

A SHOW JUMPING PHENOMENON

SCOTT BRASH

By Aya Amr

WE AT HORSE TIMES ARE HONOURED TO SHOWCASE IN THIS ISSUE A LIVING LEGEND, THE LEGENDARY SCOTTISH SHOW JUMPER, SCOTT BRASH. THE SON OF A BUILDER, BRASH HAS PROVEN THAT HARD WORK AND PERSISTENCE GO ALL THE WAY – ALL THE WAY TO BRITISH TEAM GOLD AT THE 2012 OLYMPICS IN LONDON, THE PRESTIGIOUS ORDER OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE IN 2013 FOR SERVICES TO EQUESTRIANISM, OPENING UP 2016 AS HE HAS FOR THREE YEARS RUNNING IN THE NUMBER 1 SPOT, WITH THE 2016 RIO OLYMPICS IN HIS SIGHTS WITH THE FABULOUS HELLO SANCTOS, HORSE & HOUNDS' 2015 HORSE OF THE YEAR. SCOTT BRASH'S MOTTO IS "NEVER GIVE UP". HERE BRASH LETS US KNOW WHAT MAKES HIM TICK, WHAT MAKES HIM WIN.



Scott Brash and Hello Sanctos at the Alltech FEI World Equestrian Games 2014 in Normandy

Let us start by asking who were the most influential trainers in your career?

When I first started off on my own at the age of 18, I went to train with Paul Barker. I also learned a lot from his mother; she has installed great ground work in me as a rider.

Then, of course John Lennon; he is a great trainer and has great knowledge. He really helped me evolve as a rider. I think those two trainers have had the biggest influence on me.

Have you ever trained in the US? And what are your thoughts on their training system?

I haven't, and I think that their training system is different; however, that doesn't mean it's wrong. What works for some people might not work for others and vice versa. At the end what really counts are the results and it doesn't matter how you get there.

How do you manage to stay in the top levels and resist the stress, psychological and technical factors?

I think staying focused on my job all the time really helps. Also, it is key to have a very good team behind you along with good horses. If you can have that and keep everything consistent you will manage to stay among the top riders.

How did you come across Hello Sanctos?

That actually is a funny story; by the end of 2011 my owners called me and told me that they want to buy me a horse for the London Olympics. They had Hello Sanctos in mind and so I went to try him at Katharina Offel's where he had been ridden. He hadn't done very much for three months so it was quite hard to try him because he wasn't 100% competition fit. It was quite a tense trial.

When I got off the horse I called Phil and gave him my opinion and that was it and just like that Sanctos arrived at my stables. Then I flew him off to Florida because I wanted to take my time with him and I thought Florida was the best place to do that.

Would you aim to buy a horse that is ready for the Olympics or produce a quality horse up to the Olympic level?

It is important to have both horses; you need to

have a variety and you should be able to build your own horses up to a high level but at the same time if you want to be on the top you have to buy a great horse.

Do you have a certain daily training routine?

Training is very important, you need to work on yourself all the time and always try to be better. I don't have a specific routine that I do on daily basis; I always like to change, one day we are training indoors, another day we are outdoors and another we are in Europe. We like to have different routines each week.

When you face any difficulties, from whom do you seek advice?

Most of the time I trust my feeling. You have to understand your horse really well and know what is going wrong and how to change it. In my opinion there is no one who will understand what is going on better than yourself. You shouldn't ask too many people because no one will know your horse and his details better than you do.

Do you believe in mental fitness work?

I think you shouldn't focus on one thing day in and day out, every once in a while you have to get your brain off and do something else mentally; it can't just be competitions all the time.

Personally, what keeps my brain hungry is having a different plan for each and every horse and staying focused. Also, I like to give my brain some rest and play golf once a month or do an activity that will refresh my mind.

How is Hello Sanctos when he is at home?

He's a very clever horse, he knows his abilities, and he knows that he is the king of our stable. At home he is laid-back and relaxed, does everything at his own pace and we have to cope with it. But when he enters the arena, he comes to life and he knows that this is a competition and he wants to win.

What is your dream?

My dream is to win the individual gold medal at the 2016 Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro; I gave Hello Sanctos a good rest and just started working him a week ago, we are doing our best to be well prepared for the Olympics and going after my dream. 🏆

Photos by Jacques Toffi



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