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FRENCH CLAIM FURUSIYYA FEI NATIONS CUP



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VIEW POINT FROM THE CHAIRMAN



Dear Readers,

Let me start by wishing you all a very Merry Christmas and a happy New Year!

Our winter issue is always a challenging edition to produce due to the intensity of equestrian events in the Fall. We try our best to cover all those events and the spectacular riders who have become icons that motivate others.

Icons in this issue include the amazing Bezie Madden, our woman of steel for her determination, Moroccan show jumping champion Abdelkebir Ouaddar for his "grand" appeal, Miguel Bravo for his heart that's bigger than the world, Saudi Equestrian's Kamal Bahamdan for being selected as a member of the

FEI Jumping Committee, and Egyptian jumper Ahmed Bassioni for his dedication under Select International sponsorship.

2013 witnessed several extraordinary equestrian events including the Final of the Furusiyya FEI Nations Cup in Barcelona where the French Team was crowned by showing resilience and top performance under pressure. Salon du Cheval in Morocco highlighted this year's edition with the theme "the horse tradition of shimmering Morocco" and dazzled the audience, as always. Moreover, the GCT series continue to enchant the show jumping world and didn't lack in doing so with Scott Brash winning the Doha Final with particular flair. On another note, the King Abdullah Show Jumping Festival staged at the magnificent Nofa Equestrian Resort in Saudi defined the true meaning of the word "Furusiyya", as quoted by HH Prince Faisal bin Abdullah.

Leaving top performances and moving to top beauty where Egyptian Arabian horses topped the list of beautiful horses at the Rabab and El Zahraa International Championships; a glorious gene pool showcasing Egypt's Arabian horse heritage.

The German Equestrian Federation is celebrating its centennial this year and we feature an interview with its Secretary General, Mr. Soenke Lauterbach, who gave us some insight into the Federation's history, its success and its goals for the future.

From equestrian technicalities we move to equestrian photography and art and feature the breath-taking action and studio works of British photographer David Sinclair, surreal Urban Equines by American painter Donna Bernstein, as well as wood burnings by Siham Moharram who will be hosting an exhibition at the Cairo Opera House in January 2014.

Last but not least, we find the issue of cloning extremely intriguing; inside, Dr. Oliver Pynn of Rosssdales explains to us how the process for this new technological wonderland of the 21st century works. Tangible strategies for mental strength in the ring are this issue's recipe for training tips, yet quality breeding and quality training seem to be the cornerstones in the training scale of dressage.

We hope you read on and enjoy.

Sincerely,
Khaled Assem

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CONTENTS

VIVE LA FRANCE! FRENCH CLAIM FURUSIYYA FEI NATIONS CUP TITLE IN BARCELONA	6
BEEZIE MADDEN SHOW JUMPING ICON	14
SALON DU CHEVAL EL JADIDA 2013 BEAUTY AND SUCCESS IN MOROCCO	20
ABDELKEBIR OUADDAR LE GRAND	28
RABAB INTERNATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS A HAVEN FOR ARABIAN HORSES	34
SOENKE LAUTERBACH A LOOK INSIDE THE GERMAN EQUESTRIAN FEDERATION	42
EL ZAHRAA EXPERIENCE AN IMPRESSION OF THE 2013 CHAMPIONSHIPS	48
KING ABDULLAH SHOW JUMPING FESTIVAL 2013 CHIVALRY, HONOUR, AND DIGNITY	58
KAMAL BAHAMDAN A NEW MEMBER OF THE FEI JUMPING COMMITTEE	66
60 SECONDS WITH MIGUEL BRAVO	68
DAVID SINCLAIR PHOTOGRAPHER	70
HORSES & ART SIHAM MOHARRAM	74
SELECT INTERNATIONAL EQUESTRIAN SPONSORSHIP PART 2: AHMED BASSIONI	76
LONGINES GCT SEASON 2013 WINNERS	80
MEDICAL TIPS EQUINE CLONING	82
DONNA BERNSTEIN URBAN EQUINES	86
TRAINING TIPS MENTAL STRATEGIES FOR WINNING	88
THE ART OF CLASSICAL DRESSAGE RIDING THE TRAINING SCALE (PART 1)	90



VIVE LA FRANCE! FRENCH CLAIM FURUSIYYA FEI NATIONS CUP TITLE IN BARCELONA

By Celeste Wilkins, England

IN 2012, THE SAUDI EQUESTRIAN FUND ANNOUNCED A SPONSORSHIP DEAL THAT WOULD REVOLUTIONISE THE NATIONS CUP SERIES. UNDER THE NAME FURUSIYYA, AN ARABIC WORD MEANING 'HORSEMANSHIP' OR MORE PROPERLY 'CHIVALRY', THEY PLEDGED 16 MILLION EUROS OVER FOUR YEARS. AS PART OF THE DEAL, THE NEW FURUSIYYA FEI NATIONS CUP FEATURES A NEW SET OF RULES DESIGNED TO GLOBALISE THE SERIES. MANY IN THE INDUSTRY BELIEVE THAT GLOBALISATION OF THE SHOW JUMPING CIRCUIT IS THE WAY FORWARD.



Saudi team rider HH Prince Faisal Al Shalan is a strong supporter of his national federation's role in the Nations Cup revitalisation, "When I think about the sport three – four years ago, it's definitely different... the whole industry is really booming and the only way to sustain such an industry is to globalise."

The series certainly has the potential to bring show jumping to the mainstream sporting audience. Throughout the year, Furusiyya has become synonymous with some of the most exciting show jumping seen to date, from the first qualifier in Al Ain to the gripping Final in Barcelona. Forty-one nations competed at 21 qualifiers around the globe to vie for 18 spots in the Barcelona final. One of the most radical changes brought by the new format involved the abolition of the previous league system and allocation of nations into one of six regions. Nations competed within their region, scoring points at qualifying Nations Cup competitions. A pre-defined number of nations from each region would go through to the final, eliminating the stronghold of top European show jumping nations in the final of old.

The Nations Cup series was marked by unexpected twists and turns that kept the competition exciting for spectators. St. Gallen marked a turn of events that would drastically affect the leaderboard for the rest of the season. Strong rains left the arena waterlogged and the German team elected to withdraw, even though they risked elimination from the series. As they acted in the interest of their horse's welfare, they were reinstated but they lost a crucial opportunity to gain points. Wins at Hickstead and Rotterdam and a third place finish at Aachen were not enough to pull them through to the Final. This would be the first time in recent history that the German team would be excluded from a Nations Cup Final competition and proved that in the Furusiyya FEI Nations Cup format, anything is possible.

The Final in Barcelona had all the elements of a world-class championship event. Plenty of spectators lined the stands of the immaculate Real Club de Polo, giving



Eric Lamaze

the venue a distinct Spanish party atmosphere. Behind the scenes, the riders and their connections were able to relax in the immaculate clubhouse, enjoying tapas and fine wines. Riders exercised their horses on the large all-weather track around the perimeter of the lush polo pitch. The competition arena itself was nothing short of beautiful. The new all-weather arena, installed especially for the competition, was flanked by a beautiful stand that resembled a palace, the Furusiyya VIP hospitality marquee, and two massive grandstands for spectators.

The courses designed by Spain's

Santiago Ullastres Varelas were hailed as 'true championship courses'. They tested the riders' precision and horses' scope through massive jumping efforts, technical striding and tight time allowed. While there were very few clear rounds over the course of the weekend, no combinations walked out of the ring with injuries or lost confidence. The difficulty of these courses was highlighted by a special prize fund of 200,000 Euros to be split between riders who could achieve a clear round in Friday's preliminary qualification round and the Final on Sunday. In the end, only two riders were able to accomplish that



Aymeric de Ponnat

feat, Canada's Eric Lamaze riding Powerplay and Britain's Scott Brash riding Ursula VIII. It was a special moment for Lamaze, "I am always happy for the horse. I think they deliver incredible performances for us and I'm happy to be back...To me it's one of the happiest days..."

The format of the Final was distinctly different from previous years. Only eight teams would advance to the 1,500,000 Euro penultimate Final on Sunday based on their placing in a preliminary qualification class on the first Friday of the competition. The ten remaining teams would compete for a massive prize fund of 300,000 Euros.

Qualification for Sunday's Final did not come easy. The top eight placings were undecided until the final rider, Lamaze, crossed the finish. Brazil took the win, despite elimination of Eduardo Menezes following his dismount from Calavada. He left the arena on his feet, but put the pressure on his teammates to produce clear rounds. They did, finishing on a single time fault from Marlon Modolo Zanotelli and Clouwini. The biggest upset of the competition came when the United States, tipped to win the series by many, were bumped out of the eight top placings and thereby excluded from the Final. Uncharacteristic rails dropped for

McLain Ward on Rothchild, Reed Kessler on Cylana and Lucy Davis on Baron leaving them on a score of nine faults, tied with Ukraine and Canada. Canada's Eric Lamaze sealed their fate with a clear round on Powerplay. In the event of a tie in the preliminary round, the combined time of the counting scores would determine the placings and Lamaze's round was just fast enough to put Canada in 7th place and Ukraine in the 8th and final qualification place.

The preliminary competition was also disappointing for the Saudi and Qatari teams. A spate of difficult rounds racked up many faults for the two nations, relegating them to the Consolation Competition. Kamal Bahamdan reflected on the result, "Today was a tough day and we need to make a comeback." His 17 fault round with Noblesse De Tess was atypical of the usually strong pair.

The dismal finish didn't tarnish the Saudi team's winning attitude, with many nations bringing their 'A' team; they knew it would be an uphill battle. HH Prince Faisal Al Shalan said, "We're used to it. It's a bit harder when it's two rounds, this way you feel like you're in a championship. The ring is a little bit tight for my horse; in a big ring he jumps better. At the beginning of the round I had a nice round, but then at the end I took two wrong decisions."

The Consolation Competition provided an opportunity for teams to make a comeback after the Friday qualifier. The course was no less of a challenge, producing only eight clears. The Saudi team certainly fulfilled their promise of a comeback, ending on six faults with a guaranteed third place after a fluid clear round from Ramzy Al Duhami and Al Capone, a single time fault from HRH Prince Abdullah bin Miteb and Davos and five faults for HH Prince Faisal Al Shalan and Talan. Kamal Bahamdan and Noblesse de Tess encountered problems in the difficult triple combination, finishing on 12 faults.

While the Saudi team were safely on the podium, there was a dramatic tussle between the Swiss and American teams for the top two



HRH Prince Abdullah bin Miteb

placings. Following a four fault round from Pius Schwizer, an American victory looked assured. A clear round from Beezie Madden and Simon would win the class. Simon, a horse known for his super consistent clear rounds at the international level, shocked the crowd when he slammed on the brakes at fence six. After the competition Madden explained her mount's error, "I think he made a big effort at the vertical before and he was a touch behind me on the run but it was the last thing I expected. It rattled him for sure", said Madden of her unexpected refusal with Simon.

The round tied the Swiss and American teams, forcing a jump-off. In the new Furusiyya format, three riders would form the team for a jump-off, against the clock, over a shortened course. Simon showed memories of the first round when he hesitated for a fraction of a second at the same corner where he had previously refused but went clear for the American team. The rounds came fast and furious. The Swiss, despite having a top line up of riders, failed to gain a clear. A 10 fault round from Lucy Davis and Barron meant that McLain Ward couldn't have any more

than four faults.

"I'm not sure how to explain it," Lucy said, "and it wasn't what I was planning or hoping for! I certainly didn't want to put the pressure on McLain like that." McLain handled the pressure, riding Rothchild to only two time faults and hoisting the American team to the top of the podium. A bittersweet victory, summed up by Chef d'Equipe Robert Ridland, "We got the short end of the stick, but even so it was a great competition!" After the two thrilling days of Furusiyya competition, the expectations were high for the Sunday Final. The course was massive and included the signature of the Varelas designed courses -- a demanding triple combination that fell for 11 riders. It was France's Aymeric de Ponnat and Armitages Boy who broke the spell and delivered the first of only four clear rounds in the competition.

