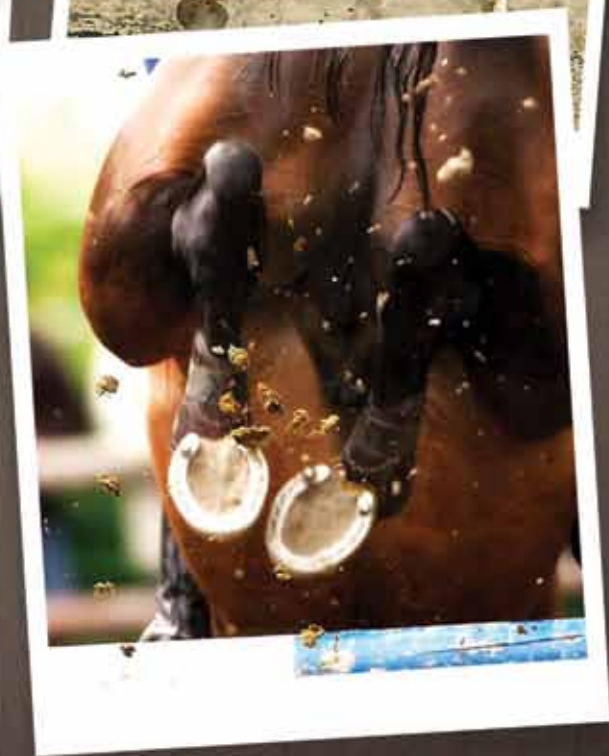


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VIEW POINT

FROM THE CHAIRMAN



Dear readers,

Egypt has witnessed many changes throughout its history up to its most recent and dramatic change this past January the 25th; a “revolution”, defined as a “turn around”, a fundamental change in power or organisational structure that takes place in a relatively short period of time. I have never been through a revolution before, so let me briefly tell you about some of the emotions I’ve gone through as an Egyptian.

As much as we were able to cope with oppressive political regimes, we were still aware of the constraints we were being exposed to. Suddenly, and as per the definition “turn around”, the initial feeling was fear - as humans generally don’t cope well with change – as well as the fear for your family from the general chaos and the disappearance of security forces, and then came the feeling of “we’re all in this together”.

I was very proud to see how everyone worked to keep the peace, yet they were so adamant about their cause, and how respectful everyone was towards one another. From fear and darkness blossomed a sense of security and togetherness, leading to hope, the father of all positive feelings, and my God...what a feeling to have lived through and witnessed this revolution.

Carrying on with “feelings” and our beloved sport, Oman glittered with hope in its festival; such a stunning event with immaculate organisation...certainly a plus for the Middle East. On the same note, the GCT in Doha and the Dubai Polo Gold Cup are other ravishing pluses for equestrian sport in our region.

Beauty and elegance is the main theme of our sport. And so our spotlight in this issue is on the Lebanese Fashion Designer Reem Acra who is one of the official sponsors of the FEI, as well as Alessandro Albanese and his wonderful visions of equestrian fashion. Last but not least, Henry Dallal and his outstanding feelings through photography...I only have five words to describe those feelings; “if only pictures could talk”.

Read on further with “hard talk” with Samir Abdelfatah, along with exposure on Ramy Iskander and his family. And finally, more with junior profiles, photography, art, training, joint problems, and more hope.

Keep the hope.
Sincerely,
Khaled Assem

Chairman

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THE ROYAL EQUESTRIAN & CAMEL FESTIVAL OF OMAN

WHAT A FESTIVAL

By **Nada H. Abdelmoniem**

“OMAN HAS BEEN ABLE TO REALISE MUCH OF WHAT WE HAD ASPIRED TOWARDS. EVERYTHING THAT HAS BEEN ACHIEVED, HAS BEEN DONE WITHIN A PRECISE BALANCE BETWEEN PRESERVING THE BEST ELEMENTS OF OUR HERITAGE, IN WHICH WE TAKE PRIDE, AND THE DEMANDS OF THE PRESENT DAY WHICH REQUIRE US TO ADAPT TO THE SPIRIT OF THE MODERN AGE – WHILE AT THE SAME TIME CORRESPONDING TO ITS CIVILISATION, MODERN SCIENCES, AND TECHNOLOGY, AND BENEFITING FROM THE LATEST DEVELOPMENTS IN THE VARIOUS SPHERES OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE LIFE.”

HIS MAJESTY SULTAN QABOOS BIN SAID



The Sultanate of Oman, located on the Arabian Peninsula, is a heartfelt sensation of a country. It is a uniquely striking orb of peace, bliss and love, harbouring undiscovered preserved as well as embraced culture. In all directions of the capital Muscat, beauty is evident through the city's natural landscape, the splendour and hospitality of its people, in addition to the affluent yet humble pride of their traditions that they would never imagine their world without. All over the city, Omani men are seen wearing their attractive official attire, the Dishdasha and colourful Imamma – and on official functions, they tie around their waists matching Imamma pashminas with a vibrant khanjar (dagger) tucked in. The khanjar, a very eye catching object, is a piece of art that captures the soul

of Oman; it is a symbol of manhood, courage and tradition. The curve of the Omani khanjar distinguishes it from daggers elsewhere, and its sheath has a right angle bend with complex work that is among the finest in the Arab region. It varies in size, style, price, and design according to Oman's different regions.

Just at the start of the New Year 2011, on January 1st, under the auspices of His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said, and coinciding with the 40th National day of the Sultanate, the Royal Court Affairs of Oman organised and hosted the Royal Equestrian & Camel Festival that demonstrated 28 national and international horse and camel shows to entertain HM the Sultan and a total of 10,000 spectators for the duration of two and a half hours.



Horses came into Oman when an Omani delegation from the Azd tribe visited Prophet Solomon in Asham, Levant. The Prophet presented them with an exceptional horse to help them in their journey and named him 'Zad ar Rakib'. Ever since, Omanis have maintained his breeding line which led to a great increase in the number of horses in the Sultanate – which reached 90,000 during the rule of the Yariba. In more recent times, numbers dwindled to an all time low until the accession of HM the Sultan, whose great interest in horses and their breeding marked the revival of the golden age of Omani horsemanship. Government equine institutions, including the Royal Stables, were established and individuals were encouraged to have their own

private stud farms. HM the Sultan equally encouraged camel breeding and sports. Currently, there are 2,320 pure Arabian horses and 117,299 camels registered under the Royal Court Affairs of Oman.

The festival is held every five years as a prominent display for HM the Sultan's passion for Omani heritage. Lt. Gen. Sultan bin Mohamed Alnomani, General Secretary of the Royal Court Affairs states, "This event is an attraction for lovers of elegance, beauty, art, chivalry and self-importance which are all embraced here, now, and all in one. The Festival is an exciting picture drawn by the Bedouins along with civilians, cavaliers, women and children."





© Khalil Al Zadjali

▲ Daring female riders gallop in tandem

And adds the Vice Chairman of the Organising Committee and Commander of the Royal Cavalry Brigadier Abdulrazak Al-Shahwarzi, "The endeavour accomplished by the hard working team of men and women from the Royal Court Affairs to make this festival stand at such grandeur, as you may have seen, just to meet the approval of HM the Sultan's passion for horses and camels, is what makes us all strive to achieve what is truly of essence for Omani culture."

The Director General of the Royal Cavalry Mr. Faisal bin Mahboob explained, "We have been planning this event for three years; to technically produce the event, the Royal Court Affairs employed the professional services of German Performance Sales International (PSI) owned by businessmen Ullrich

Kasselmann and Paul Schockemohle through which their team of experts managed and supervised the grounds, sound, lighting and colossal LED screens." Flawless is the word to describe such professional and

technical production. However on an even higher level of excellence, to honourably gauge the efforts of the Organising Committee which they modestly refuse to comment on - locally, the Royal Court Affairs

▼ Jean-Francois Pignon



© Khalil Al Zadjali

brought in citizens, women and children from the Royal Cavalry, Royal Camels, Royal Household Troops, Royal Guard of Oman, Mounted Unit of Oman, Royal Oman Police, Military Bands, Folklore Band of the Royal Court Affairs, Royal Oman Symphony Orchestra and the 1st Royal Band for Music & Folklore – all mounting a total of 1,372 horses and 736 camels. To start the event in preparation for the arrival of HM the Sultan, all mounted creatures stood in absolute patience on a 232 meter long by 127 meter wide show ground for 30 whole minutes. With no movement what-so-ever, except the animals shifting legs to balance their weight, no top organisation and discipline could possibly match in such harmonised unity. Indeed, a royal and impressive performance.

The foreign teams participating in the festival were brought in from Jordan, India, Russia, Switzerland, France, Germany, Norway, Spain, Great Britain, South Africa, Argentina, Egypt, and the USA. They all performed to the live engaging tunes of the Royal Oman Symphony Orchestra led by Brigadier Rames bin Jamaan Al-Oweira.



▲ India's horse & bull performances

All citizens entered the grounds at Midan Al-Fateh in Al-Watayah with invites sent out from the Royal Court – whilst officials, organisers and performers, most likely, never left the grounds due to rehearsals being implemented two weeks in the stadium preceding the festival.

A day after the festival, a gala dinner was prepared for all guests and performers where the Chairman of the Organising Committee His Excellency Nassr bin Humood Al-Kindi took the chance to greet and speak with everyone. Tunes from bag pipe performers entertained all guests, while the heads of all

performing teams received gifts for their efforts in performances.

To have witnessed such an event was to have seen true excellence in beautiful organisation of equestrian and camel skills employed by Arabs – nights and days of hard work ending to an unconditional and unquestionable aim; the happiness of HM the Sultan whom all Omanis respect and love. And to have visited Oman was to have seen a great country with a promise for more, and a place where their women define elegance and their men define the archetype of man. 🇦🇴

▼ The Royal Household Cavalry Musical Ride of Britain



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PERISCOPE ON

REEM ACRA

By Lubna Dairanieh

REEM ACRA IS AN INTERNATIONALLY CELEBRATED LEBANESE FASHION DESIGNER WHO STUDIED DESIGN IN PARIS AND NEW YORK. HER CAREER AS AN EMBROIDERY ARTIST BEGAN IN NEW YORK WHEN SHE LAUNCHED HER OWN BRIDAL GOWN COMPANY IN 1995. ACRA MOVED TO THE TOP IN THE BRIDAL INDUSTRY AND DRESSED GLOBAL CELEBRITIES OF STYLE FOR WEDDINGS, RED CARPET APPEARANCES AND AWARDS CEREMONIES. HER CLIENTS INCLUDE ANGELINA JOLIE, HALLE BERRY, CATHERINE ZETA-JONES AND BEYONCE. HER READY-TO-WEAR AND BRIDAL COLLECTIONS ARE CARRIED BY 150 OF THE WORLD'S MOST EXCLUSIVE RETAILERS.



