and a speed of 375m/min.

The third class held on the last day, was the Mixed Teams competition. Each team consisted of 4 riders, competing in two identical rounds plus one jump off against the clock for first place. The class was of maximum height 125 cm and a speed of 350m/min.



The opening ceremony

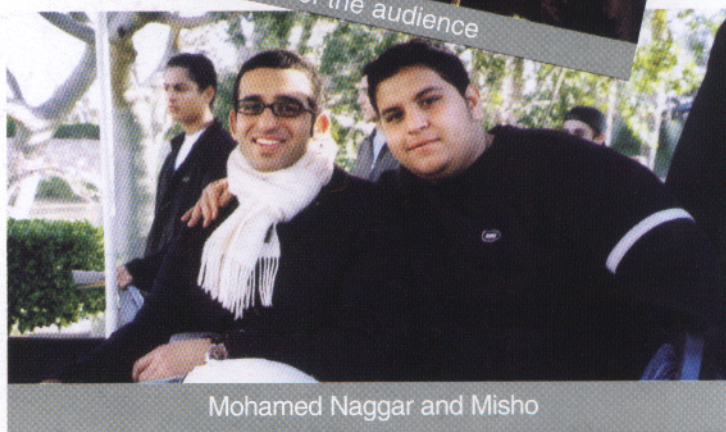
Sameh Hattab, & Ahmed Ashraf Bassiouny during the show



Wahba Saleh, Medhat Ragheb, Ashraf Abdullah, & Amr Beshier, among friends



Part of the audience



Mohamed Naggar and Misho

Francois Mathy from Belgium, second place in the Grand Prix, among some of his foreign friends.



Day 1:

Every flier and brochure said: Egypt with its IDEAL winter weather is a perfect location for this competition. ... NOT!!! It was a grand competition, but unfortunately the warm Egyptian winter

I really like the country, hotel and I also like my horse.

Marcel Goran - Netherlands, Winner of the 1st class

weather we were accustomed to and what all the foreign guests were expecting to greet them was not to be. It ironically turned out to be one of the coldest days this winter!

Putting behind the weather this class witnessed an admirable bundle of riding skills. A total of 24 riders managed to succeed in complet-

This competition is more like a festival and is considered to be a great experience for all Egyptian young riders.

Eng. Abdelfatah Ragab - President of EEF

ing a clear round, but the real encounter was between the 1st and 2nd place winners, Netherlands's Marcel Goran and Egypt's Andre Sakakini. Sakakini on Leonardo gave us quite a performance; he completed the course successfully in a time of 43.84, making most spectators classify him as this class's winner, but unfortunately that was not to be. Goran on Watch Out, managed to beat Sakakini's time by only 25 seconds. An unexpected twist of fate!!

We missed it a lot!!!

Karim El Sobky - Egypt, Winner of the Grand Prix



Marcel Goran on Watch Out



Islam Ragab



Eng. Abdel Fatah Ragab, and Francois Mathy on Darios

RESULTS

	Country	Rider	Horse	Time
1.	Netherlands	Marcel Goran	Watch Out	43.59
2.	Egypt	Andre Sakkakini	Leonardo	43.84
3.	Egypt	Islam Amr Eid	Sphinx	44.71
4.	Belgium	Francois Mathy	Darios	44.97
5.	Egypt	Mohamed Abdelmaqsod	Romario	45.68
6.	Egypt	Mohamed Borai	Pizza	46.36
7.	Netherlands	Rob Ehrens	Lion Heart	47.57
8.	Italy	Mossimo Grassalo	Clumzy	47.76
9.	Sweden	Helena Lundback	Milk Shake	47.87
10.	Egypt	Dr. Karim Zohair El Sobky	Le Gatte	48.83

Day2:

Congratulations Dr. Karim Al Sobky!

A major improvement in the weather, which was the final component needed to perfect the event's most highly awaited competition, The Grand Prix.

Out of the seven winners, five were Egyptian riders, which definitely was a real treat for all the Egyptian viewers. The first three winners were the only ones able to successfully complete the course without any penalty points, while all the rest had knocked down at least one pole (i.e. 4 penalty points)

It's been a good day for the Egyptians.

Dr. Bo Helander, General Secretary of the FEI

Dr. Karim El Sobky won this class with a clear round at a time of 43.58 seconds, the Belgian Francois Mathy came in second with a time of 44.59 seconds (1.01 seconds apart). Yet the real thrilling competition for El Sobky was from his fellow Egyptian rider, Sameh Hatab, who rode an almost perfect course (he knocked down a fence) with a time of only 41.3 seconds, which was the shortest. These two riders seem to have this growing "special competitive relationship", as quoted by El Sobky. Even though it is well known that they are good friends on the social level, they always somehow end up competing against one another for different titles in important events such as this one.



Eng. Hisham Hatab, Dr. El Sobky, Eng. Abd El Fatah Ragab, & Gen. Mohamed Sobaih.



Dr. Karim Zohair Al Sobky on LeGatte



Francois Mathy on Darios



Gen. Ahmed El Sawaf on Meshmesh Z, and Sameh Hatab on Celino.