As in the previous rounds, the anchor riders decided the podium places, with France, Brazil and Ireland in contention as the fourth riders entered the ring. Penelope Leprevost for France retired when Nayana kicked the top rail of the

first fence as her score would not alter France's chances of victory. Ireland dropped out of the running for top honours when Billy Twomey and Tinka's Serenade faulted at the precarious plank vertical at fence six. Alvaro De Miranda held the Brazilian hopes, but a less than perfect stride to the double at fence 8 knocked their chances. The French team hoisted the Furusiyya trophy atop the podium, finishing on a score of eight faults and winning a share of the colossal 1.5 million Euros prize money.

The inaugural season of the Furusiyya FEI Nations Cup has been a success. HH Prince Faisal, the main proponent behind Furusiyya commented, "Everyone is very enthused about [the Furusiyya series] and we hope it will grow and grow." With the excitement that played out in Barcelona, there is no doubt that next year's Nations Cup series will attract the top of the sport and provide even more opportunities for international growth. HH Prince Faisal summed up what the show jumping community is thinking



Team Brazil



Winners of the Consolation Competition, Team USA



Chairman of the Board of Trustees of Saudi Equestrian Fund HH Prince Faisal bin Abdullah presenting the French team with their trophy



HH Prince Faisal bin Abdullah presenting FEI President HRH Princess Haya Al Hussein with a trophy

following this successful event, "The organisation of the show did a great job to make this show one of the most attractive shows in the world. I would really like to be here again. The first season of the new

structure of Nations Cup was really spectacular from the very tough qualifications to the Final. That is what the international equestrian community needs; to spread our sport over the whole world."

All photos courtesy of FEI/Tomas Holcbecher And Saudi Equestrian



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BEEZIE MADDEN SHOW JUMPING ICON

By Nada H. Abdelmoniem

HORSES HAVE ALWAYS BEEN AN IMPORTANT PART OF LEGENDARY BEEZIE MADDEN'S LIFE SINCE SHE RECEIVED HER FIRST PONY AT THE AGE OF FIVE. AT THE AGE OF 50, WHEN MOST ATHLETES MIGHT CONSIDER RETIREMENT, THIS TWO-TIME OLYMPIC AND WORLD EQUESTRIAN GAMES MEDALLIST, 2013 ROLEX FEI WORLD CHAMPION AND SECOND-RANKED RIDER IN THE FEI LONGINES RANKINGS WITH MILES OF EXPERIENCE IN THE SADDLE, REMAINS A STELLAR AND HEAD-TURNING COMPETITOR TO WATCH AND A WOMAN OF STEEL DISPLAYING CONTINUOUS DETERMINATION. HT SPOKE WITH BEEZIE ABOUT THE CHALLENGES SHE HAS FACED, HOW SHE PERCEIVES SUCCESS, AND WHAT MAKES HER WANT TO CONTINUE TO ACHIEVE MORE.

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Beezie & Simon during the 2013 Rolex FEI World Cup

Many of us know about your astounding and prolific career; how did you handle the challenges you have faced?

The road has not always been easy, but I have been fortunate enough to get together with people like Katie Prudent and later my husband John, who have helped me get to the top. There are many challenges, from picking the right horses and developing them correctly and recovering when something unexpected happens, like lameness.

You have won the best there is to win, from Olympic medals to five-star show jumping events; what is it that gives you the strength to make you want to continue to

shine through?

I love the horses and seeing them improve, and I love to compete. Both of these things keep me passionate about continuing to ride and improve.

Were there times when you questioned your passion for the sport?

Not really. There have been challenges over the years, from rebuilding our string after older horses retired and getting through shows that didn't go as planned, but that's horses and the sport. You have to enjoy the entire process to stay intact in this sport.

Your lifelong experience with horses combined with naturally,

hard work, are probably what got you to where you are now. From your point of view, what is it that you look for when pursuing success?

You have to never give up. Not succeeding cannot be an option and there is no magic shortcut. Hard work and doing the little things right on a daily basis are what lead to success. You have to never give up.

So, you think success is a choice?

John and I always say we prefer to hire someone with the right attitude and work ethic over natural ability, so in some ways, yes. You choose to work hard and keep striving to improve and do things right for the horses every day.

In your early riding years, who would you credit most for your development and passion for riding?

My parents were big supporters in my early years. John, my husband, took a chance on me as a young rider as well and has been by my side helping me develop as a professional.

How do you prepare mentally and physically for an important show jumping competition?

I don't know as I do differently on the day of a big class than any other day! We treat each day and class as important and follow the same system, which keeps regularity for the horses.

You made your Grand Prix debut in 1985, meaning you have been professionally competing for 28 years. The rules of show jumping were a little different back then and so were the horses themselves. Which do you think is more difficult: the sport then or now – and what is it that you look for in horses now?

I don't think what we look for in horses has changed too much. John and I still like the same type of horse, one that's a bit of a Thoroughbred type that has a lot of blood. We like to see a horse that has the right attitude and aptitude to learn and improve.

I was present during the Rolex World Cup Final in Sweden and watched you win the first day's competitions and ultimately be crowned the World Champion on the last day. Many had bets riding on other riders; what were your instincts about competing at the World Cup and what would you tell those who didn't bet on you?

The World Cup Final was one we had been trying to win for years. We had come close in the past with other horses, but it just all came together this year with Simon. He is a great horse for those types of events, where the pressure is on, the crowd is big and the competition lasts over several days. He's the type that has enough blood and endurance to last. I felt good going into the Final; I had confidence in Simon and our relationship that has developed and that served us both well.

Over the past 15 years, show jumping has tremendously developed in the Middle East and we have seen many young and promising riders emerge on the scene. Have you been watching any Arab riders compete and if so, who would you say has potential to make a mark in the next five years?

Years ago Kamal Bahamdan rode with John and me, and I think he has made a mark on the Saudi team and will continue to do so in the next five years. He is a serious student of the sport and brings that focus to developing his horses.

There has been talk about some objecting to the sponsorship of the Saudi Equestrian Fund to the FEI Nations Cup; how would you comment to that and do you think this sponsorship deal changes the competition format, positively or negatively?

Any time you have a new sponsor ready to support our sport, it's a good thing, in my opinion. I think the new format of the Nations Cup brings some new excitement to it and it's a little less confusing to the fans to have one big final everyone is working towards. With it being the first year, there may be small questions to be ironed out in the future, but I think



John Madden

the changes made by the FEI were positive for the riders, horses and supporters of the sport.

Beyond show jumping, are there any other sports or horse sports that you enjoy?

I enjoy dressage and, outside of horses, I enjoy downhill skiing.

If there is something about Beezie that you would change, what would that be?

I am always working on myself, so this is ever-changing.

Where will the world have the honour of watching you compete next – and what do you hope to

achieve in the next two years?

This fall I will compete at the New Albany Classic, the Nation's Cup Final in Spain and then a few of the indoor shows here in the United States. Over the next two years, I would love to continue to represent the USA on teams, including the World Equestrian Games.

With all of your experience and successes, what words of advice would you give young riders?

Expect to work hard every day. John and I always attribute our success in the ring to all the day-to-day hard work we put in. There are lots of opportunities for young riders if they are willing to work hard and have a good attitude. 🐾



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SALON DU CHEVAL EL JADIDA 2013 BEAUTY AND SUCCESS IN MOROCCO

By Nada H. Abdelmoniem

UNDER THE HIGH PATRONAGE OF HIS MAJESTY KING MOHAMMED VI AND ORGANISED BY THE ASSOCIATION OF HORSE SHOWS, THE SIXTH EDITION OF SALON DU CHEVAL WAS ORGANISED, YET AGAIN, IN GRAND-COLOURFUL-EQUESTRIAN-STYLE FROM OCTOBER 2ND UNTIL THE 6TH AT THE HIPPODROME LALLA MALIKA IN THE CITY OF EL JADIDA. THIS YEAR'S SALON OFFERED AN ABUNDANCE OF HORSE-RELATED ACTIVITIES INCLUDING COMPETITIONS AND AN EXHIBITION AREA THAT HOSTED NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL PARTICIPANTS.



The halter show



Horse show



The Barb horse of Morocco

MOROCCO:

Majestic, historic and beautiful are only some of the words that one could use to describe Morocco, a country of unique culture and beautiful landscape. From the rugged Atlantic coastline to the quiet majesty of the Sahara Desert, the Kingdom has a lot to offer as a destination – and that’s just the scenery. Visiting the Imperial cities and the various historical monuments reveals a culture heavily influenced by tradition, one that is entirely different from other Arab cultures.

The ancestors of the Moroccan Arabs originated in the Arabian Desert. From there, they gradually migrated into northern Africa. Over the centuries, the Arabs have become somewhat intermingled with the Berbers, and this has influenced their way of life. Nevertheless, the two groups have remained distinct.

Moroccan cuisine is extremely refined and delicious; it is a mix of different cultures. Several Moroccan cities are famous for their culinary arts with Rabat being the most famous, then Fez, Tangier, Marrakesh and Meknes. Over the centuries, they created the basis for what is known as Moroccan cuisine today, blending ginger, saffron, mint, cinnamon, olives, and fruit with savoury meats to create a unique and tasty flavour appreciated around the world.

EI JADIDA:

The Portuguese fortification of Mazagan, now part of the city of El Jadida, 90-km southwest of Casablanca, was built as a fortified colony on the Atlantic coast in the early 16th century. It was taken over by the Moroccans in 1769. The fortification with its bastions and ramparts is an early example of Renaissance military design. The surviving Portuguese buildings include the cistern and the Church of the Assumption, built in the Manueline style of late Gothic architecture. The Portuguese City of Mazagan - one of the early settlements of the Portuguese explorers in West Africa on the route to India - is an outstanding example of the interchange of influences between European and Moroccan cultures, well-reflected in architecture, technology, and town planning.

THE SALON:

The theme of this year’s Salon was “The horse tradition of shining Morocco” which highlighted the unique equine heritage of the Kingdom and its devotion to traditional equestrian arts and Moroccan horse trading worldwide. According to the organisers, the Salon registered some 250,000 visitors, a number higher than the Salons organised in the previous four years.

The richness and diversity of the products displayed at the Salon in the international villages represented farmers, regions, art and culture, and honoured the multiple segments of Moroccan crafts: embroidery, damasquinerie, upholstery and silver.

On the first day, an equestrian display of Arabian horses presented by Morocco’s national studs charmed visitors, followed by a show of aerobic training, demonstrated by the riders of the Equestrian Art School of Marrakech, as well as training presented by London 2012 Olympic dressage rider, Yassine Rahmouni, the first rider to represent Morocco at an Olympic equestrian event.

The horse shows were in full swing throughout the week to the delight of thousands of spectators who were present. Just like every year, the Salon’s programme was very busy, between demonstrations and competitions.

The Children's Village offered many activities related to the horse with a play area presented by the Office of Water and Forests and the Fight against Desertification.

Several conferences were also organised and led by a host of researchers and experienced experts in the field and focused on themes relating in particular to 'joint injections in horse sports', 'septic arthritis: diagnosis and treatment and assessment of recovery time after exercise', alongside cultural seminars, which highlighted the key role of the horse in civilisation, the strengthening of the Moroccan army and international relations throughout the centuries and the history of Morocco.

THE CHAMPIONSHIPS:

Alongside the third leg of Morocco's Royal Tour, the World Cup Arab League Show Jumping competitions, the Barb and Arabian horse championships (Class A and B) were held, in which many of the wins went to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as HRH Prince Fahad bin Sultan won junior males, senior males and females in the International Thoroughbred Arabian Horse Show A. Haras Royal De Bouznika of Morocco competed well with Saudi and also won many of the categories.

The show jumping was no less wonderful as up to 20 nations competed for total prize money of 46,000 Euros. Expectations were high for the local favourite Abdelkebir Ouaddar, but a young Syrian on the scene is turning heads, Amre Hamcho, along with the likes of Saudi Olympic champion Abdullah Al Sharbatly, Egypt's Sameh El Dahan and France's Philippe Rozier. Eventually, Al Sharbatly riding Exclusive won the Grand Prix, while Ouaddar and Quickly De Kreisker were placed fourth, and Sameh El Dahan on Suma's Zorro were placed sixth.