Isabell Werth & Satchmo during the 2010 World Cup Competitions

Recently, Acra has signed a three year sponsorship for the Western European League and the Final of the FEI World Cup™ Dressage. Here is a bit about her background and how she is prepared to take on the new challenge.

Can you tell us about your background with horses?

As a young girl I began to take

riding lessons but they were abruptly stopped at the onset of the war there. I still have my black velvet riding hat from then. Unfortunately I presently do not ride, I live in New York but I wish my apartment was big enough for a horse!

How did the idea of being an official sponsor for the FEI come about ?

I have good friends who are passionate about riding and are a part of the equestrian community who encouraged me to participate as a sponsor. For me, it's very fulfilling to participate in such an elegant and widely esteemed sport in this way.

We understand you sponsor the Western European League

& the Final of the FEI World Cup Dressage; any reason as to why those two disciplines in particular?

Dressage at this level has many of the qualities that I work hard to achieve in my own collections. The horses are very elegant and dramatic, and the riders perform with great precision and style



▲ Angelina Jolie wearing Reem Acra during the premiere of *The Curious Case Of Benjamin Button*

whilst competing.

Do you occasionally have time to visit international horse shows and the Dressage World Cups of the Reem Acra Western European League?

If not me, than there is always someone there from the Reem Acra brand to represent the company.

If you attended any international dressage events, which top horse and equestrian personality has caught your attention the most or like to watch the most?

I enjoy watching them all. They each have their own way with the horses who are more beautiful each time I see them.

Equestrian clothing is designed to a certain style; do you have any plans to incorporate your design visions into that style, and do you have any plans on establishing a Reem Acra equestrian line?

The idea of the sponsorship is to bring the Reem Acra style to the equestrian community which is a new audience for me.

You are a full time renowned fashion designer and have now taken on a new task, what challenges do you face when managing between both?

I can't do it all and am blessed to have very talented people around me so that I can manage all of the different aspects of my business.

Have you ever visited any equestrian events in the Middle East? If not, do you intend to or would you like to?

I would like to and hope to in the near future.



▲ Beyonce wearing Reem Acra during the *Diamond Ball*

Do you have any information about the development of equestrian sport in the Middle East?

I have an idea but I'm sure there's much more to know.

Finally, do you think there is a question I should have asked you but did not?

I have lots of ideas about future projects; who knows? Maybe one day I will have the opportunity to make a wedding dress for a horse wedding. 🐾

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DOHA 2011

FIRST LEG OF THE GCT TOUR

By Khaled Assem

Billy Towmey, Ireland



▲ Winners of the final with Jan Tops & Rashid Al Mansoori at the press conference

EIGHTEEN HEAVYWEIGHT SHOW JUMPING RIVALS PROGRESSED TO THE SECOND ROUND OF THE FIRST LEG OF THE GLOBAL CHAMPIONS TOUR GRAND PRIX WITH ONLY THREE JUMPING DOUBLE CLEAR WHICH ENSURED A VERY EXCITING JUMP-OFF.

Brazil's Alvaro de Miranda Neto (Doda) riding the scopey AD Ashleigh Drossel Dan was first to go on the shortened, technical track. They produced a sensationally fast clear jump-off round in 42.53 seconds whilst placing pressure on Germany's Meredith Michaels-Beerbaum on Shutterfly and Switzerland's Pius Schwizer.

An enthusiastic crowd was looking forward to a win by the 18 year old Shutterfly and his crowd favourite rider, however a fence down at a vertical four fences from home meant second place at best. Schwizer riding Carlina looked up on time around the first part of the course, however with a fence down as they approached home allowing de Miranda to breathe

a sigh of relief from the 'kiss and cry' stand. This was the first Global Champions Tour victory for Doda who has been performing at every event since it started in 2006.

The Global Champions Tour President Jan Tops confirmed that Qatar would be hosting the first leg of the championship next year too.

JAN TOPS:

2011 TOUR: We have ten events this year; we started the first leg here in Doha and end the tour in Abu Dhabi in November. We are very excited about being in Abu Dhabi this year; it's an experience for us as organisers and also exciting for the sport in the Middle Eastern region in general.

DEVELOPMENTS:

Organisers of each show are trying to upgrade the aspects of the show; details always present more perfection.

RIDERS:

The top riders of the show jumping scene are all here and are aware of the competition levels. They make sure they attend and actually plan their whole season around the GCT. I am very proud and happy about that.

PUBLICITY:

I think the press' responsibility is to keep informing equestrian



▲ Yasser Charif, Syria

enthusiasts in this region. This year we have five Arab riders competing in the tour and you never know how many of them will be participating in years to come. It's growing.

**RASHID AL MANSOORI,
PRESIDENT OF THE QATAR
EQUESTRIAN FEDERATION:**

Congratulations to the people sitting here at the press conference table for their super efforts. I thank Jan Tops for organising such a good circuit. There are many improvements for Qatar as we believe this is the best place for a championship of this level. The GCT is very important for our riders and as a major sporting event and I look forward to seeing the final this year in the Gulf.

The last two years I have seen great improvement in the performance of Qatari riders and the growth of our sport. Private owners are now here and show jumping is being recognised as a great horse sport along the lines of racing which has been dominating the local horse

scene for so long.

ALVARO DE MIRANDA NETO:

Thanks to everyone at the tour for all the work they have done to bring our sport to such a level. This is my first GCT win, one which was very hard to get given the competition levels of great riders such as Meredith and Pius. My horse is the best horse I have had in my life and it is so pleasant to have him around our stables. He has all the talent in the world and if you ride him well he will do well, so I am happy to start the 2011 GCT season with a win.

MEREDITH MICHAELS-BEERBAUM:

I was delighted and pleased with Shutterfly's performance; he is 18 years old and jumped so well. He is part of the family and it is a privilege to be able to ride such a horse. The second round was one of the hardest courses that we have ever ridden. I appreciated Doda's performance and the way he put pressure on us; it

was a fast run by him!

PIUS SCHWIZER:

I have really enjoyed coming to the city of Doha. Effort to finish behind such a great horse and it was a fast round with very good riding by Doda. The stabling facilities were of the highest levels with the horses having spacious air conditioned boxes which meant they could have plenty of good rest in order to be in peak condition to compete at the highest level. Denis Lynch was fifth on two time faults, one in each round; with two time faults you don't get very far and the first time fault was my mistake. I could have ridden a lot faster to stay inside the time. The second one - I had the disadvantage of starting first and it was difficult to avoid the time fault.

DENIS LYNCH:

The course was very big and wide and the arena here is fantastic; the footing is simply great. My horse

All Inclusive is a very experienced horse; I can't teach him anything anymore! I do my best, he does his best, and at the end we hope we get some money out of it!

ALI AL RUMAIHI:

The course was technical and not too difficult but the horses did not do too well. I will take them to Europe next, have them rest, re-programme them, and then complete the 2011 GCT tour.

CINDY VAN DER STRATEN:

This is my first time to jump such big classes. Last year in the GCT of Valencia I jumped small classes so this year I am starting with the big ones. I trained with Josh Lansink in the past and I have ridden with Juan Carlos Garcia for two years. Global Medique are a sponsor and Antares with saddles, but all my horses are owned by my family.

FRANK ROTHENBERGER:

I can't compare the courses here in Doha to any other Grand Prix; this one was big, technical and I think most horses jumped well. Overall, I expected faults at the triple combination which was difficult to jump at 180 meters wide.

YASSER CHARIF:

The courses at the GCT are generally big courses. I see international standards as well as international organisation, and top levels of competition by top horses. Everything related to the event is done meticulously down to the detail. As a rider, I would need an excellent horse to jump here.

BILLY TOWMEY:

It is always good to compete at GCT events. I'm very self critical of myself and I guess this is how one should be if he wants to keep improving. It's always important to recognise the basics as those are the fundamentals for being a good rider. I recently won the Grand Prix of Barcelona, La Boule and St. Gallen; winning a GCT show would be wonderful! 🏆



▲ Pius Schwizer, Switzerland

▼ Ali Al Rumaihi, Qatar





© Stefano Grasso

▲ Michel Robert, France

GLOBAL CHAMPIONS TOUR GRAND PRIX OF QATAR, MARCH 19TH 2011
TABLE A, 2 ROUNDS/TIME 2ND ROUND, 1 JUMP OFF

Rider	Horse	Prize	Round A	Round B	Jump Off	Time
Alvaro de Miranda Neto	AD Ashleigh Drossel Dan	€ 150,000	0	0	0	42.53
Pius Schwizer	Carlina	€ 100,000	0	0	4	43.35
Meredith Michaels-Beerbaum	Shutterfly	€ 60,000	0	0	4	45.13
Luciana Diniz	Lennox	€ 40,000	0	1		70.50
Denis Lynch	All Inclusive NRW	€ 25,000	1	1		72.90

CS5* 1.45/1.50M, MARCH 19TH 2011
TABLE A, AGAINST THE CLOCK, NO JUMP OFF

Rider	Horse	Prize	Round A	Time
Simon Delestre	Orphee de l'Illon	€ 8,000	0	59.51
Guy Williams	Torinto van de Middelstede	€ 4,000.00	0	60.85
Janika Sprunger	JL's Komparse	€ 3,000.00	0	61.37

CSI5* 1.45/1.50M, MARCH 18TH 2011
TABLE A, AGAINST THE CLOCK, 1 JUMP OFF

Rider	Horse	Prize	Round A	Jump Off	Time
Bernardo Alves	Kingly du Reverdy	€ 24,000	0	0	41.49
Billy Twomey	Je t'Aime Flamenco	€ 12,000	0	0	41.61
Jeroen Dubbeldam	BMC van Grunsven Simon	€ 9,000	0	0	42.03

CSI5* 1.50M, MARCH 17TH 2011
TABLE A, AGAINST THE CLOCK, 1 JUMP OFF

Rider	Horse	Prize	Round A	Jump Off	Time
Roger-Yves Bost	Ideal de la Loge	€ 24,000	0	0	44.20
Michel Robert	Kellemoi de Pepita	€ 12,000	0	0	44.63
Simon Delestre	Napoli du Ry	€ 9,000	0	0	44.99