GRAND PRIX WINNERS

	Country	Rider	Horse	Time
1.	Egypt	Dr. Karim El Sobky	LeGatte	43.58
2.	Belgium	Francois Mathy	Darios	44.59
3.	Egypt	Gen. Ahmad El Sawaf	Meshmesh Z	47.74
4.	Egypt	Sameh Hatab	Celino	41.30
5.	Egypt	Mohamed Mansour (Mimo)	Amido	44.41
6.	Egypt	Horiyah Farghaly	Sky High	44.46
7.	Spain	Alfredo F. Duran	Crepe Suzette	44.73
8.	Brazil	Joa Aragao	Noranzo	45.96
9.	Egypt	Mohamed Medhat	Randy	48.93
10.	Egypt	Ismail Rashdan	Askia	51.25

Day3:

The Mixed Teams competition was the final class of this three- day event. Participants were divided into fifteen different teams, each consisting of four different riders; it was "A definite must- watch!"

I'm very surprised at the improvement since the last time I was here

Alfredo F. Duran - Spain, 7th place winner of the Grand Prix

The final piece of action in this event was the naming of the three leading riders, an Egyptian, a female rider and a foreign rider. Islam Amr Eid won the title of the Egyptian leading rider, while the event's leading lady was Dane Merdethe from Denmark and the title of the foreign leading rider went to Francois Mathy from Belgium.

The number of audience on each and every day of the event was very impressive (especially during the weekend). This indicated how successful the planning of the event was and of course the promotional campaign created to grasp a wide public of riders and non- riders. It was one of those few equestrian events where a big share of the audience was not part of the Egyptian equestrian circle. It felt great to know that more and more people have started to get interested and appreciate one of the most fulfilling sports.

Apart from the competition itself, the foreign riders were able to do some sightseeing activities. Furthermore, they also went on two trips outside Cairo; one to Sharm El Sheikh and one to the King's Ranch riding center in Alexandria. Besides a welcome and a farewell party were organized for them in the hotel, and a Gala - Dinner given by the Egyptian Equestrian Federation during a Nile boat cruise.



First place winning team.



Alfredo Duran from Spain.



Khaled Mohamed Ali.

WINNING TEAMS

First Team(with a total of zero penalty points):

Ahmad El Naggar - Egypt
Nahla El Sawaf - Egypt
Massimo Grossato - Italy
Khaled M. Ali - Egypt

Dr. Guido Grimaldi - Italy
Ahmad M. Rezk - Egypt

Second placed Team(with a total of four penalty points)

Marcel Groen - Netherlands
Yehia Attallah - Egypt

Third placed Team(with a total of five penalty points):

Mohamed El Borai - Egypt
Shadi A. Hassan - Egypt
Jean Wingis - USA
Mohamed Medhat - Egypt

International Coverage:

By: Ina El Kobbia

Summarized impressions from the World Wide Web.

If you take a glance through the internet and feed the world's largest internet search machine "google" with keywords such as CSI Cairo, Movenpick Show,... etc., you find yourself connected to websites stretching from Europe to Asia. Amongst these are professional as well as non-professional horse-riding sites and even several tourist sites that advise travellers to Egypt well in advance of the event to take opportunity to watch the tournament at the Moevenpick Hotel in Heliopolis from 12-16 January 2004.

Admittedly most of the sites covering the topic are German horse-riding sites, just to mention two: the site of Reiter Revue, one of the best known magazines on equestrian sport in Germany and horseweb.de, a large established information resource for internet users all about horses.

Most of the published articles covering the competition range from neutral to positive; mainly the event itself is mentioned and the results are presented. However one could gather from many of the articles an undertone that gives the whole event an exotic touch, as if to imply that the Egyptian professional riding scene has been out of close international watch for quite a while and presents itself to the outside world surprisingly well. Numerous articles report that the FEI-General Secretary Dr. Bo Helander praised the perfect organisation of the event and expressed his respect for the level of the Egyptian riders and their horses. The German sites focus on the results of the German riders mentioning Jutta Wiesner as the cousin of Heinrich-Hermann Engemann, who obtained the best position among German participants in the mixed team competition, her team taking 4th place. Nonetheless the team competition was won by a team of three Egyptian riders and the Italian rider Massimo Grossato. As for the results of the Grand Prix the President of the Egyptian Equestrian Federation Abd el Fatah Ragab expressed his happiness that it had been a great day for the Egyptian riding sport: the Egyptian Karim el Sobky won on the 8 year old gelding 'Le Gatte' before the Belgian F. Mathy on the 10 year old gelding 'Darios'. Special attention is given in German articles to André Sakkakini, who is described at the local matador with residence in Germany, well known to the German professional riding scene, and who qualified already for the Olympics in Athens for his country Egypt. He was edged out this time on the first day by the 32 year old Dutch rider Marcel Groen who took first place riding the 11 year old Dutch mare 'Watch Out' just before André Sakkakini on 'Leonardo', a Holsteiner gelding. One critical voice also stemming from Germany more or less ascertained that while Egyptian came out ahead of that competition, a considerable number of well known and experienced foreign riders could not cope well with the horses provided for them. However the same article proceeds by noting that Egypt is not unknown in the field of high level horse jumping, taking 4th place in the Olympics in Rome (1960), and that Micky Brinckmann (cavalry captain), still admired in Egypt, had felt so wonderful about that country ■



Anna Jackobs from Germany, on Odysuiss.



Claudia, Tamer El Nafarawi, Rob Ehrens, Mrs. Ehrens, and Robert Ehrens.



Islam Amr Eid, Juta, Mohamed Abd El Kerim & friends.



Ahmed Bassiouny, Merit Fanous, Islam Ragab, Karim Hamdy, Dokdok, Dr. Karim El Sobky, Adham, & Mr. Gamal Amer.