THE CULTURE:

Recognised as a prestigious sporting and cultural event nationally and internationally, the magnificent spectacle of the Tbourida today is inseparable from the Moroccan socio-cultural identity and always captures the enthusiasm of thousands of visitors. In line with the national strategy introduced by the Ministry of Agriculture, the Tbourida strengthens and expands the development and sustainability of the equine industry in the Kingdom. Visitors from 16 regions poured into the Salon, demonstrating the commitment of Moroccans, lining up all afternoon to hail and embrace Moroccan identity.

THE EXHIBITION:

The exhibition space hosted international exhibitors from Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, Algeria, Belgium, Germany, Hungary, and France - representing 30 different equine trade industries. They brought together world-renowned operators specialised in horse breeding, equestrian sport, transport and the health of the horse, with Turkey being the guest of honour at the 2013 edition. 🏠

*For full competition and championship results, see:
<http://salonducheval.ma/en/competition-and-championship-results.html>*

*All photos courtesy of
Salon du Cheval/Mustapha Meskine*



The thrilling Tbourida



Abdullah Al Sharbatly



Motaab Al Shamari of Al Khalediah



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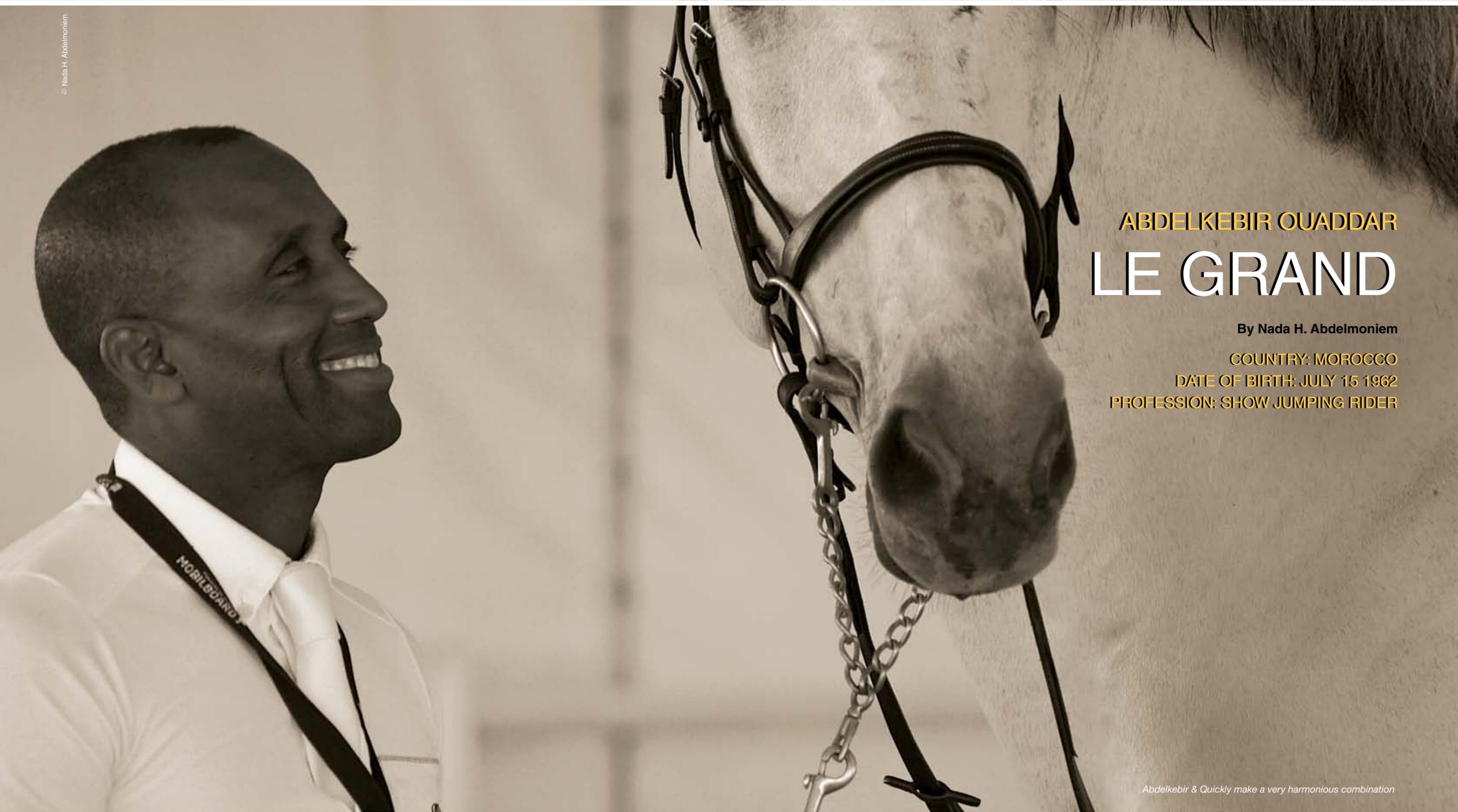
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ABDELKEBIR OUADDAR
LE GRAND

By Nada H. Abdelmoniem

COUNTRY: MOROCCO

DATE OF BIRTH: JULY 15 1962

PROFESSION: SHOW JUMPING RIDER

Abdelkebir & Quickly make a very harmonious combination

ABDELKEBIR OUADDAR, THE NUMBER ONE RIDER IN MOROCCO, IS THE CAPTAIN OF HIS MAJESTY KING MOHAMMED'S VI SHOW JUMPING TEAM. AN EXTREMELY DOWN-TO-EARTH HUMAN BEING AND LOCAL FAVOURITE CHEERED FOR UPON TROTTING INTO THE ARENA, HE AND HIS NINE-YEAR-OLD STALLION 'QUICKLY DE KREISKER' EARNED A FIFTH PLACE IN THE GRAND PRIX OF CSI-4* FRANCONVILLE THIS PAST JUNE AND BECAME THE FIRST MOROCCAN PAIR TO QUALIFY FOR THE 2014 WORLD EQUESTRIAN GAMES IN NORMANDY, FRANCE. BASED IN BOIS-LE-ROI, FRANCE, AND TRAINED BY OLYMPIC MEDALLIST JEAN-MARCEL ROZIER, OUADDAR NEARLY WON EVERY CSI3*-W EVENT OF MOROCCO'S ROYAL TOUR, THE KICK OFF TO THE WORLD CUP ARAB LEAGUE 2013/2014 SEASON. THE SEVEN-TIME NATIONAL CHAMPION WON CSI3*-TETOUAN AND WAS PLACED FOURTH IN THE GRAND PRIX OF CSI3*-EL JADIDA WHERE HT SAT DOWN WITH HIM AND HE SPOKE ABOUT HIS EARLY DAYS AS WELL AS HIS ASPIRATIONS.

BACKGROUND:

I first got introduced to show jumping through Princess Fatima Al Zahraa. She was around me as much as my parents were and I used to ride alongside her son, Prince Moulay Abdellah Alaoui, President of the Moroccan Royal Federation for Equestrian Sports (FRMSE). Once

I finished my studies, I immediately wanted to become a professional show jumper. I travelled and started to train with Nelson Pessoa in Chantilly and so over the years I gained a great amount of experience which led me to seven victories in the Moroccan National Championships.

I am currently training in France,

with no sponsor but with the undivided support of His Majesty King Mohammed VI who keeps a close eye on my results. Without his support I probably would not have been able to participate in as many international events such as the Global Champions Tour (GCT) where I finished 3rd in the 2012 Monaco Grand Prix. This placement

has opened so many doors for me and for that I am extremely grateful.

TRAINERS AND INFLUENCE:

My current coach is Marcel Rozier who is now retired but still gives me excellent pointers. His son, Philippe Rozier, has been selected to be the Moroccan Team coach so I also get some insight from him as well. As for the people who have influenced me, I would say they are Nelson Pessoa and Marcel who, over the years, have had a great impact on me. They were both my favourite riders while growing up and I always wanted to be able to ride like they did one day.

TRAINING PROGRAMME:

I have three competition stallions at the time, being: ten-year-old Porche du Fruitier, nine-year-old Quickly de Kreisker, and eleven-year-old Cordano Sitte Z Cordano. I also have young horses who are still under training but I ride daily, approximately five to six times a day,

at Marcel's Stables where I regularly camp. His Majesty King Mohammed VI also has stables in France which allows me to train there as well. Being based in France makes it easier for me to travel throughout Europe for competitions.

TWO YEAR PLAN AND FAMILY:

I hope that my will and strength will stay strong to allow me to continue to be as successful. I am currently putting all my effort and concentration on preparing for

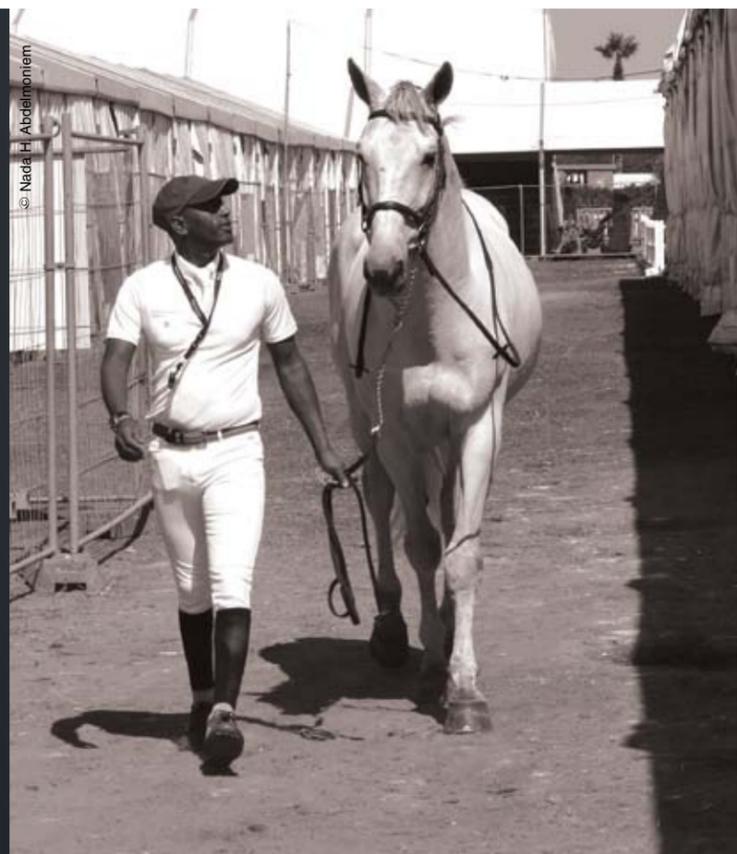
the World Equestrian Games with Quickly. I would also love to be able to compete in the Olympics so that is part of my plan as well.

As for my family, they give me all the strength and support that make me want to continue. My wife is amazing and she manages my entire schedule. My daughter Soukaina is not less amazing. Throughout the years that I have been competing, they have always been by my side during the ups, and during the downs. 🙏

"I WOULD CHANGE ABSOLUTELY NOTHING ABOUT ABDELKEBIR. I DON'T DRINK, I DON'T GAMBLE, I PRAY, I LOVE MY FAMILY AND FRIENDS AND THEY LOVE ME. PEOPLE LOVE ME, JOURNALISTS LIKE YOU LOVE ME...SO WHY WOULD I WANT TO CHANGE ANYTHING ABOUT ME? I THANK GOD 1,000 TIMES FOR BEING WHO I AM AND WOULD LIKE TO STAY JUST THE WAY I AM MEANT TO BE."