CSI5* 1.45M
TABLE A, AGAINST THE CLOCK, NO JUMP OFF

Rider	Horse	Prize	Round A	Time
Guy Williams	Torinto van de Middelstede	€ 8,000	0	58.51
Christian Ahlmann	Sebastian 89	€ 4,000	0	59.08
Alvaro de Miranda Neto	AD Norson	€ 3,000	0	59.20



Alvaro de Miranda, Brazil



GAZA-1917-18

TEGIPDOO-1918

SIXTY CAVALRY FIRST

WAZIRISTAN-1917

CHINA-1900

CAMBRAI-1917

EGYPT-1917

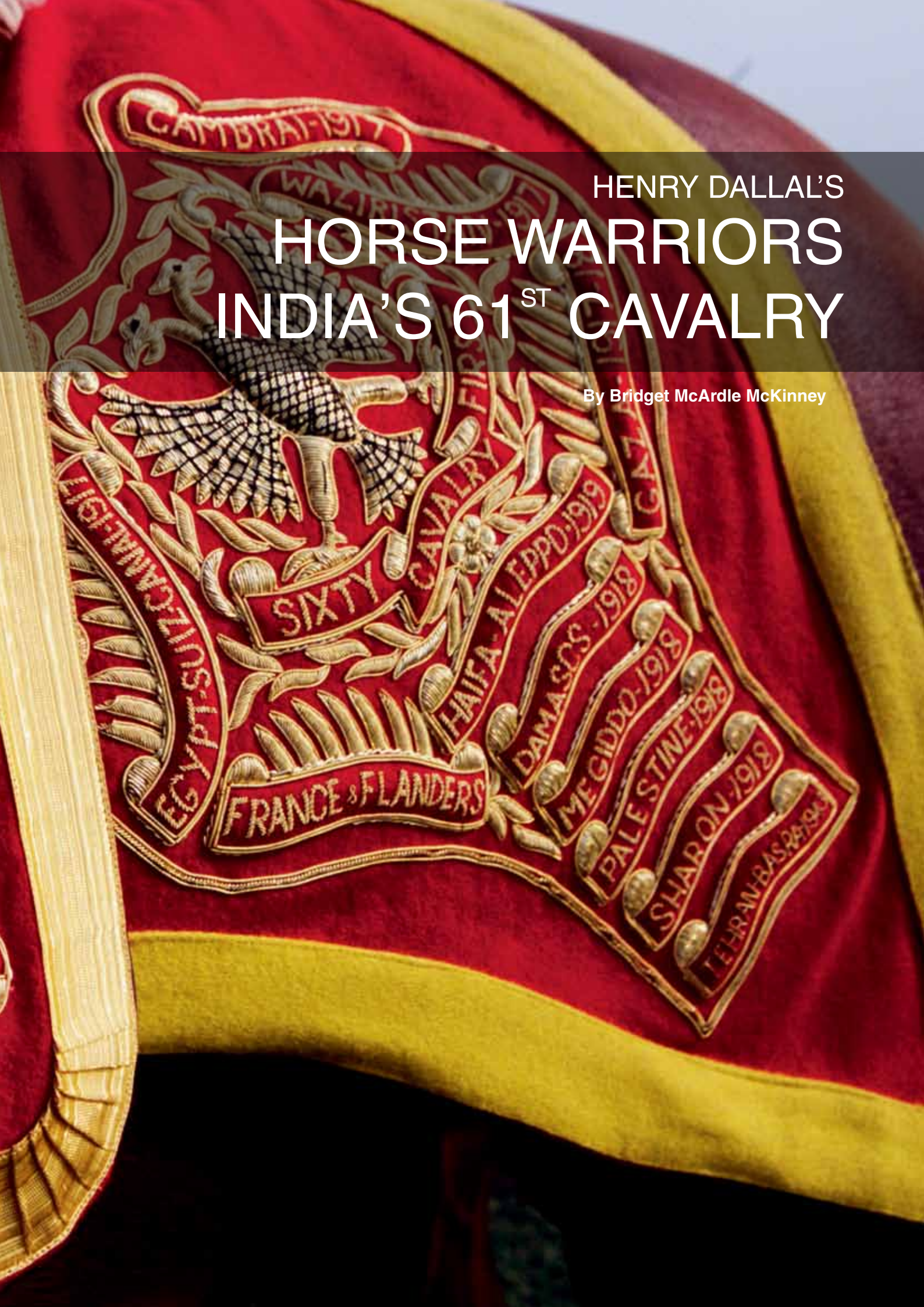
DAMASCUS-1918

PALESTINE-1918

SHARON-1918

FRANCE-FLANDERS
1914-18

HAIFA-ALEPPO-1919
TEHRAN-BASRA
1947



HENRY DALLAL'S
HORSE WARRIORS
INDIA'S 61ST CAVALRY

By Bridget McArdle McKinney



HENRY DALLAL, A PHOTOGRAPHER FAVOURED BY ROYALTY WORLDWIDE, HAS PRODUCED A MOVING TRIBUTE IN PICTURES TO ONE OF THE WORLD'S LAST MOUNTED CAVALRY REGIMENTS - INDIA'S 61ST CAVALRY REGIMENT IN HIS IMPRESSIVE PORTFOLIO OF PHOTOGRAPHS, "HORSE WARRIORS – INDIA'S 61ST CAVALRY". BUT THIS IS NOT ONLY A TRIBUTE TO INDIA'S 61ST CAVALRY REGIMENT, IT'S TO INDIA AND HER WONDERS AND MOODS.

His interest in cavalry pageantry and mounted regimental life was set in motion serendipitously when he first saw the Household Cavalry sweep by on the Knightsbridge road outside his home in London. He returned some

time later to record the Cavalry, its ceremonial duties, and the daily life of what he calls the "tribe". This led to the publication of his first book "Pageantry and Performance" in 2003. His latest award winning book takes us on a journey to Jaipur, the home of the 61st Regiment. The Regiment was created in 1953 at the behest of Prime Minister Shri Jawaharlal Nehru amalgamating the various state mounted units which existed at that time. Today the regiment includes 273 mounts, purpose bred at the Babugarh Stud Farm.

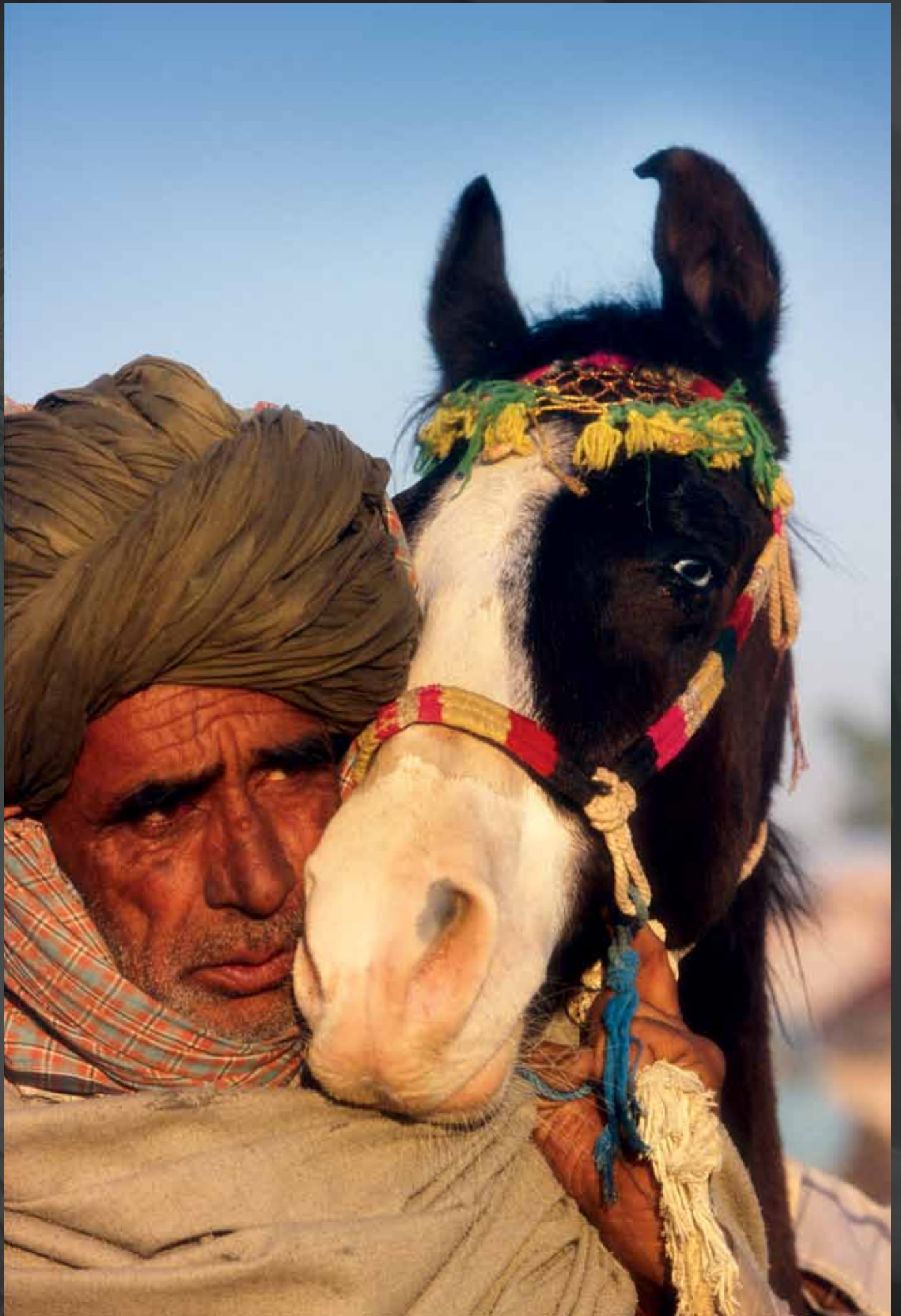
The Regiment performs ceremonial duties as well as mounted border patrols and to keep equestrian skills at peak undertakes extensive training in all aspects of military horsemanship. In this as in all things Regiment, discipline reigns. Equine sport also keeps skills keen. The Regiment's polo team is at the top of the sport in India and around the polo-playing world.

Through fabulous photography contained in this book, we see the Regiment in all its pomp and ceremonial regalia, and its routine

daily camp life, rigorous training, and loving care of the horses and learn the history of the Regiment. But we also discover the Indian traditional horse markets in the Thar Desert, the equine culture of Ladakh, and the legendary Nihang warriors of the Punjab with their unique Marwari horses.

Dallal's photographs range from crisp formal portraiture and still photos to the dizzying flash of a Regimental charge in silhouette at sunset; the smoky fires at the Thar horse market at dawn to the abstract forms of horses at Babugarh Stud, looking more like sand dunes than anything equine. What is quite remarkable is that all of the photographs were taken using traditional photography and not digital photography; all photos are fresh and unaltered – 220 snatches of time in motion.

Dallal is currently working on completing two photograph books: one for the horses of the Sultanate of Oman and another for Qatar. For further information regarding Dallal's photography, please see www.henrydallalphotography.com



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ALESSANDRO ALBANESE

FASHION COMES WITH ELEGANCE

By **Nada H. Abdelmoniem**

Country: **Italy**

Date of Birth: **19 September 1967**

Star sign: **Virgo**

Full profession: **Fashion Designer**

WHO IS ALESSANDRO ALBANESE AND WHAT IS HIS
TAKE ON EQUESTRIAN CLOTHING? WELL, HERE IT IS....

AA SAYS IT BEST!



▲ AA & the junior American team which won the gold medal at the 2010 North American Championship

Tell us about your background with horses?

I actually don't come from any particular equestrian background. By chance, I got involved in the equestrian scene after visiting one event which was when my big passion for equestrian fashion started; I noticed the quality of its clothing and I simply took on the opportunity to add a touch of class to it.

Tell us how your passion for design started?

I have been interested in fashion design ever since I was a teenager. My father was a tailor. We come from a country that highly regards "fashion" as a business!

Why did you decide to specialise in equestrian fashion?

It just happened. It was an opportunity for a new challenge and I took it.

What makes your designs unique?

The Italian touch in fashion is unique. It is tradition mixed with advanced technology when it comes to fabrics and implementation. Today I have the opportunity to travel around the world where my concepts have become more international, designed and customised for any and all requirements of international clients.

If you could pick an equestrian to model your designs, who would you pick?

Brazilian Olympic show jumping medallist Rodrigo Pessoa; his elegance mixed with his classic style makes him my pick. He has been wearing AA jackets for many years.

Many would describe equestrian clothing as "standard", would you agree?

The equestrian scene and its clothing

have presented many design ideas and inspirations in the last few years to many well known designers. They were smart enough to incorporate that style into everyday fashion from riding pants, to jackets, to trendy street fashion. So no, I would not agree with the term "standard".

What is your favourite piece in equestrian clothing?

The riding jacket...

What don't you like about equestrian clothing?

The tendency in the last few years to change it from elegant into fancy. There is no style, but simply "appearance". Fashion is not about "wearing it" but about "how to wear it". Introducing flashy details into this line of clothing, such as Swarovski jewellery or other garish accessories, is an unnecessary addition.

Do you think equestrian clothing

can be incorporated into everyday clothing?

Our collections are used more and more outside the riding scene. Today, 20% of our clients are not equestrians; I think that is a very good percentage.

What kind of advice would you give to equestrians who don't understand their bodies and as a consequence choose incorrect pieces?

Ah. This is difficult to explain. It would depend on their culture. People are different and fashion choices differ!

Who is your favourite equestrian?

Being a winner does not necessarily mean being the best rider. One has to be a winner on a horse just like being a winner in life. Have style inside or outside a horse event. I see many such ladies and gentlemen who fit the description; I will not say names because I do not wish to forget anyone. However, many of them wear AA collections!

What has been some of your career highlights?

I'm proud to have had clients such as Princess Charlotte of Monaco in the past. Some from the royal family of Spain, Saudi Arabia and Norway as well. Some Olympic teams have worn AA collections along with some Hollywood celebrities, international Pop stars, and ten of the 20 best riders in the world. I'm also honoured to have an AA shop in Harrods, London, where international clientele always visit.

Where do you see Alessandro Albanese in the next five years?

We are raising the bar way up in our quality designs in order to be able to stay competitive. However soon, AA will not only specialise in the



▲ AA during an AA presentation in Miami

equestrian lines of clothing; I am looking forward to a new challenge, in a new discipline and in everyday fashion.

When you are not designing, you are...

Selling my creations to private clients or visiting a new city to catch some new inspirations. 📍

▼ Catalogue shoot





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THREADNEEDLE DUBAI POLO GOLD CUP

By Bridget McArdle McKinney

FROM QUALIFIERS STRAIGHT THROUGH TO THE FINAL, FROM MARCH 2ND TILL THE 11TH, PLAYERS BOTH PROFESSIONAL AND AMATEUR AGREED THAT THE ACTION WAS HOT, HOT, HOT AT THE DUBAI POLO GOLD CUP SPONSORED BY THREADNEEDLE, A LEADING INTERNATIONAL INVESTMENT HOUSE. A 15 GOAL TEAM HANDICAP FOR THIS EVENT ENSURED THAT WE WOULD SEE NOTHING BUT HIGH QUALITY PLAY THROUGHOUT, AND WE WERE NOT DISAPPOINTED.



© Sarah Anselme

Faris Al Yabhouni & Rashid Al Habtoor



▲ The winning team, Abu Dhabi Polo

Held under the patronage of His Highness Sheikh Maktoum bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, the Deputy Ruler of Dubai, at the beautifully groomed and appointed Dubai Polo & Equestrian Club, this is the Gold Cup's second year. The Club itself is truly a stunning venue "for everything equestrian and a lot more", according to its promotional material. It has 336 stables and 13 paddocks, two international standard polo fields, show jumping and riding arenas, a pool, spa, gym, lounges, dining rooms and terraces.

Rashid Al Habtoor, a player with 20 years experience who heads Mahra Polo Team, the winners of the Dubai

Polo Gold Cup 2010 and the Silver Cup 2011, says that, although he was disappointed not to advance to the semi-finals in the Gold Cup this year, "The Cup Series is a great event. To have 16 teams at this level and 45 or 50 polo professionals in Dubai for this event is a great step for Dubai. Not many countries in the world host play at this level."

The Gold Cup Series Director, Santiago Torreguitar, agrees. "The quality of play has been just so good, the games so close...Mohammed (Al Habtoor, Cup Series Chairman) has put fantastic support behind this event." We found the organisation and the use of technology for the

event pretty much flawless, following not only the early planning stages of the series before the event, but also daily scores and news during the event on the Dubai Polo Gold Cup website (www.dubaipologoldcup.com) and on its dedicated Facebook page. We were also able to purchase our tickets on-line in advance, a great convenience.

After thrilling qualifiers and the semi-final, advancing to the Threadneedle Gold Cup final, Abu Dhabi Polo faced Dubai Falcons. Abu Dhabi Polo (patron and avid horseman Faris Al Yabhouni, and team mates Ramiro Dagna, Alfredo Barabucci, and the remarkable Facundo Sola)



▲ Action on the field

▼ Spectating in style

took the Gold, winning nine goals to seven. Dubai Falcons showed spirit, fight, and technique, led by Saeed bin Draï, and even with the skill and expertise of team members Nicolas Petrachi, Tomas Iriarte, and Salvador Ullaa the Falcons could not save the day.

If I could hazard a guess, the most valuable player of the tournament was the skilful Argentinean Facundo Sola, the charger of the Abu Dhabi team. He's been a player for 17 years and he is only 21 years old, so, yes, that means that he's been playing polo from the age of four! With a seven handicap, he's earned his place to give advice and his advice for young players: "Work a lot with the horses, ride a lot, practice a lot and train a lot." His father once told him that every time you step onto the field it is to win, never give up. "Even if it was my father or brother on the other side, I always played to win,



and after the match we were all just family again.”

Ghantoot Polo (led by keen polo player Nasser Al Shemsi and including team players Nasser Al Dhaheri, Gonzalo Azumendi, and Hugo Barabucci), won the subsidiary final beating DCC Sumaya in a tight eight to seven match. Hugo Barabucci, a six handicap powerhouse on the Ghantoot Polo Team, described the quality of play, “The whole tournament has been very good, the games excellent”. He looks forward to more polo tournaments of this calibre in Dubai in the future, but feels, as did many of the officials and players I spoke with, that perhaps for now maintaining a 15 handicap tournament makes sense and will ensure good quality play, a more inclusive spirit, and more opportunity for events.

Throughout the week, what added to all of the action and excitement and enriched the experience of the event, was the informed and amusing Adam Snowdon, the qualifiers and semi-final commentator. A two handicap player himself with years

of mileage under his wings, he led the spectators through play by play action and the inscrutable rules of play and penalty with wit, humour, enthusiasm, and a critical eye, finding plays “cracking”, “cheeky” or “beautiful”.

Umpires Keyte, Seavill, and Ellis were very strict wardens of the game, with a couple of calls which raised some comment in the field, but it was all for the sake of horse and human safety and to preserve the integrity of the sport. It is difficult, indeed, to spot a bump or ride-off a few feet off angle or line from the sidelines of a 300 yard field or even seated on a moving pony infield, so the decisions are left to the umpires, who assumed them in this tournament with firm, but calm, authority.

As time ran out on the final chukka of the match and the players cleared the field, there was more excitement yet to come. Up in the sky high above the Dubai Polo & Equestrian Club two light aircraft circled – then first one diver, then the next jumped out and paraglided down onto the field carrying the prized Gold Cup

and other awards, to the merry astonishment of the crowds. Then accompanied by a bevy (flock?) of ‘polo cheerleaders’ in gold boots with pom-poms, the winners came forward to receive their due.

The festivities didn’t end there. Following the award ceremony, the spectators and players retired to mid-field for a full-on party with DJ Serhan, DJ Mark Pickup and the Playboy Mansion DJ Lil Louda playing the latest, all hosted by the Horizon Lounge.