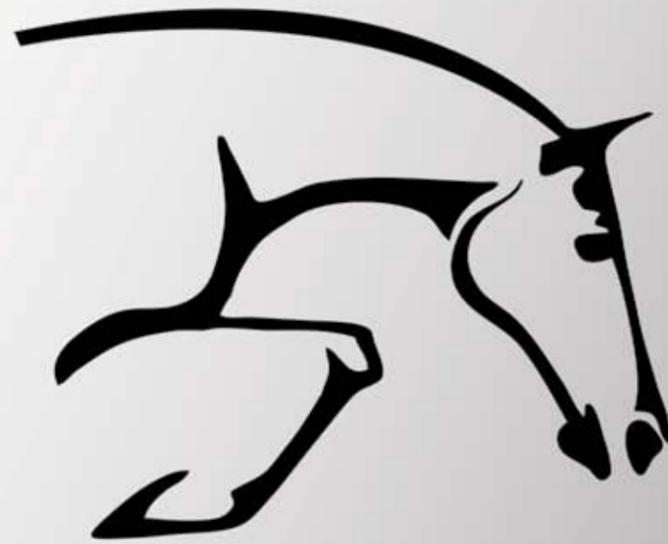
At the 2012 GCT in Monaco



Out for a walk



Abdelkebir with his bundle of joy, Soukaina



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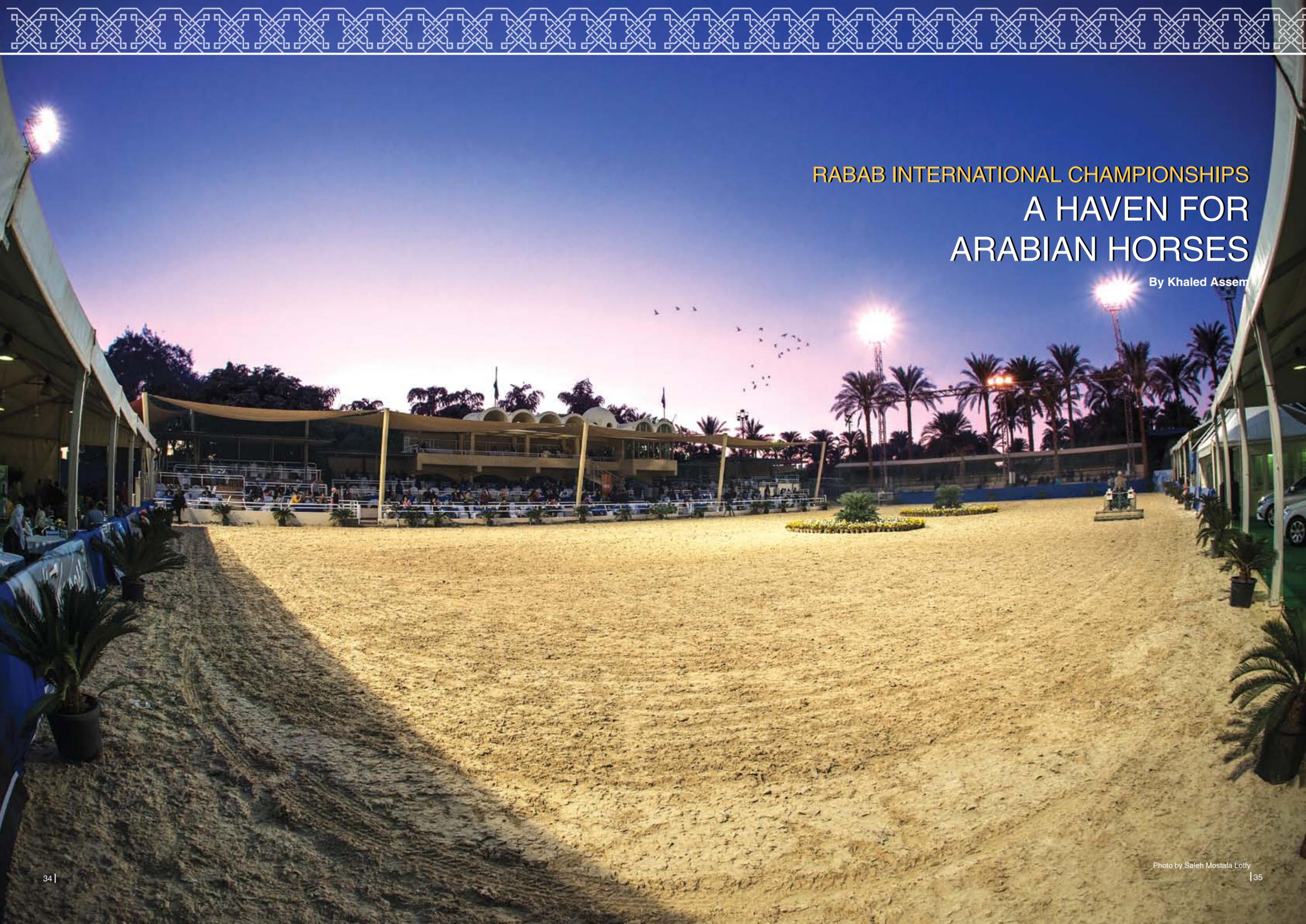
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RABAB INTERNATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS A HAVEN FOR ARABIAN HORSES

By Khaled Assem





Gold yearling filly champion Rasha El Mamlaka



Silver yearling filly champion Nagham El Bidaa



Gold junior filly champion Hend El Rayyan Misr



Silver junior filly champion Nehmedo El Gameel



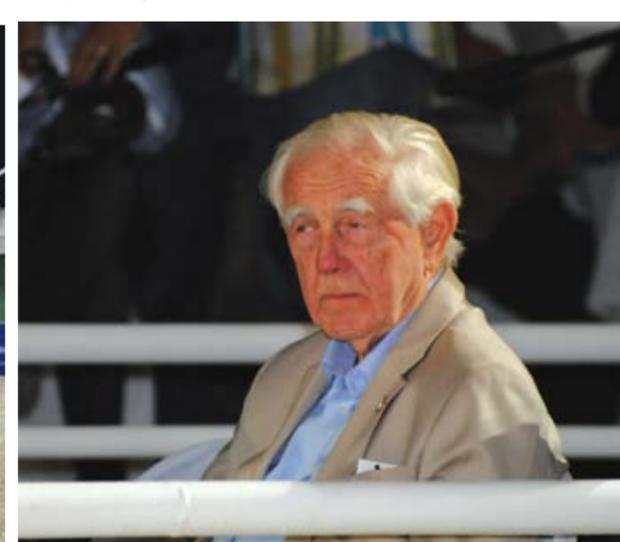
Bronze yearling filly champion Bokra El Farida



Consultant Eng. Khaled bin Laden presenting Dr. Nasr Marei with a trophy



Bronze junior filly champion Manar El Kahera



Dr. Hans-J. Nagel, President of the WAHO

THE RABAB INTERNATIONAL ARABIAN HORSE CHAMPIONSHIPS TOOK PLACE IN CAIRO ON OCTOBER 24TH 2013. THE VENUE, RABAB STUD, IS A HAVEN FOR ARABIAN HORSES AND AN IDEAL SHOW LOCATION WITH ITS EXCELLENT FACILITIES, LARGE NUMBER OF HOSTING AND BOARDING BOXES IN THE DOMED ARAB STYLE, PADDOCKS, AND LARGE SHOW ARENAS ALL SHELTERED IN GREEN GROOMED ACREAGE SHADED BY DATE PALMS WITHIN SIGHT OF THE ANCIENT SAQQARA PYRAMIDS. ADD TO ALL OF THESE PLUSSES THE OBVIOUS PASSION OF THE HOSTS AND ORGANISERS OF THE SHOW, ALWAYS A SMILE AND A WARM WELCOME, EFFICIENT AND DYNAMIC AND YOU HAVE AN IDEAL SETTING FOR THE CHAMPIONSHIPS. WE COULD CARRY ON WITH OUR PRAISE AND COMMENDATION OF THE VENUE AND THE EVENT, BUT WE WILL LEAVE THE COMMENTS NOW TO THE RABAB PARTICIPANTS THEMSELVES...

MRS. IRINA STIGLER
Judge - Russia:

I frequently visit Egypt; this is my third time in the country and my second year to judge at Rabab. I see some progress with the young horses. The quality is improving very fast especially with yearlings. The pace of the progress is also quite good, particularly with the presentation as they are using the services of European handlers and the level is getting better every time. The hospitality is great, of course, and can't really complain about the weather!

MRS. NABILA AL-ALI
Commentator - Kuwait

This is my second year at Rabab and I am very proud to be invited. Egypt is known to have very good commentators and very good voices so being here amongst them is a privilege. The show is lovely; Rabab Stud has such a friendly atmosphere and Sheikh Khaled bin Laden has a very special aura about his personality that adds to the whole show.

I recently started to commentate at shows in Belgium and that made me very happy because even though I commentate at

shows all over the Middle East. It was quite interesting to work with a European audience; presenting Arabian horses with Arab names, correctly pronounced in Arabic added flair to the show. As for the crowd in Egypt, they are extremely interactive. Last year a groom gave me a good remark; he told me that my presence and my voice were a good winning charm for him and his horses.

I am always glad to be here as Egypt...well, it is like a second home to me, and I feel that my experience as a show jumping judge gave me more depth of field



Gold champion senior mares Sheikhat Al Khalediah



Silver champion senior mares Loaloah El Kahera



Gold champion yearling colts El Basha Ounny



Silver champion yearling colts Djdan Ibn Djsira



Bronze champion senior mares Ajenda



Mr. Aly Shaarawy



Bronze champion yearling colts Ward El Masaeid



Dr. Mohamed Machmoum

when it came to commentating on and presenting Arabian horse shows even though I fully intend to become a judge for halter classes. For now, I am reading intensely to get familiar with the terms used in such shows, and to add my own expressions and feelings according to what I see.

MR. NASHAAT HEGAZY
Show Organiser - Egypt

Despite the difficulties Egypt is currently going through, we worked really hard to set up this show and we were able to bring in more sponsors, over 220 participating horses and five countries competing apart from Egypt. I have to say that the levels of horses participating were certainly higher than in the

previous years.

The most difficult adversity that challenges us as organisers is that we are unable to host foreign horses due to the EU ban. We came up with a plan to host the World Championships with Italian organisers, yet unless the ban is lifted, we won't be able to put together a successful event.

MR. ALY SHAARAWY
Judge - Egypt

The second class of the young fillies was remarkable as it showed the wealth in the pool of good horses available in Egypt. This is very important if we want to define where good work is taking place as well as a route for development. Presenting the

horses is still an area where we need to develop; our local boys are still behind in experience and some are without good talent when it comes to extension.

Also, horses should be trained all year round not just before shows. Judges are here to see the strengths and faults in a horse. If a horse is trained and exercised well, considering that he is naturally talented, then certainly the marks for movement, for example, will grow higher. Yet, as I mentioned, the horse has to have it within as well. Consequently type plus exercise will bring out the best in the horse. This show is really well organised and it is acquiring an international flavour and I hope to see more participation next year.

DR. MOHAMED MACHMOUM
Judge - Morocco

I have been attending this show since its birth. In Egypt there are three elements that one has to recognise:

A very special and interactive audience that is well informed and in love with this discipline which tremendously adds to the success of the show.

The quality of participating horses; even though maybe 60% of the total number of studs participated and not all, the quality is still great which just indicates that the number of good horses in Egypt is very high and that in itself is success.

The organisation every year shows passion, vision, competitiveness and the desire to be on an international level.

All this is an addition to the Egyptian Arabian horse infrastructure and wealth in this sport.

I also noticed that the classes for the producing mares and stallions were very rich in quality and number, and those classes are the base for any breeding programme. Moreover, the three-year-old classes were very impressive.

Egypt has some excellent bloodlines and the EAO is one of the richest banks worldwide. This is a treasure not just for Egypt but

for the whole of the Middle East. As to further developments of this industry, in my view what is needed is:

- Producing parallel complementing factors such as the handlers. There is not one local Arab handler that can match the skills of a European. All the studs always import or hire foreign handlers.
- There is still some deficiency in the veterinarian field. Its development will surely add to the progress of the industry.