With the relentlessly exhilarating action on the field, the festivities, and the chic ambience of the Dubai Polo & Equestrian Club, the Dubai Polo Gold Cup is certain to attract even more spectators and players next year. We certainly plan to be there! 🏆

**Pictures courtesy of:
Official Gold Cup photographer
Annemieke Goos
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▼ A joyous celebration, Faris Al Yabhouni & his brother



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SAMIR ABDEL FATAH

INSIGHTS

By Khaled Assem

ENGINEER SAMIR ABDEL FATAH IS THE CHEF D'ÉQUIPE OF THE NATIONAL EGYPTIAN SHOW JUMPING TEAM. HE WAS A VERY SUCCESSFUL RIDER DURING HIS OWN TIME AND LIVED IN YORKSHIRE, ENGLAND, FOR 20 YEARS. HE WAS ALSO THE OWNER OF ONE OF THE HORSES MICHAEL WHITAKER RODE AT THE 1984 OLYMPIC GAMES, AMANDA, AND HAS BEEN DEEPLY INVOLVED IN THE SHOW JUMPING FIELD. HE IS AN OLDER BROTHER AND A MENTOR TO A WIDE FIELD OF RIDERS IN EGYPT; SHARP, WITTY, VERY EXPERIENCED AND CAPABLE TO TAKE ON THE JOB OF TRAINING THE EGYPTIAN TEAM, WHICH IS QUITE THE CHALLENGE. ENGINEER SAMIR GIVES HORSE TIMES HIS INSIGHTS ON THE BANNING OF HORSES TRAVELLING IN AND OUT OF EGYPT, EGYPTIAN SHOW JUMPING RIDERS, AS WELL AS THE CURRENT POLITICAL SITUATION WITH THE EGYPTIAN EQUESTRIAN FEDERATION.

What is happening in Egypt regarding the banning of horses travelling in and out of the country?

As far as I know, and even though I do not possess any documentation to back what I will say, although I was in a position to listen to opinions from various sides, I came to the conclusion that, unlike in Syria where there is a horse disease, the problem in Egypt is more administrative. European Commission in Dublin was made aware of some discrepancies when horses entered Europe with health certificates that indicated the presence of an influenza or vaccination containing a banned substance. As such, it was brought to the attention of the Commission that they ought to visit Egypt in order to inspect the quarantine regulation and implementation altogether. They came in May 2010 and tried to coordinate with the Ministry of Agriculture on how to control that matter. The group were shown many locations and parts of

various stables existing within various clubs which they found unacceptable. Eventually, they went back to the concerned authorities in Europe while providing a directive stating that regulations should be strictly followed in Egypt. It's clearly an administrative issue; it should be done, followed up upon and completed. But who is accountable for such implementation? Nobody knows.

To my knowledge there are now two problems: the administrative part and the vaccination issue. It is said that Egyptian Arabian horse breeders are also not allowed to export their horses even though the quarantine process is completed in the Egyptian Agricultural Organisation which is a different entity from the Equestrian Federation. Does this mean that Egypt is banned for quite some time? Some say indefinitely; not just upon completion of the paper work and inspection parties coming in.

All I know is that they used the wrong vaccine. This should not have happened and this should not happen again. I have not heard of the banning being indefinite. However, if it's going to be for a certain number of months, and it has already been a year now, by the time they come to re-inspect, it will be another six months. So, come what may, we have to do what we have been asked to do, apply it, then we will see how many months are left before lifting the ban.

You travel with the Egyptian Equestrian team as the Team Manager; how many events have you been to in 2010, and as the Manager, how do you feel the team is doing at the moment? What, if any, change is needed for the riders in team competition?

The riders and I have been to the four CSI tours in the UAE, one in Syria, and one in Saudi; actually, quite a few. During those tours there were no team competitions. The





only one that required team work was the competition in the five star 2010 event in Ghantout, Abu Dhabi. We had only three riders competing; we could not fill the fourth spot. We do not have an excessive number of prepared horses and riders, although I know in the near future we will be participating in Nations Cup events coming up in the UAE and Qatar. Last year we had more applications than positions, but this year we have lesser riders than last year. If we are in a situation where a team is required to represent Egypt, then we usually allow the six best riders to fill the positions. So far, we are in need of horse power and certainly a good and professional administrative solution for transportation as distances are so far.

I have travelled with you in the past, and from my knowledge I understand that the Team Manager has a say in choosing riders who would be part of the team, and that it's not just by points; it's a question of which horse and who is ready. As such, do you feel that the present method of choice is the one that you would like to continue with? You, as the Manager, decide that or are there other external adopted standards?

To tell you the truth, I am lucky. The two situations in which Egypt had a

team was during the 2007 Pan Arab Games and Ghantout - although I will exclude Ghantout as we only had three who were capable of delivering, which they did, and two who wanted to commit suicide if they had joined the team; they were certainly not ready. That's another issue and it's no secret.

During the Pan Arab Games, I was given a short list of 15 riders only three weeks before the event which was a short period for change and training. I devised a good system and mentioned it to everyone involved. We planned together on approving stamina, consistency, and readiness. As the Manager, all I needed to see was the rider who would compete in three major competitions: either two grand prix and one qualifier or vice versa, or one from the last training show as well as one qualifier and one grand prix so that if one couldn't attend two certain shows, he could attend one as in the case of Nael Nassar. Nael was put to me as a contender while he shouldn't have been chosen. Having said this, I always have to accommodate political aspects. A Chef d'Équipe always wants to choose the best team to represent a country but politics plays a big role. Nevertheless, I still feel that I do my part somehow. Some countries try to use selection committees but they failed as they ended up with

litigation cases in court. Take the USA, their system of trial and points exhausted their horses and for three or four championships they did not win a single medal. Personally, I think it should be a combination of two factors; I have to keep an eye on who is "prepared" at that point, whilst not ignoring the competitions, performances and points - an indication of how horse and rider have done. Transparency is also important; a trainer should be transparent and strong enough and know his job however long it takes in convincing the other side that when all's said and done, we should be reasonable in choosing riders.

We know that there are some riders who wish to change administrative features in the Equestrian Federation for some reasons. If we discuss that, in respect of the claims or demands, what are some of the things that you would like to see changed there, and what would you tell management? There is a gap between us and other Arab countries and for some reason this gap growing. Where are we and what do we lack? Horses, funds, management or professional riders? What clues would you give riders?

Long question. Part of it I will not be involved in; the political part. I used to



front revolutionary ideas since 1980. Now I'm 61 and a technocrat – a man who wants to apply and work with the technicality of the game. I'm too old now. The youngsters on the other hand, if they want change they are entitled – for better or for worse it will be their responsibility. They already proved on January 25th that they are clever as well as broad minded. I owe the youth of Egypt an apology; I was not expecting them to do what they did...write a new history for Egypt. I ridiculed their behaviour but they proved that they know much more than I gave them credit for.

As far as Egypt is compared to other Arab countries involved in equestrian sport, I do not think we are behind and I always believed that we could beat them any day with a touch of cleverness by simply using our resources correctly. We have done so for the last 20 years before they appeared on the scene. Technically, I think we have five riders who could beat them. We have history and heritage and I don't mean this rubbish that everyone uses to describe us, "we are Pharaohs, we built the Pyramids". By heritage I mean that, for example, in Saudi, there would be around 15 good riders behind the top three who, I would say, are Khalid Al Eid, Ramzy Al Duhami and Abdullah Al Sharbatly. We, on the other hand, would find 50 behind our top four. We have a wider base, that is. Some

would argue that we need better horses, but we are in a country that can produce horses. I see potential; we just need better management and knowledge. When I came back from England in 1996, there was only one trainer, but now we have plenty. You are a rider and a certified trainer along with several others too! That's a step in the right direction. It's also argued that not everybody has the talent to be a trainer; we can't see results immediately of course! In the Gulf they bring in ready-made trainers and horses, here we are working with self-made trainers.

I like how you analysed the formula. You are talking about a separation between the top class sport where you have three to four riders and maybe one or two can be added from the local scene, that could already provide a very strong base for you, and then you are in favour of working and cultivating horses and trainers from inside, developing the sport from within, correct?

The Federation cannot look after all aspects, believe me! I lived in Europe and I saw the systems they follow; we should somehow be imitators with regard to several factors so as to learn from the best. There is nothing wrong with that; they have succeeded in developing the sport, so why can we not learn from that? We don't have

to follow all of it, but actually take what suits us best and from there on develop it on our own. The sport should be run by established and knowledgeable institutions, and not a Federation with many administrative struggles. The Federation should just be referred to, if you ask me, just as the FEI is referred to on the international scene. The FEI does not run all events.

An important asset that was of added value to equestrian sport in Egypt, was the two FEI Certified Coaching workshops. As a trainer, it was useful to have practiced before, but it was also useful learning more details from the course. The Federation should be in charge of top sport, and clubs, under the umbrella of the Federation, should keep their own activity going on; would that help?

We run the CSI*** event in Sharm El Sheikh under the umbrella of the FEI, but what does that mean? It means that we choose judges that are qualified by the FEI. If clubs want to run shows on their own, that's possible, and the Federation can send Stewards. Judges are individuals with integrity and can do well. I hope that during this wind of change our region is witnessing, our sport does not suffer or go backwards, though I am optimistic that it won't. 🍀

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RAMY ISKANDAR

A CLUB'S HERITAGE

By Nada H. Abdelmoniem



© Ahmed Shawkat



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▲ *Ramy & the love of his life, Josiane, at the Ferosia Riding Club in Zamalek*

RAMY ISKANDAR AL RAHEB HAS BEEN A MEMBER OF THE FEROSIA RIDING CLUB IN ZAMALEK SINCE 1974. HE STARTED TO RIDE AT THE AGE OF EIGHT, AND FOR THE PAST SEVERAL YEARS, HIS FAMILY HAS FOLLOWED HIS FOOTSTEPS. HIS WIFE JOSIANE, SON FARID, AND DAUGHTER CARLA ALL SHARE THE SAME PASSION AT

THE CLUB; JOSIANE IS ONE OF THE FEW CONSISTENT FEMALE SHOW JUMPERS WHO HAS BEEN INVOLVED IN THE SPORT AND FARID ALONG WITH CARLA ARE CURRENTLY PART OF THE YOUNG JUNIOR TEAM.

In 2005, Ramy was appointed as a board member in the club and ever since has been occupied with plenty of technical and administrative details. In the next few lines, we

will hear him tell us about his achievements at the club as well as the challenges he faces within.

How do you see the Ferosia club from your perspective?

The club has around 500 members. For the past 38 years, Gen. Elwy Ghazy was the main figure on all of the different boards elected for the club – which explains why it is more like a family than anything else. You must understand that we all grew up here as young kids with our parents being involved simultaneously. This model is evolving today as we have



▲ Mr. & Mrs. Iskandar with their son Farid & daughter Carla

our young riders presently competing and training. As such, there is a code of conduct that we grew up with and are naturally passing on to our children.

Who has had the greatest impact on you as a veteran club member?

I would say Gen. Elwy Ghazy. On the other hand, Gen. Mohamed Selim Zaki, Captain Ibrahim Abdallah and Gen. Gamal Harris have left their memorable marks too. Several others can fit this bill as well.

Do you think you have achieved enough for the club?

I would say that I contributed by creating the first junior rider's school for the club back in 1996. I had just started training some young riders, including Karim El Zoghby, Ahmed Hussein, Ayman Waked and Ismail Shaker - who are now friends and

colleagues there. Karim el Zoghby went on to win a silver medal at the Mediterranean Games and to become an Olympic rider.

What kind of challenges do you face at the club?

There are many, of course, but I think the biggest would be bringing the younger and older generations of riders closer together as, you may well be aware, the difference in mentality and approach to general issues can be a challenging factor.

Another challenge would be attracting new members who would fit with old members harmoniously and without any conflicts, members with vision and potential contributions to the club.

In addition, finding enough financial revenue that would sustain the club is a challenge. Managing its limited resources constructively and coming

up with good structural and technical plans in order to continuously develop the sport within is also a challenge. Finally, to be able to listen to and accept all different opinions, yet have a strong vision that would be generally accepted by almost everyone.

What are you expecting from the board in the near future?

It is to help club members to choose what is good for the sport and to maintain the same atmosphere that we grew up with; it is quite unique. I also wish to see board members who come from three generations of riders from within. I hope we can all chip in with clear visions and passions, and share them with everyone involved there. And finally as a father and as a rider, I wish to see the club stay the way it is, since I would like to see my son and daughter grow up there with the same values. 🏠



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ABDULLAH AL RAJHI

COUNTRY: KSA

DATE OF BIRTH: MAY 29 2000

PROFESSION: HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT AND JUNIOR SHOW JUMPER

TRAINER: KHALID AL EID



▲ Jumping during the April 2011 National Championship in Jeddah

▼ Abdulllah was rewarded a prize for being the youngest show jumper in KSA



Started riding: in 2010 after watching a show jumping event and after being encouraged to train by my father, Khaled.

Horses: one horse named Hebra. She is six years old and jumps in 1.25m classes.

Training venues: Al Eid Stables jumping 1.15m fences.

Mentors: my father has encouraged me tremendously to train for show jumping and ever since I have developed a big love for it. I hope when I grow up I become a top rider just like Khalid Al Eid and Ramzy Al Duhami.

Aspirations: I would love to become part of the Saudi show jumping team and of course represent my country in international events.

Dream events: currently all I am focusing on is training and improving my riding at local junior events. In the near future I will try to participate at international junior events and I hope that I succeed. 🏆

60 SECONDS WITH

SAMIR ABDELFATAH



▲ 1990 Mena House event, Egypt hosting the USA team

Country: Egypt

Date of Birth: June 16 1949

Star sign: Gemini

Profession: Civil Engineer & the
Chef d'Équipe of the National
Egyptian Show Jumping Team

What is your best achievement?

Amanda is my horse. She was ridden by Michael Whitaker during the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics where they won the silver medal and she won her gold medal at the 1987 European Championships in St. Gallen. My personal achievement, I would say, is my team winning 3 medals at the Pan Arab Games here in Cairo in 2007.

Who is your favourite athlete (rider or other sports person)?

Many show jumpers from the old and new generation are very good, but I would choose Michael Whitaker. He has an extraordinary talent for riding a horse.

Do you keep any pets?

Apart from horses? No. My ex-wife kept 17 dogs which made me a little wary to get near them again.

What is your favourite movie?

Anything that is a thriller or action film. I like to be able to snooze for a few minutes and then get back to the

movie and be able to follow it again.

Who is your ideal celebrity (female or male)?

Several to name, but Kim Novak from "The Legend of Lylah Clare" and Catherine Zeta Jones.

What is your favourite gadget?

The bridle. I can only use my hands well with the reins of a horse but with nothing else!

What is your favourite music record?

Frank Sinatra's "My Way".

What is your second favourite sport?



▲ Prince Philip Duke of Edinburgh greeting Samir Abdelfatah & Michael Whitaker during the 1982 Royal International Horse Show

All sports at top levels.

Do you like to cook?

I know how to! Very well. But I wouldn't choose to.

What is your strength and what is your weakness?

Strength: to be able to start all over again. My weakness, although I don't see it as such: being too emotionally involved with the people I deal with.

What makes you happy & what makes you sad?

Happy: seeing people trying to achieve something. Sad: to see people waste their talents or potentials.

To your close friends & family, you are known to be?

The Godfather.

If you had the power to change something, what would you change?

I would start Egypt's January 25th revolution, but they beat me to it!

If there is something about Samir that you would like to change, what would that be?

Maybe to get a new car.

Do you support any charitable organisations?

The streets of Cairo.

Do you think there is any other question we should have asked but did not?

You could have asked me if I could be more constructive in life than I am now. 🙄



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PHOTOGRAPHER

STEFANO GRASSO



Born in Milano in 1959 and based in Trieste, Stefano Grasso travels around the world to capture the wonderful moments of horses. His passion for photography started at a young age after taking and developing photographs with a Rolleiflex gifted to him from his father.

Stefano started his career by shooting several sports including sailing, athletics, basketball, volley ball and rugby. Upon becoming a professional in 1997, he specialised in the horse racing industry.

Currently, he is an international correspondent for Sheikh Mohamed bin Rashid Al Maktoum stable Godolphin, and staff photographer for Trotto & Turf, the most renowned daily racing newspaper in Italy. He travels worldwide to follow the most prestigious events in the horse industry and has many continuous contributions to a variety of international books and publications. Over the past few years, his photographic skills in equestrian photography has seen him provide photo coverage of the 2006 Aachen World Equestrian Games and the 2007 Mannheim European Championships on behalf of the Italian Equestrian Federation and Cavallo Magazine. He is also the official photographer of the Italian champion Varenne, one of the most famous trotters in the world, as well as the official photographer of another internationally famous Italian champion, thoroughbred Falbrav.

In 2011, Stefano joined the Global Champions Tour team as the official photographer for the whole season.

He is the owner and creator of the website www.stefanograsso.com which publishes and distributes the best of his equestrian images, as well as the website www-horse-poster.com which publishes and sells a selection of his best productions. 📷

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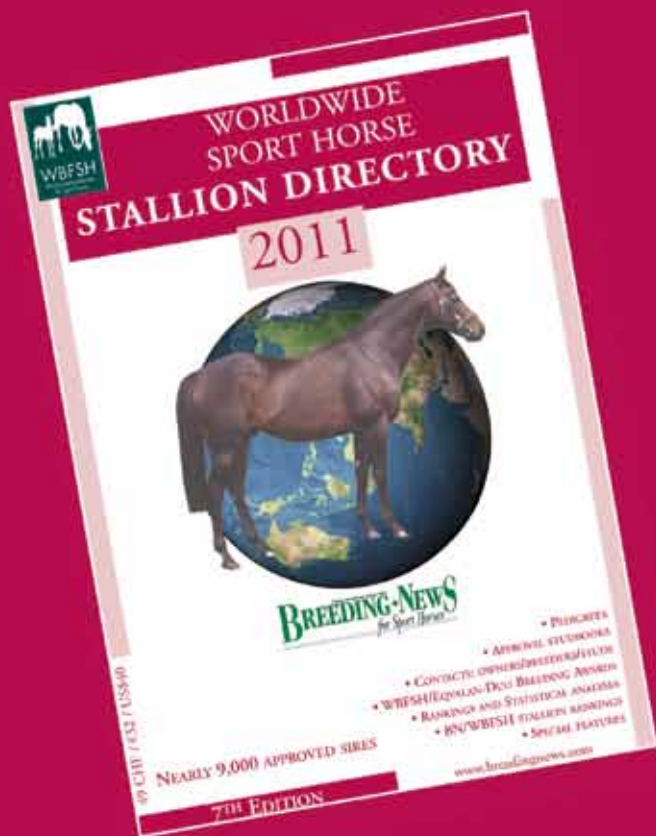
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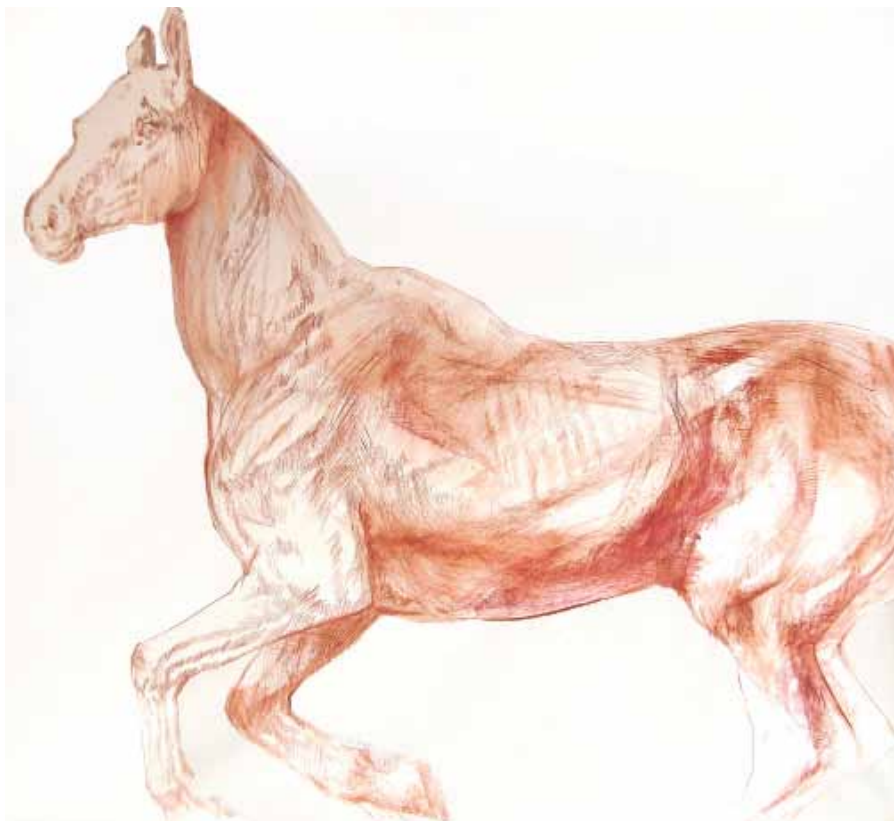
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GIUSEPPE VIGOLO



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Size: 1,50 x 3,60 mt
Technique: sanguine on paper