On the breeding level, Egypt has very successful progeny due to very experienced and selective breeding programmes, yet still, there is a lot of room for development in the affiliate



Gold champion junior colts Sohaib El Farid



Bronze champion junior colts Ezz El Khahera



Gold champion senior stallions PCF Vision



Silver champion senior stallions Awwal El Ammar



Bronze champion junior colts Zamzam EL Sayad



Mohamed Akl, Irina Stigler & Marwa Fawzy



Bronze champion senior stallions Imperial Baareq



The Organising Team of the Rabab 2013 Championships

industries as I mentioned such as producing professional educated grooms and enriching the pool of judges. Egypt is a big name in this field and there should be a "factory" of excellent grooms, vets, and most importantly, judges to support.

Finally a cornerstone that without a doubt should be compulsory is the need for good training for the horses, not just preparation but regular good training to keep the muscles' confirmation of the horses for the shows and for international competitions. I saw some horses that were a bit overweight and some were out of shape. I am, after all, looking for

an athletic horse.

It would be a good idea to hold a seminar after each show hosting breeders to explain some of their views and recommendations as well as some of the advantages that they saw in order to create more awareness to at least some of the other upcoming breeders. This will also allow the judge to communicate and interact with them. A simple remark could actually lead to the change of a breeding programme and further develop it.

In that sense, the role of HT is to try to get out there and develop the dynamics of communication

within the industry where more people could benefit. Finally, the target and aim of shows is not just to present who is a winner, but to learn about the ideal horse and programme's strength, and how the industry could become stronger. It is such a responsibility to be a judge because through a judge's points, someone could continue in his path and another could change one. Judging is and should remain to be a beacon of light for the breeder who wants to learn.

DR. MOHAMED OUSSIDHOUM
Judge - Morocco

This is my first time here, the

quality is very good and everyone is generously hospitable. The organisation is great as well; the female fillies and colts were a good class. I wish all the best for Egypt.

MR. JOSY EVERARS
Judge - Belgium

This is my second time in Egypt. I see improvements as I noticed that more breeders keep participating every year and that the horses' conditions have improved from last year.

Overall, the quality is there. In Europe it is a bit different with our food and other factors, yet

what the breeders are doing here is good because I simply see the results through the efforts done in the shows. The presentation is improving by using European handlers and for sure there is room for improvement; not on the big levels but on the smaller ones. I see that there is some work to be done on the personal level than in the genetic. They are using semen and the gene pool is more open now.

MRS. MICHAELE WEIDNER
Judge - Belgium

This is my first time as a judge here but I visited Egypt several times. I am very happily surprised, the horses are looking very good, they are very well handled, and some

horses have very good movement. I would put some attention on the legs; this is the only thing I could criticise. I would also recommend development through breeding by using better stallions and mares. But this problem is worldwide and not just in Egypt. In all, it's a top show and I loved the senior mares' class which showed the richness in the gene pool and the fillies; they have great potential. 🏆

For full results, see:
<http://tinyurl.com/k5an32l>

All photos courtesy of Ahmed Nashaat El-Hamadany
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SOENKE LAUTERBACH

A LOOK INSIDE THE GERMAN EQUESTRIAN FEDERATION

By Khaled Assem

ONE OF THE MOST INFLUENTIAL AND LEADING EQUESTRIAN FEDERATIONS IN THE WORLD IS THE GERMAN EQUESTRIAN FEDERATION. THIS YEAR, THE GERMAN EQUESTRIAN OLYMPIC COMMITTEE CELEBRATED ITS CENTENNIAL, A REMARKABLE 100 YEARS OF GROWTH AND ACHIEVEMENT. ON THIS OCCASION, THE SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE GERMAN EQUESTRIAN FEDERATION, SOENKE LAUTERBACH, GRACIOUSLY TOOK THE TIME TO SPEAK WITH HORSE TIMES ABOUT THE SUCCESSES AND CHALLENGES OF HORSE SPORT IN GERMANY. HERE IS WHAT MR. LAUTERBACH HAD TO SAY.

The German Equestrian Olympic Committee celebrated its 100th anniversary this year. As the Secretary General, how would you describe the history of top-level equestrian sport in Germany and its particular success story?

Equestrian is one of the most traditional Olympic sports in our country. In the early 20th century the sport was dominated by members of the armed forces. This was partly due to the fact that the cavalry still played an important role as such horses were always available. Secondly, cavalry officers often had a rural or aristocratic background and had been close to horses all their lives. However, the results of German competitors at the Olympic

Games in 1912 were not up to the basic expectations and therefore, the Crown Prince founded the German Olympic Committee for Equestrian Sports (Deutsches Olympiade-Komitee für Reiterei, DOKR) with a view on improving performance in the following Games. Even though there were no Olympic Games in 1916 due to the First World War, the DOKR continued to exist. It was managed very professionally by real horsemen and management experts throughout the past 100 years until today.

In the 1950s the DOKR moved to Warendorf where it is still located today. Being a member of the German National Federation, it is managed by the same staff and in the same

way as the top sports department of the National Federation.

The wider the base of a pyramid is, the higher the pyramid can be. Our greatest advantage is the broad base of horses and riders. This results in a comparatively large number of top horses and riders who have risen to the highest levels of international sports – and this has remained unchanged since the middle of the last century and we strive to keep it as such. Also, there is a high density of events in Germany, providing our athletes with the opportunity to compete at all levels every week.

Consequently, with the help of our core values and horsemanship, education (of horses and riders),



Headquarters of the German Federation & the German Equestrian Olympic Committee

dedication and professional management and support by DOKR, Germany has become, maybe, the most successful country in equestrian sport.

Looking back, what do you consider to be the highlights of professional German equestrian sport and what would you qualify as particularly challenging moments?

It is difficult to compare certain top results against others in our long history of successful participation. But I will mention a few that appear to be very special to many.

Even though the Olympic Games in Berlin in 1936 took place during a time no German citizen can be proud of, we can be proud of the unique success of German equestrian athletes who won all six gold medals at these Games. This will surely remain undefeated.

The double gold medals of Hans Günter Winkler, the most successful jumping rider of all times, and the legendary mare Halla at the Olympic Games in Stockholm in 1956 brought Germany back on track after the Second World War. And these two, together with other athletes

such as Fritz Thiedemann, acted as fantastic ambassadors for “the new Germany”. For several decades, from 1976 to 2008, the dressage team won all gold medals at the Olympics.

And finally, the rise of our eventing teams during the past ten years is probably the most impressive proof of our strength. Following disastrous results in 2000/2002, the DOKR set up a special programme for upcoming riders and was lucky to employ top trainers. This, in combination with other measures, resulted in double eventing gold at the Games in 2008 (Hinrich Romeike and Marius), in 2012 (Michael Jung and La Biosthetique Sam FBW), as well as other victories at several European and World Championships. Michael Jung, who is called the most “complete” rider in the world by many, can serve as the perfect example for our education and training philosophy. He may well be succeeding Mark Todd who was named “rider of the 20th century” by the FEI.

But there have also been dark hours in our sport. Best known is, for sure, the poling (To pole a horse is to raise the pole as to hit the horse’s legs when jumping a fence) scandal

in the early 1990s. And there were several cases of doping and prohibited medication in the past 10 years where German riders were also involved. We had to overcome these situations that are in a way comparable to the current situation in endurance in some countries. This was a tough and painful process for us. But in the end it worked and I think it is fair to say that we came out of this stronger than before.

The German Federation is one the most influential in the international equestrian scene. Please allow us an inside look into how things work there.

Our National Federation is built on three pillars: sport with 17 Regional member organisations, breeding with 25 member organisations and then the 58,000 personal members. There is no special structure that separates the different disciplines, and I consider this crucial for the development of the sport. We are lucky to have a lot of real experts in our committees and counsels as well as among our 160 staff members at the NF headquarters.

Within the sports sector there are 710,000 club members organised in 7,700 equestrian clubs. Of course



Fun & early education in horse sport

not all these people compete. But 3,600 horse shows accommodate 1.5 million starts in competitions every year. An average of 80,000 athletes compete with 137,000 horses. This may again provide some understanding for the broad base of athletes I was referring to earlier on.

But we are far from being perfect; there are another one million riders who are not listed in our clubs or as personal members, and we have not been able to attract them to our organisation so far.

What are your major goals for the Federation in the near future?

We are just going through a major strategy process to define the goals until 2020 and the way forward to achieve them. One of the challenges involved is to set priorities. Economically, more and more difficult times will arise and we will be unable to continue with everything we have been doing so far.

Having said that, among our top priorities will be to remain one of the most successful nations and to win at least four medals at the Olympics in Rio in 2016. We have just issued new training and education rules and these partly new standards need to



During the 2012 FEI Sports Forum

be established among all trainers and riders. We are also seeking to identify new income opportunities to fund our work. This is important because we cannot count on growing subsidies from the government in future. And we are striving to attract more members, be it the personal members department or in our riding clubs. For both we are already developing and running a special campaign.

On the international side, the FEI has had to overcome major challenges; what do you think have been the greatest achievements of the international body so far and where do you see an urgent need to do more?

In recent years, the FEI has benefited from fundamental growth. We have more fellow member National Federations and income has risen significantly. And my impression is that FEI Headquarters works more efficiently than ever. There is a great team in there, supported by volunteers from all continents.

Members of the FEI are of very different developing standards and this makes it challenging for the FEI to serve all members equally. They need to avoid any perceived

conflict of development versus top sport. I am well aware that Europe especially is considered to be defending its interests against the rest of the world. I do not feel that this is the case, and the FEI should help to keep this impression low or reduce it to zero.

Endurance is currently of great challenge. The FEI Endurance Strategic Planning Group (ESPG) has identified the problems and proposed urgent measures to be taken as well as a long term strategy. All these must successfully be implemented and a change of culture be achieved. Otherwise I am not sure if this fascinating discipline has a chance to survive in our equestrian family. As Andrew Finding, Chair of the ESPG, said: “Failure is not an option”.

About Soenke Lauterbach:
Mr. Lauterbach came into office in January 2009 and was Secretary General of the Hong Kong Equestrian Federation prior to this current position.

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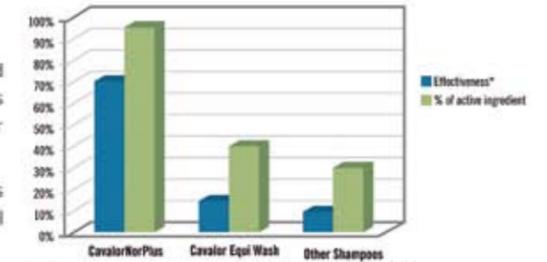
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– Karen Keymeulen
Groom & Owner



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EL ZAHRAA EXPERIENCE AN IMPRESSION OF THE 2013 CHAMPIONSHIPS

By Bridget McArdle McKinney
Interviews by Nada H. Abdelmoniem

IT WAS MY FIRST TIME TO ATTEND THE WORLD-FAMOUS EL ZAHRAA ARABIAN HORSE CHAMPIONSHIPS; IN FACT, IT WAS MY FIRST TIME TO VISIT EL ZAHRAA STUD. ON ENTERING THE GATES TO THE COMPOUND I FELT A LITTLE LIKE DOROTHY IN THE "WIZARD OF OZ" TRANSPORTED FROM THE SCARY TORNADO-BLOWN BLACK-AND-WHITE KANSAS INTO THE BRILLIANT TECHNICOLOR WORLD OF PEACEFUL MUNCHKINLAND. HOW COULD THIS BE? HOW COULD THIS BEAUTIFUL GREEN OASIS EXIST AMID THE CRAZY TRAFFIC, DUST, NOISE AND POLLUTION OUTSIDE, RIGHT IN THE CITY?

As we drove down into the place through an arcade of fragrant eucalyptus trees, the senses are calmed and you begin to forget that that other world exists at all and the mind turns to the beauty of the horse as we pass corral after corral of mares, foals, and separately, stallions trotting, playing or slowly making their way to wherever they please.

Of course, back in 1928 when the Royal Agricultural Society, the predecessor of the Egyptian Agricultural Organization, sought to establish a permanent breeding farm for their pure Arabian breeding stock, they found an ideal location far out in the desert of Ain Shems, today a bustling densely-populated neighbourhood. At that time, I suppose, no one could ever have imagined that Cairo would grow to such an extent as to completely encase today's El Zahraa Stud.

The stud itself was created from the descendents of Abbas Pasha's breeding stock owned by Khedive Abbas Pasha Hilmi II, Prince Mohammed Ali Tawfik, Lady Anne Blunt and her daughter Lady Wentworth, the best of the best of the pure Egyptian Arabian horse, the foundation of the 'Straight Egyptian'.

Further up the avenue of eucalyptus, we approach the stately showing grounds and tented arena festooned in cool clean white cotton, tiered for the viewing tables, shaded, and catered. A VIP experience by anyone's standards, civilised, calm and cultured...until the first of the equine competitors bursts into the arena to the thumping high-decibel sound of techno-music and the roars, claps, horns, rattles, total cacophony of the gallery intended to whip the horse into a frenzy to show his 'fire!' The expert horse handlers do their best to calmly show off their charges in the best light despite the chaos and their focus and concentration under the circumstances were truly remarkable, as were the focus and concentration of the judges.

The judges hailed from France, Germany, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Italy, Switzerland and



Gold champion, International mares Mahala



Judges of the National Show with their trophies



Gold champion, International fillies Dahma Al Najdiah



Gold champion, International stallions Lahari



Mr. Mohsen El Gabry, Mr. Ahmed El Telawy & Prince Sultan bin Saud



Gold champion, International colts Sohaib

Poland and applied their extensive expertise to the task of discerning the subtle differences between the competing horses in each class to determine the ultimate champion. What do they look for? What little nuance of form or disposition makes a winner?

The horses are judged on 'type', head and neck, body and topline, legs, and movement. While the other rated aspects are reasonably clear, the aspect of 'type' we were told is an esoteric quality combining form, attitude, colour, and the 'X-factor', which the judges feel rather than see. That's what makes them judges and us observers!

This annual event gathers local and foreign breeders who are keenly invested in snatching the National and/or International Championship. Tensions run high, gossip and jealousy flow like sweet tea, charges and counter-charges are thrown, but everybody knows everybody and the legendary multi-generation breeder families and the winning breeding stars are always respected and honoured, and overall the feeling of good-natured camaraderie prevails.

The Egyptian Agricultural Organization (EAO) today regulates over 650 Straight Egyptian horse breeding farms which comprise over 8,000 purebred horses and El Zahraa Stud's renewed and re-invigorated breeding programme aims to keep the best of the Straight Egyptians right here in Egypt to produce a new generation of the preserved breed.

This unique line was almost lost twice. The first Arabians of this line arrived from the Arabian Peninsula in the early thirteenth century, imported by the Mamluk Sultan El Nassir Ibn Qalawun and Sultan Barquq. Then, in the early 1800's, Mohammed Ali Pasha, the founder of modern Egypt, increased the fold with the purest Arabian lines from Arabia, which over time devolved to his grand-son Abbas Hilmi Pasha I. Upon his death his heir unfortunately had little interest in the breed stock and sold or gave away much of it, so lovingly and carefully bred and kept. Fortunately, Ali Pasha Sherif bought

as much as he could, owning at one point 400 of this line.

However, upon his death in 1897, his horses were sold at public auction. In 1908 the horse breeding section was assigned to re-start the pure Arabian line and turned to the lines which had been sold after Ali Pasha Sherif's death. It is from these horses that the stud and the Straight Egyptian now descend.

Why do they do this? Why do they breed and preserve? Why would this ever be important when there is so much prevailing poverty and illiteracy? Indeed, when the Stud itself is surrounded by poverty? The breeders would tell you plainly, it is because it is heritage, it is meant to last, it is meant to be protected and preserved, it is the Egyptian line...

MR. PETER GROSS
Breeder - Germany

We have been coming to Egypt for 12 years and we attend all El Zahraa shows. Organisation becomes better every time we're here; horse quality keeps getting better as well and I think foreign breeders should start considering coming back and competing. The legs of the horses I see are quite weak, however, and, as you see, the marks from the judges are generally low, just like all over the world, but this has nothing to do with the horses we have been seeing in the National Championships. I believe that the legs of Egyptian Arabians are no longer correct and that is something that has been going on for years. In Europe and the USA the horses run free in the wild and as such maybe the legs are better and stronger. In Egypt they stay in the paddock most of the time, grass is not available. But I have to add, the legs were a disaster 12 years ago; they really have developed at this stage.

MR. HASSAN ABDO
Breeder - Egypt

Egyptian dressage is a popular Egyptian folk equestrian activity. We choose certain horses to perform the dances as not all horses have the



Gold champion, National colts Andaleeb Al Baidaa



Nada H. Abdelmoniem & Bridget McArdle McKinney



Gold champions, National fillies Amal Rabab



Gold champion, National mares Anbar Noor



President of the EAO presenting the Best Breeder trophy to Tarek & Ahmed Hamdy of El Farida Stud



Gold champion, National stallions Gamil El Gabry

skill, and those horses are generally different from racing or Arabian horses. It takes up to three years to train them; if a horse shows good results we take him into the ring, but if not, then he is deemed to have no potential talent. The talent usually runs in horses which come from lines that are known to do the folk dance. Actually, it keeps getting better these days; there is more competition and the best horses are judged. In the past unregistered balady [from the country-side] horses were used but now, registered Arabians are the big hit.

This folk dressage is popular abroad and several times we took the horses and we performed in Germany, the UAE and France. However with the [EU] ban, things have been bad. It sent the prices of Arabians to the sky. It's been a loss for all the breeders and it's beneficial for those abroad who are now importing horses from the Gulf as opposed to Egypt, the origin. We hope that officials lift the ban soon.

DR. MOHAMED HASHIM ELDEEB
Chairman of the EAO

I was the Chairman of the EAO from February 2011 till 2012 and was then reassigned in July 2013. The EAO would hold two annual auctions but due to the political and economic crisis Egypt has been going through, as well as the ban on the importation of Egyptian horses, the organisation has not been producing the same amount of financial resources it did in the past. Let's take El Zahraa itself, it costs around 8,000,000 Egyptian pounds to annually keep it maintained, and this amount should be covered from exportation alone, but it is simply not happening. The EAO is a governmental institute, yes, but since 1970 it has been an established as a self-financed economic institution. What needs to be done to develop the EAO is to pick up on the projects that were started yet never completed, such as the equine hospital built from the donations of a Gulf businessman. It's there, but it lacks all the facilities.



Equicare booth at El Zahraa Stud Farm



The Organising Team of El Zahraa



A 12 x4 HT banner at El Zahraa Stud Farm

MR. MOHSIN EL GABRY
Breeder – Egypt

El Zahraa is where the history of Arabian horses started; all those who breed Egyptian Arabians would pay respect to this place, the place where all breeders started their passion.

The ban has been a little beneficial for some of us breeders to tell you the truth. Some of the pure genes that used to be exported are now kept here in Egypt which has in turn increased horse production. But generally speaking, I believe this ban is about administrative paperwork and should be resolved soon.

MR. PHILIP LOOYENS
Handler - Belgium

Handling horses has been a hobby for me; I've been doing it since I was eleven years old and I just love it. I handle horses all around the world and currently will be doing so around the Middle East as it's the winter season in Europe.

The trick to handling horses is a combination of a few things together and there is so much room for development for local handlers. Actually, things have changed a lot since I first came to El Zahraa. Handling is a long process of practice. For example, I personally do not like all the crazy plastic bag waving; they are supposed to stop doing it. If locally they want to be part of any positive process they have to



Everyone came to pay tribute to legendary Dani El Barbary; grooms, handlers, Presidents, breeders & Saleh caught one of those tributes with one snap



Dr. Mohamed Hashim Eldeeb presenting Dr. Nasr Marei with an honorary trophy

start with stopping that. Using one plastic bag is fine and only when it's waved with a bit of a feel, but when there are 20 handlers waving plastic bags at the horses, it's really not nice and it's overdone. It's probably worse for the horse than to anyone else!

MR. KHALED EL NAGHAMSHI
Breeder - Kuwait

I started in El Zahraa in 1997 and every time I come there is some development. Arabian horses have problems with their legs; it is not just in Egypt, but worldwide. This could be enhanced with better production. We really urge those involved to exert more efforts with regards to the ban; it is such a shame that all these beautiful Arabians are trapped inside and not seen elsewhere.

MR. BADR EL JABERI
Omani Cultural Attaché:

This is the first time for me at El Zahraa and I am very impressed by the horses and hopefully after the ban is lifted, it would be great to see the Sultanate participate with some of its Arabian horses. 🇮🇵

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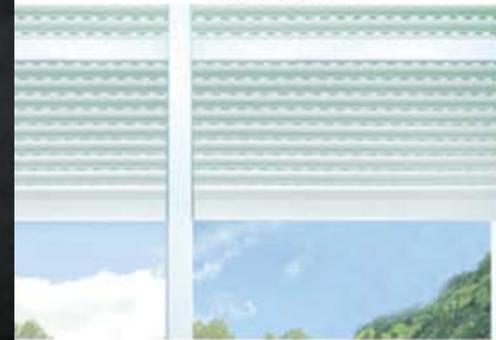
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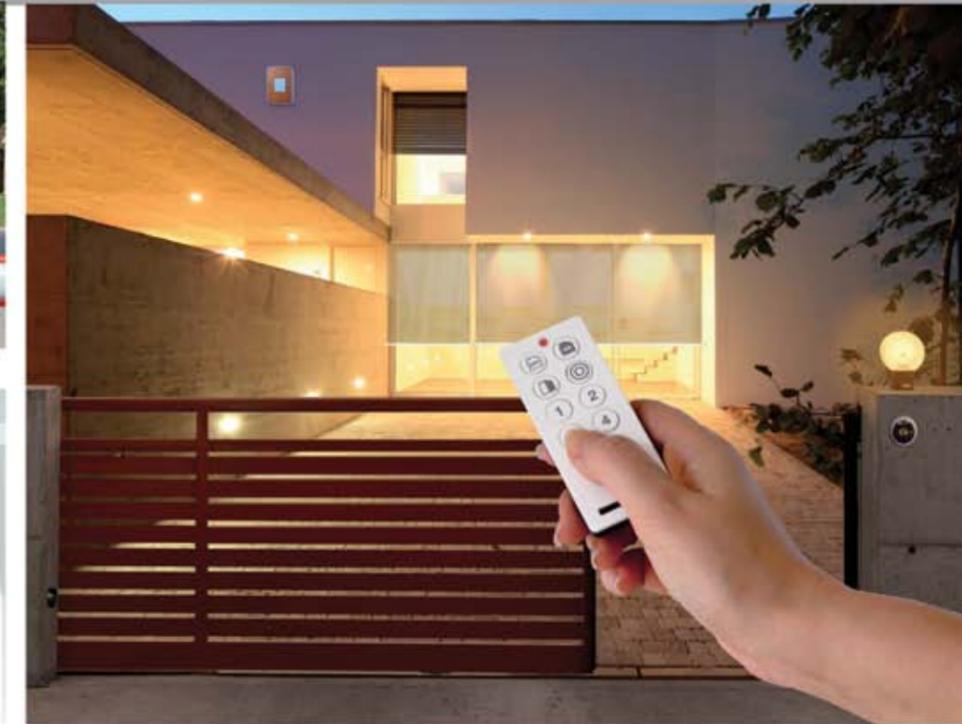
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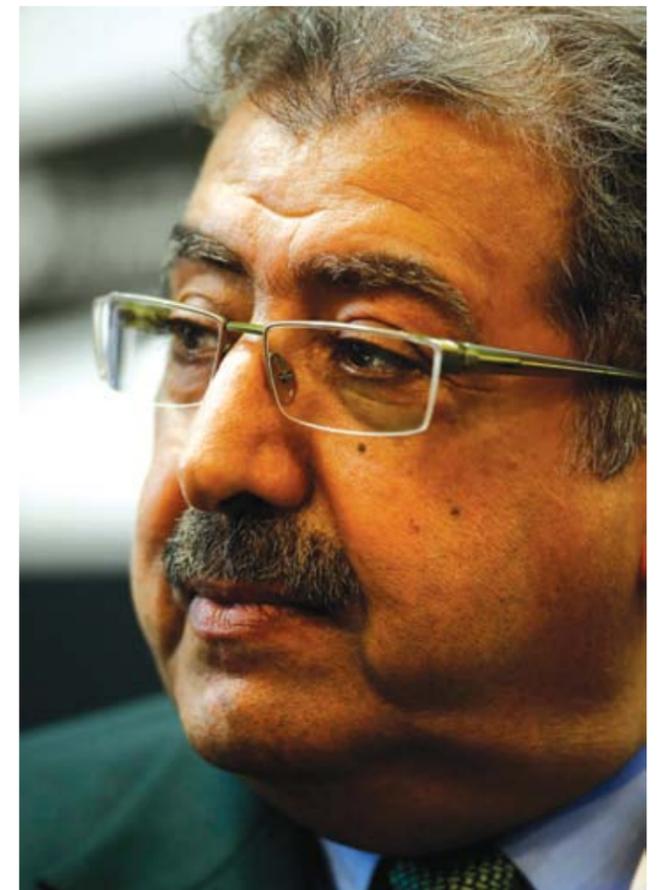
KING ABDULLAH SHOW JUMPING FESTIVAL 2013 CHIVALRY, HONOUR AND DIGNITY