BELOW PAINTING 2009:
Size: 1,50 x 1,70 mt
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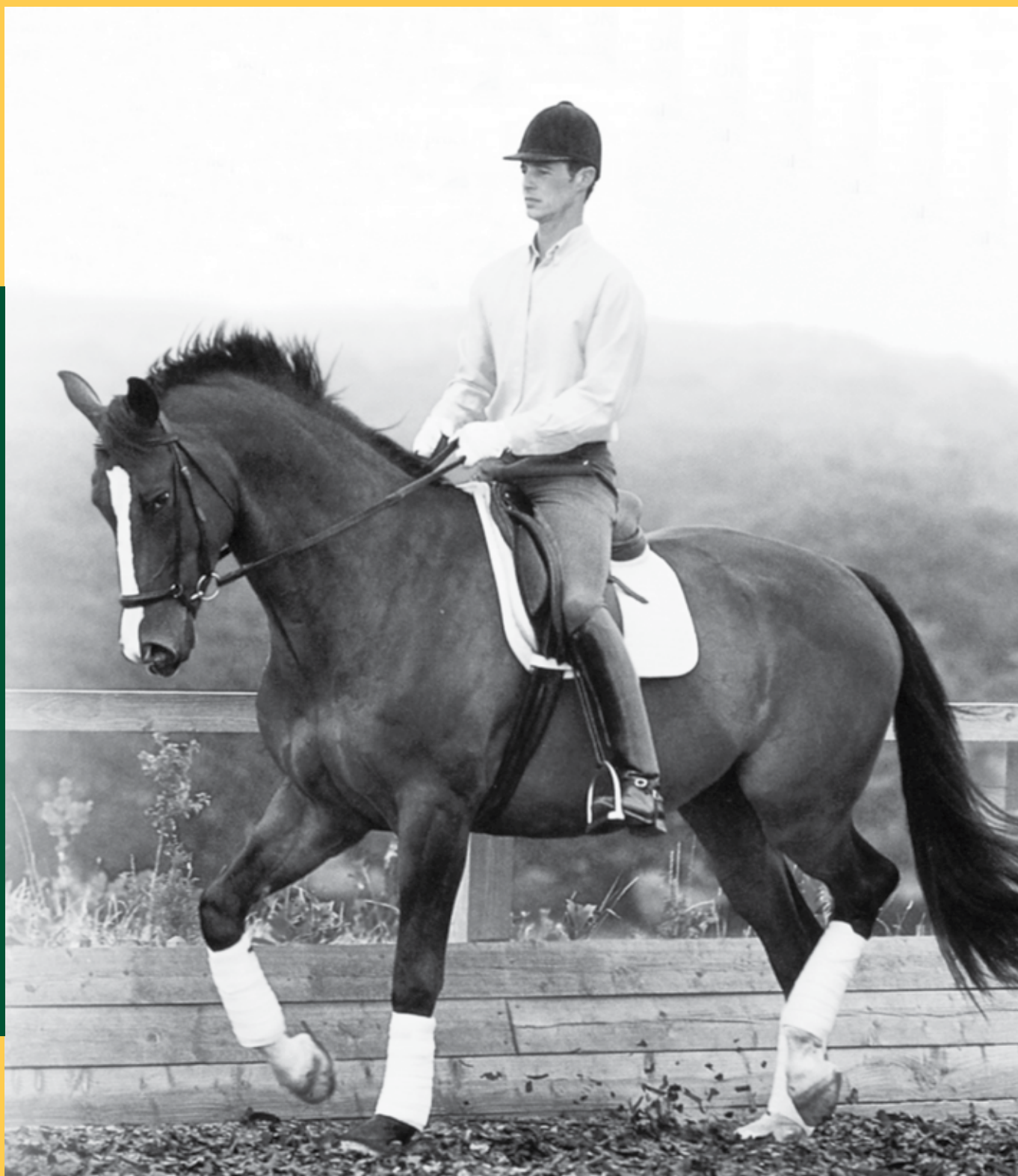
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HOW TO BE A TRAINER (PART 15) DRESSAGE FOR JUMPING (PART 5)

By Dr. Mohamed Elsherbini





▲ Allow the horse to stretch his head & neck, and then ride him on the bit again. If sent on correctly, the horse will not change his centre of gravity

I must say that it is unusual to be writing this article after the January 25th revolution with all of the changes it has brought! Nevertheless our subject today is "Riding on the Bit" which is one of the keys to correct jumping.

DEFINITION:

The horse is said to be **on the bit** when it is working happily on the contact, and is accepting the rein aids with a steady and soft connection between the rider's hand and the horse's mouth both at the halt and in movement.

PREPARATION:

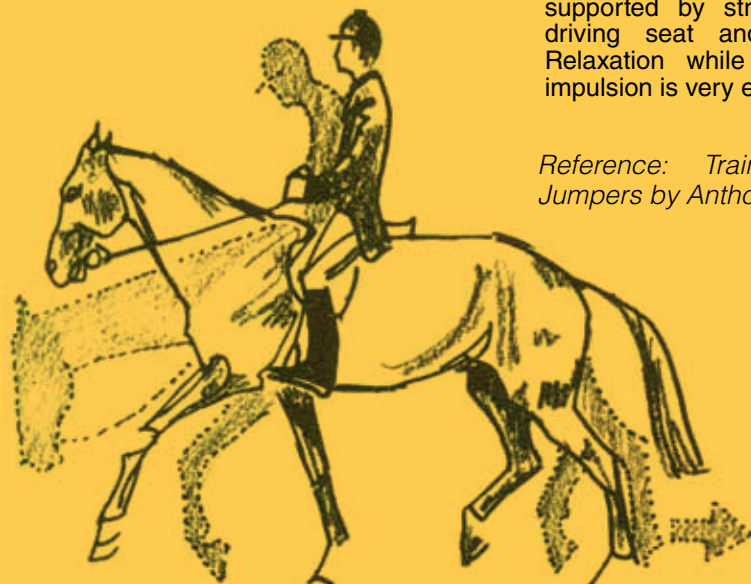
There is no problem in riding a horse **on the bit** - only a rider who starts **placing the head** too soon, and in an incorrect manner, will have difficulties. At first the horse should be able to carry the rider in balance, lower his head and neck to use his back, and be able to move his own four legs in all paces on a complete loose rein without losing balance or increasing his speed. If the horse is not able to do this he will, when asked to go on the bit, use the rider's hand as a **fifth leg**. The horse must be flexible naturally in neck and ribs and engage his inner hock on both sides.

AIDS:

The horse is taught to go on the bit only when his muscles are warmed up at the end of a session, as there is less chance of resistance. During preparation one should make many transitions from a variety of paces, sending the horse forward. A slight alternate side-ways turn of the wrist in rhythm with the horse's step will be

sufficient to encourage the horse to fix his lower jaw.

The first attempt to ride the horse on the bit should be made during a transition from walk to a halt. While at a halt the rider maintains adequate seat and leg aids and instead of letting the reins slip through the hands (first rein aid) or following the mouth down and forwards (second rein aid) when the horse flexes his jaw, the immediate reaction of the rider should be to ease his hands for a few seconds and then tighten them again (third rein aid) - similar to **squeezing a sponge**. If the rider has **dead hands**, the horse's mouth will also become **dead** very soon. The frequent changes from collection to relaxation will make the horse more flexible and ensure that he



▲ If the horse is not sent on sufficiently, he might come on to the forehand

accepts collection without stiffening and resistance.

PRECAUTIONS:

Effortless acceptance of the horse for collection is monitored by his acceptance to being ridden forward on the bit whilst taking the next points into consideration:

1. For a young horse, it is dangerous to go on the bit for long sessions every day. Three times a week is enough to avoid jamming his sensitive parotid gland between the jaw bone and the jowl.
2. If the horse responds willingly to halting on the bit, move forward a few strides at a walk while maintaining the horse on the bit. This should be followed by the first rein aid.
3. Don't start your third rein aid without good preparation for the horse's muscles in a relaxed manner. Never use **dead hands**.
4. The horse's poll should always be the highest point of the arched neck and the nose should be slightly in front of the vertical line.
5. The danger of **losing impulsion** is a serious mistake while applying the third rein aid (riding on the bit). The frequent lowering of the head and neck could bring the horse too much on the forehand if impulsion is lost and if the horse is not supported by strong forward driving seat and leg aids. Relaxation while maintaining impulsion is very essential. 🐾

Reference: *Training Show Jumpers* by Anthony Paalman

NON-INVASIVE

TREATMENT OF JOINT PROBLEMS

(PART 2)

By Dr. Jack Leonard

GOOD NUTRITION IS ALSO AN IMPORTANT AND OFTEN OVERLOOKED FACTOR. ADEQUATE QUANTITY AND QUALITY OF PROTEIN, CALCIUM: PHOSPHORUS RATIO OF AT LEAST 2:1, MICRONUTRIENTS INCLUDING 20 PARTS PER MILLION OF COPPER, ZINC, ETC. ARE ALL PARTS OF A GOOD DIET. PROPER HOOF GROWTH REQUIRES SULPHUR CONTAINING AMINO ACIDS AND BIOTIN ALONG WITH GOOD CIRCULATION TO THE FEET. EVEN THINGS LIKE DEHYDRATION CAN AFFECT THE INJURY RATE. WHEN TISSUES, FOR INSTANCE, LIKE CARTILAGE GET DEHYDRATED THEY ARE MUCH LESS SUPPLE AND ARE MUCH MORE SUBJECT TO DAMAGE. THE SAME GOES FOR TENDONS AND LIGAMENTS. DEHYDRATION CAN ALSO DECREASE SYNOVIAL FLUID IN THE JOINT. THAT FLUID IS NECESSARY FOR PROPER LUBRICATION AND JOINT FUNCTION.



Distal end of the third metacarpal (cannon) bone showing cartilage erosion & score lines from abnormal wear due to corticosteroid injections

So what does one do other than submit to the “needle man”? There are actually quite a few options available today. We will discuss a few of them.

The best treatment of all is also the easiest and the cheapest. It is simply rest. Yes, that’s right, rest. It really needs to be part of almost all other joint treatments, invasive or not. Rest will often stop the damage and create an environment where the natural healing abilities of the body can repair damaged tissues. Here again, as with prevention, good nutrition is essential. The body must be supplied with the necessary macro and micro nutrients to repair and rebuild tissues. Rest can also be combined with other therapies such as physiotherapy, massage, swimming, passive flexion, and controlled hand walking and stretching.