By Khaled Assem

HORSE TIMES ATTENDED THE SECOND ANNUAL KING ABDULLAH SHOW JUMPING FESTIVAL CSI5*-RIYADH WHICH WAS STAGED AT THE MAGNIFICENT NOFA EQUESTRIAN RESORT LATE NOVEMBER – EARLY DECEMBER. AS CHAIRMAN OF THE FESTIVAL HRH PRINCE ABDULLAH BIN MITEB BIN ABDULLAH BIN ABDULAZIZ PUT INTO ACTION HIS BELIEF THAT EQUESTRIANISM IS A DEMANDING SPORT AND IS AT THE HEART OF THE HERITAGE AND IDENTITY OF ALL SAUDIS.

Chairman of the Board of Trustees of Saudi Equestrian Fund, HH Prince Faisal bin Abdullah stated that a key aim of the King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz Show Jumping Festival is not so much the winning, it was to provide Saudi equestrians with the opportunity to improve by competing at a higher level against equestrians from other countries with different skills. As HH Prince Faisal told HT:

“THE VALUE OF THIS WORD [FURUSSIA OR HORSEMANSHIP] IS THE PERCEPTION OF CHIVALRY, KNOWLEDGE OF EQUESTRIANISM, AND THE HIGHER VALUE OF PASSION AND COMPASSION BETWEEN MAN AND HORSE. IT IS THE ESSENCE OF DIGNITY AND HUMILITY AND A TEST OF BRAVERY AND HONOUR. THE MESSAGE HERE IS NOT JUST THE WINNING; IT IS THE ENDEAVOUR OF BRAVERY, PATIENCE AND HONOUR. IT DOES NOT RECOGNISE A PRINCE, IT SIMPLY RECOGNISES A HORSEMAN. IT IS THE IDENTITY OF A CULTURE THAT HAS BEEN THERE FOR THOUSANDS OF YEARS.”





HRH Prince Abdullah bin Miteb



Abdullah Al Sharbatly



Kamal Bahamdan won the GP qualifier of the Festival

Indeed, for some time there has been a strong and focused movement to support and encourage the sport of show jumping in Saudi Arabia and the Kingdom has received significant international accolades and recognition for its achievements in show jumping, chiefly through the successes of the Saudi Equestrian team. As HRH Prince Abdullah confirmed, "The support of King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz is the foundation of the Festival. The King's support is complemented by the generous support of HRH Crown Prince Salman bin Abdulaziz, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defence and HRH Prince Muqrin bin Abdulaziz, Special Envoy to King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz, Second Deputy

Prime Minister. The King's support is based upon the importance he places on the younger generation, sport in general and equestrianism in particular." The first tournament held from 20 – 23 November was the domestic Saudi tournament (Lel Watan) which was being run for the fifth time. The tournament consisted exclusively of Saudi riders of all ages and levels of skill. The second tournament was for international equestrians, and worldwide participation was invited. A five-star rating for the event has been assured by the course configuration, competitor qualification criteria and the size of the prize money.

The third tournament was exclusive to nationals of Gulf countries and was the first of its kind. There was a round dedicated to younger riders aimed at promoting equestrianism in the Gulf and raising existing standards. Cash prize money of \$ one million was on offer to the tournaments' victors. Abdulrahman Alzahrani, PR Manager of the Saudi Equestrian Federation stated, "With the big prize money available from organisation and sponsoring companies, every rider could win something even if a small amount. The idea is to present financial support in the form of prize money whereby young riders can at least afford all their requirements. The shows are the way to progress



Khaled Assem, HH Prince Faisal & Sami Al Duhami

and the prize money is the way to sustain that. This comes through HRH Prince Abdullah bin Miteb, Prince Badr bin Muhammed and other sponsors such as Khalid Al Jeraisy.”

Hosting the Festival at the luxurious Nofa Equestrian Resort was certainly an intended part of this ‘heritage showcase’.

Located in the centre of the Kingdom, close to Tebrak some 85 kilometres from Riyadh, it is arguably the most prestigious and beautiful resort of its type in the Arab world. Built with an eye to the desert’s original Bedouin culture it melds with the environment and landscape.

The resort describes its ambience and design thus: “Throughout

the day the effect of the wind and angle of the sun’s rays are constantly changing the shape and colour of the sand dunes. Like a cross between snakes and chameleons the dunes change from the morning’s shade of light beige to the late afternoon’s reddish hues. The resort design has not only been based on the landscape, but also on Bedouin culture. Competitive horse riding has always been part of Bedouin culture, and Bedouins have always lived in the desert. So horses and desert are their twin loves with their tent as home and shelter from extreme weather. Also Bedouin hospitality to visitors is legendary...what better an inspiration for a resort than to capture tradition and service quality with modern

sustainability?”

The Saudi Equestrian team riders have had their most successful show of the year during this Festival. With four of the team’s six riders competing, Saudi Equestrian was well represented here.

The victories started early for the Saudi Equestrian team, with Kamal Bahamdan winning on the opening day – the 5* Grand Prix qualifier riding Noblesse des Tess, and this had been preceded with a second place finish for HRH Prince Abdullah bin Miteb in the opening class of the day with two clear rounds aboard Senorita.

The second day saw Abdullah Sharbatly register his first of what would be three



Ibrahim Bisharat, Bob Ellis & Atef Shawky



Fahad Al Eid



Khaled Al Eid



HRH Prince Nawaf bin Faisal, President of the KSA Equestrian Federation, along with Eng. Khaled Allam, one of the Festival's sponsors, Abdullah Al Sharbatly & Sheikh Ali Al Thani

victories in three days, when he won the 1.45m class aboard Little Pezi. A resurgent Khaled Al Eid was in third place riding Moustic des Flayelles and Kamal Bahamdan riding Cezanne 30 was fifth. All three riders went double clear, but Sharbatly's second round was particularly impressive as he was 3.5 seconds faster than his nearest rival in second place.

"Little Pezi is a new horse for me and is already jumping really well", said Sharbatly, "The level of competition at the show has been amazing, with all the local and international riders bringing their best horses which makes each class highly competitive. However, both Little Pezi and Chicago 84

have shown their class, and I'm delighted with the way they have been jumping throughout the week".

Course designer Bob Ellis commented to HT, "For this Festival I knew that the standard of riding was going to be good and a little more concentrated as it is a World Cup qualifier. I hope I set up enough tests without going stupid so that there would be no problem for the horses, but rather for the riders that they would have to adjust the stride patterns a little bit more and hopefully we get to watch some good sport. All the problems that we put in with the distances are more a rider's problem than a horse's one."

The victories continued for Sharbatly on the third and final day. Riding Chicago 84 he won the first class of the day, going double clear and fastest in the jump-off, ahead of his Saudi Equestrian team mate Kamal Bahamdan in third on Cezanne 30. And Sharbatly went one better in the Grand Prix when, riding Little Pezi, he again went double clear and six seconds faster than the second placed rider. 🏆

For full results, see:
<http://tinyurl.com/qac97os>

Sources for this article include:
King Abdullah Show Jumping Festival website and Saudi Equestrian

الدورة العاشرة من معرض دبي الدولي للخيل

المعرض التجاري الأبرز في الشرق الأوسط لقطاع الفروسية



تجربة راقية في عالم الفروسية

هل ترغب في حضور أكبر حدث في عالم الفروسية للعام؟ يمثل معرض دبي الدولي للخيل نقطة لقاء لمختلف الجهات المعنية بالفروسية، من فرسان محترفين، وأصحاب الجياد العربية، والاسطبلات، ونوادي الفروسية، وهواة الفروسية.

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مزايا عينية: اختبروا حماسة المزاد المباشر واستكشفوا تشكيلة من القطع الملائمة لمختلف الميزانيات.

جديدا صالة عرض فنية: سيقوم مبدعون متخصصون في الفنون التي تتناول الجياد بعرض أعمالهم التي تعكس جمال الجواد العربي ورشاقته وتجنس أدميته في التراث المحلي ليتسنى لمحبي الفنون في المنطقة الاطلاع على إبداعاتهم.

قوية التراث: تذوقوا الأطباق المحلية، وتجولوا في القرية البدوية، وتمتعوا بعروض الصقارة، والحنا، والخط العربي، والحرف اليدوية.

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KAMAL BAHAMDAN

A NEW MEMBER OF THE FEI JUMPING COMMITTEE

By Khaled Assem

SAUDI EQUESTRIAN'S OLYMPIC CHAMPION KAMAL BAHAMDAN HAS RECENTLY BEEN SELECTED TO JOIN THE FEI JUMPING COMMITTEE FROM 2013 UNTIL 2017, A POST WELL DESERVED. THERE ARE A NUMBER OF ISSUES THAT NEED REVIEW, NEGOTIATION AND UPGRADING WITHIN THE SPORT AND HERE IS WHAT BAHAMDAN HAD TO SAY ABOUT THIS TO HT.

Let me first start by offering you my congratulations for your appointment and for also winning the GCC Grand Prix at CSI3*-W Riyadh Arab League Tour this month. What are your comments on being selected as a member of the FEI Jumping Committee?

While watching the sport as a rider and a show organiser, as well as a friend of all officials and the fact that I never spent a day in my life since I was seven years old without being around horses, I feel that the show jumping is currently at a turning point. Matters could go either way; negatively or positively. I do feel that one has to contribute back to the sport, and as such I thought I would give this position whatever I can.

Tell us about the Committee and what you plan to offer it?

I am a member of a five-man Committee, a good combination of people. I come from a part of the world where the sport is rapidly emerging. I competed in the American circuit for 15 years and in Europe the past seven or eight years. I believe that I can bring to the Committee that historical perspective, one that I understand very well due to my experience. From the sport in the very mature to the emerging parts of the world, there are many issues which need to be addressed in the best ways possible.

Where is the Middle East and the sport in that equation?

Since the inception of the Arab League, show jumping has reached huge and new heights whether in the Kingdom, Qatar, the UAE, or Morocco. The quality of the horse and rider combination, as well as that of the officials, regional judges, course designers and top organisation during the League's three or five star shows, has improved exponentially and is as good as any in the equestrian world. This is the result of years of work, but still, there are other nations in Asia such as China, Korea and Japan, and in Eastern Europe, that need ambitious plans for development. Our sport is around 115 years old and so hopefully show jumping can capitalise on newcomers who will create a strategic momentum and a possible shift in the sport as a whole.

What are some of the Committee's priorities?

To move the sport forward through implementing several technical issues such as the ranking system for five star shows. We need to find a formula to elevate the quality of shows in all areas, not just in prize money but in matters such as footing and all conditions dealing with the welfare of horses, and we want to use the energy and momentum in the emerging region to do so.

Is Saudi Equestrian impacting the world of show jumping, in particular in relation to emerging countries in the sport and young riders? If so, how?

The achievement on the top level by the Saudi team in the London Olympic Games just shows all the emerging regions that "it can be done". This will initially give hope for everyone, more young people will realise that if they give it everything they will have a chance. You can actually see the numbers increasing. The wait list for people to join the Federation is by the hundreds.