This brings us to the next group of treatment modalities which are collectively known as nutraceuticals. These are substances such as glucosamine, chondroitin sulfate, oral hyaluronic acid, aloe, avocado, soy, omega-3 fatty acids, collagen, etc. available in various combinations. They are not really considered nutrients nor are they pharmaceuticals but have properties of both, thus the name. Their use in osteoarthritis is controversial. Even experts are by no means in agreement on their efficacy. Most clinicians feel that they are probably more useful as preventatives than treatments. However, this author prefers to use them as adjuncts to other therapies in a multiple modality approach to osteoarthritis in the horse.

Non-steroid anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) have their place in the treatment of joint problems in horses. These are things like aspirin (salicylic acid), phenylbutazone (Bute), Flunixin Meglumine (Banamine®), etc. These drugs reduce the inflammation of joint disease as well as relieve pain. They can be useful for short and long term treatment. Phenylbutazone has been used successfully for many years in the long term treatment of joint problems in horses. Only the



▲ An arthritic right hip joint caused by an injury

oral form should be used as the intravenous form causes phlebitis and destruction of the veins that is often permanent. This destructive effect seems to be magnified when phenylbutazone is combined with salicylates (aspirin) as in one certain well know combination.

All of the NSAIDs have some potential side effects. Most notably are gastric (stomach) and colon ulcers. These can be potentially serious but only occur in a minority of individuals on NSAIDs. A new NSAID for horses called firocoxib, under the trade name Equioxx® is available that is very potent but with minimal side effects. Equioxx inhibits cyclooxygenase-2 (COX-2),

an enzyme that causes inflammation and pain. Most other NSAIDs only inhibit COX-1.

There is a topical NSAID available to treat arthritis in horses called Surpass®. Surpass contains diclofenac and employs a totally new technology not based on traditional carriers like DMSO and PLO gel. Surpass is manufactured to exacting standards for diclofenac bound within liposomes (microscopic vesicles composed of membrane-like lipid bilayers surrounding aqueous compartments). The cream is applied directly to the affected joint once a day. This leads to the next modality known collectively as topical medications. Many different substances are



▲ The distal end of the first phalanx shows severe cartilage erosion. In one area the erosion is down to the bleeding subchondral bone

used topically to treat joint disease in horses. Most liniments provide a soothing effect and increase circulation to the joint. Topical anti-inflammatory medications are often based on the use of DMSO (dimethyl sulfoxide).

DMSO is in itself a good topical and systemic anti-inflammatory. It also scavenges free radicals, chemicals that breakdown tissues. Other reasons to use DMSO are its great ability to penetrate all tissues of the body and its capability to carry other substances deeper into the joints and peri-articular tissues. It is often combined with locally active steroids and non-steroid anti-inflammatories.

This is an important distinction. For example, the corticosteroid prednisone must go through the body and be metabolized by the liver into its active form to be effective. Prednisolone, a similar drug, is already in the active form and so is a better choice for topical use.

Some of the most exciting new treatments involve biological products. These are substances produced within the animal's own body, such as stem cells, Interleukin 1 receptor antagonist protein (IRAP), and platelet rich plasma.

When a joint is inflamed, it creates an unhealthy environment for healing. The natural response of inflammation is Mother Nature's way to tell us to rest: if it hurts, don't use it. Let it rest. The negative side, however, is that the inflammatory process can create a harmful chemical mix in the joint fluid. In other words, the inflammation itself can contribute to breakdown of the joint.

Pharmaceutical companies have focused a great deal of their research on arthritis on identifying the chemical mediators of inflammation at the molecular level. It seems that the worst of these culprits is a substance called interleukin-1. Interleukin-1 (a deleterious cytokine) is at the head of the inflammatory cascade, leading to a breakdown in the cartilage matrix through signalling factors that alter regulation and effect of inflammatory biochemical mediators. The goals of therapeutic intervention focus on returning a joint to normal as quickly as possible, when possible, and to prevent the occurrence and severity of osteoarthritis in an injured joint. When interleukin 1 attaches to receptors on the synovial membrane of the joint, bad things begin to happen that leads to all of the inflammation and destruction of all the joint tissues (cartilage, synovium,

etc.) that we see as osteoarthritis.

A company called Arthrex, based in Naples, Florida in the USA developed interleukin 1 receptor antagonist protein (IRAP) therapy as an answer to this problem. Basically, IRAP is an incubated "soup" that's produced from the horses' own blood that has been collected and incubated overnight with chromium-coated glass beads, then put in a centrifuge and filtered. The collected serum is then injected into the affected joint (or tendon sheath). This "soup" then locks up inflammatory receptors on the synovial membrane, creating a more normal, healthy joint fluid environment conducive to healing. It undoubtedly contains a variety of other "growth factors" that stimulate joint healing as well. This is a very innovative and, so far, very successful approach to joint therapy that does not involve any drugs but simply the body's own products.

Intra-articular stem cell use has also been an exciting new direction for treatment of joint disease. While research is still under way, it is a promising avenue of therapy. One of our biggest challenges in treating osteoarthritis is replacing damaged, degenerating, or destroyed cartilage. Once the articular cartilage is gone, there are few options for a bone-on-bone situation. Early evidence suggests that stem cells injected into a joint can make new cartilage. It is only a matter of time before researchers will discover how to "program" stem cells to produce the new tissue. Early clinical results of stem cell use in joints have been promising but much work needs to be done.

Intra-articular platelet-rich plasma (PRP) use is also on the table, and there is some interesting new research available, but it is too early to recommend it for regular clinical use. Platelets contain many "growth factors" that signal the body's own mechanism to heal, so there is potential for using it to treat tendon and ligament injuries and possibly joint damage. 🐾

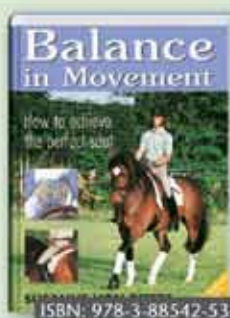
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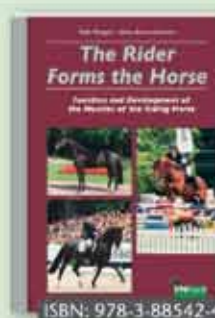
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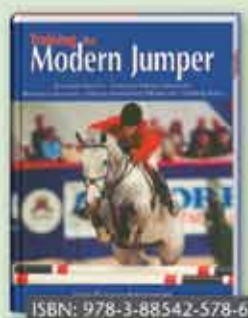
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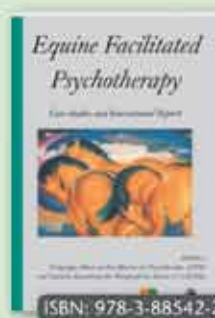
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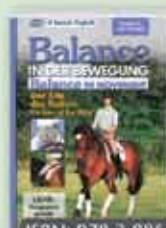
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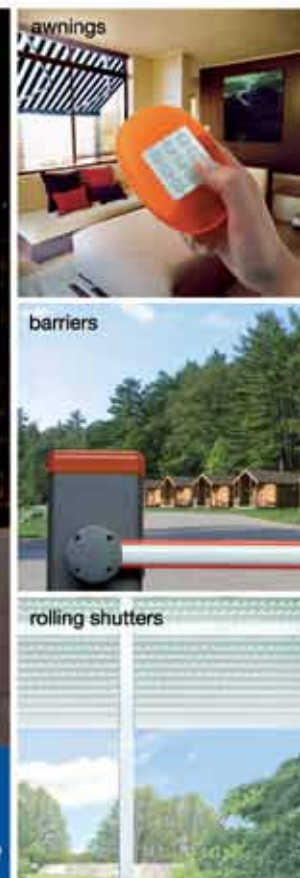
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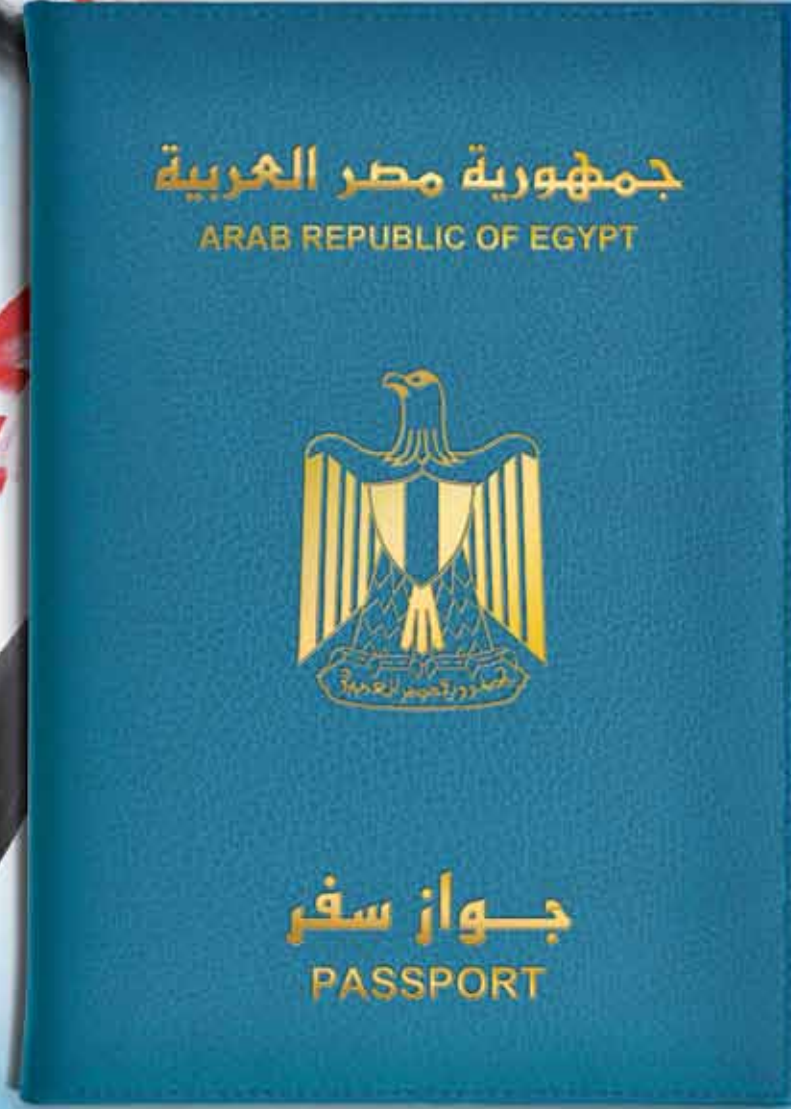
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