Also, international riders help younger ones although not yet in an organised formal manner but still we all help. Khaled, Ramzy, and I feel that it is our duty to help. The young riders are the real success and continuation of the sport.

Tell us about the interconnection between the Saudi Equestrian Fund and the KSA Equestrian Federation?

HRH Prince Nawaf bin Faisal, the President of the KSA Equestrian Federation, is also a trustee on the board of Saudi Equestrian so the connection has always been there. There is enough coordination between them to ensure efficient and effective implementation of the national team's goals and priorities. 🏇



Photo by Cymon Taylor

60 SECONDS WITH MIGUEL BRAVO

COUNTRY: PORTUGAL
DATE OF BIRTH: OCTOBER 18 1958
STAR SIGN: LIBRA

PROFESSION: PROFESSIONAL SHOW JUMPER AND CO-MANAGER OF DUBAI'S Z7 SHOW JUMPING TEAM COMPOSED OF MARION HUGHES, MICHAEL HUTCHINSON AND JOAO M. MARQUILHAS.

MIGUEL BRAVO IS EXTREMELY ENJOYABLE COMPANY. HIS POSITIVE ENERGY HAS NO LIMITS, HE'S FANATICALLY HUMOROUS, HAS A HEART BIGGER THAN THE WORLD, AND CAN WIN A SHOW JUMPING CLASS ON ONLY A FEW HOURS OF SLEEP. WE GOT TO KNOW HIM DURING CSI 1* (A) - HORSES & HOPES INTERNATIONAL SHOW JUMPING FESTIVAL HERE IN CAIRO LAST YEAR WHERE HE WAS PLACED SEVERAL TIMES ON BORROWED HORSES, AND WHERE HE BECAME A GENEROUS HERO TO MORE THAN 2,000 SPECTATORS AFTER GIFTING HIS TROPHY TO THE YOUNG RIDERS OF THE SPECIAL OLYMPICS TEAM SIMPLY TO PUT A HUGE SMILE ON THEIR FACES.

What is your best achievement?

My respect for horses.

Who is your sporting hero (any sport)?

My wife Marion Hughes.

Do you keep any pets?

Yes! Chickens, ducks and birds.

What is your favourite movie?

Jack Nicholson's 'One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest'.

Who is your ideal celebrity (female or male)?

HH Sheikh Mohammed Al Maktoum; he's a genius.

What is your favourite gadget and are you obsessed with it?

I treat my Stables 'Calmaria' like a gadget. I love it. Mad about the place.

What kind of music do you enjoy listening to and do you like to dance?

I enjoy Frank Zappa and I definitely like to dance.

What is your second favourite sport?

Rugby.

What is your favourite book?

'Antonio Maria Bravo e Filho' by Joao Maria Bravo.

Do you like to cook and what is your favourite food?

I do. I like grilled red shrimps and Portuguese food.

What are the most memorable places you visited?

Graigue, Cuffesgrange and Co Kilkenny, all in Ireland.

Are you superstitious?

No.

What is your strength and what is your weakness?

My strength: when I believe. My weakness: when I don't trust.

What makes you happy and what makes you sad?

Happy: a glass of white wine. Sad: a glass of water!

What is the biggest challenge you ever faced?

Moving to Ireland.

What is the biggest reward you ever got?

My five children: Antonio, Maria, Molly, Marta and Matilde.

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

The "happy one".

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

To end those stupid wars.....

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

To be faster against the clock!

If you were not a professional show jumper and a coach, what would you rather be?

The best groom in the world!

Finally, which question would you ask yourself?

What time will we start tomorrow?! 🕒



© Luis Alonso



Miguel & Molly

DAVID SINCLAIR PHOTOGRAPHER

DAVID SINCLAIR IS AN EQUINE PHOTOGRAPHER BASED IN THE UNITED KINGDOM AND PUBLISHED WORLDWIDE. HE WORKS ON DOCUMENTARY AND STYLISED PHOTOGRAPHY, COVERING ANY EQUINE SUBJECT FROM RANCHING TO MULTI-THOUSAND-DOLLAR STUDIO HORSE SHOTS, TO POLO AND EVENTING.

Previously a stage manager in London, Sinclair moved to the heart of Gloucestershire while simultaneously renewing his interest in photography. The proximity of so many horse disciplines gave him an ideal subject and his equine website was created. Since that time and as a by-product, Sinclair has ridden many different horses and what

was one love, rapidly became another.

Sinclair stated, "I have tried wherever I have been in the world to catch not just the essence of the animals themselves, but the spirit and personality of the people who work with them. The wonderful textures and colours of their natural and working environments together with the

emotion and intimacy shared between horse and human.

"Photographing horses as a display of human achievement, competing or as pets, has its place of course. Visually, horses are incredible, be it standing for a portrait or running in the 3.30 at Royal Ascot. They are probably the most painted and documented of creatures.





“However I am more and more interested in the way working with horses defines people and grounds them. The culture of the ranch horse in North America and the Gaucho in Argentina is different, but is a common identity created by people relying on horses to make a living where a good horse is as important as a good truck, where caring for and working with horses, extends into the rest of their lives in a real way.

“The Arabian horse is something of a mystery to me, having not had the opportunity yet to understand and shoot the importance these horses represent historically. Aesthetically they are beautiful and I can understand the world of breeding a fine horse but would sincerely like to find a story or common thread. One that ties the importance of this

horse to the native culture that has brought them to this point and admiration around the world.

“I had occasion to go to Dubai to do a portrait of Mari Alvarez as part of a project for FEI Solidarity. I was left with a lasting impression of the country and the horses; I would love to find a way back. I don't think it would be too hard to produce pleasing images given the light they are blessed with but would like to find images that also evoke the pure but quiet satisfaction and human delight working with them offers.”

Sinclair has gained a reputation for creating images that resonate with horse people and non-horse people alike. 🏠

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SELECT INTERNATIONAL EQUESTRIAN SPONSORSHIP

PART 2: AHMED BASSIONI

By Khaled Assem

IN HT'S SERIES OF INTERVIEWS WITH FOUR RIDERS BACKED BY SPSS SPONSORSHIP OF SHOW JUMPING IN EGYPT, WE CONTINUE WITH THE SECOND PART AND EGYPTIAN SHOW JUMPER AHMED BASSIONI. SPSS EGYPT, AN IBM COMPANY, ESTABLISHED BY SHADY SAMIR, IS A LEADING GLOBAL PROVIDER OF PREDICTIVE ANALYTICS SOFTWARE AND SOLUTIONS. THE COMPANY STARTED SPONSORING LOCAL RIDERS IN 2009 AND HAS BEEN DOING SO EVER SINCE.

Why do you think you were chosen to be sponsored by SPSS?

I think being sponsored by SPSS materialised as I am one of the riders that has had a successful career up until now in the sport. I am also one of Egypt's National Team members for the past years. Moreover, I also work at SPSS....another plus of course.

Please shed light on some of your best results to date?

Nationally, I have won all National Championship Finals for the A2, B, and C levels in the past years. In the A1 National Championships Final, I was placed third, fourth and fifth in the past few years as well.

Internationally, I competed in many Grand Prixes as well as 5*, 4*, 3*, and 2* European and Arab League World Equestrian Games qualifiers. I was placed in many of them and I was also one of the leading Arab riders in the 2007/2008 Arab League Tour season.

I have not been competing as much since 2012 when I lost both my favourite competition horses.

Do you feel as an individual that you can add to the image of the team?

Yes. Each one of us adds a different essence to the whole concept behind the team; we complete each other and consequently, there is certainly a successful

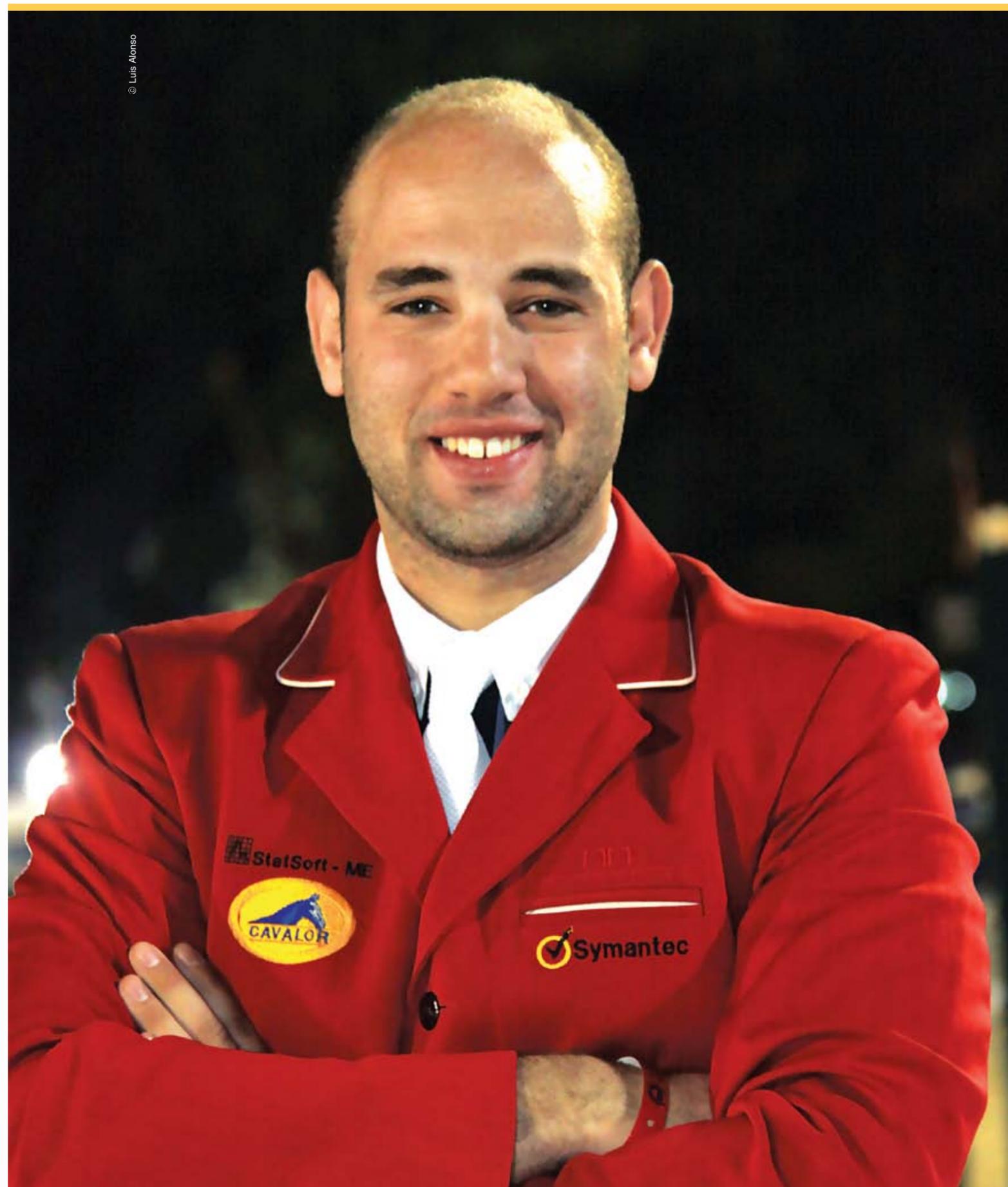
"image".

In your personal opinion, how could this SPSS sponsorship programme be further developed?

It could be further developed by expanding internationally such as sponsoring international shows and riders abroad. Financially supporting the team to travel and ride internationally would be a good development as well.

Do you feel that the sponsor is getting good return – and if not, what kind of developments would you suggest?

I think and feel the sponsor is getting a good feedback.





© Luis Alonso

Tell us a little about your family?

My family is an equestrian family. My father is an experienced international rider and was a member of the National Egyptian Team who won medals in the Pan Arab Games. He is the reason that I am part of this lovely sport. Without his support and efforts I wouldn't be who I am, a professional show jumper. My brother and mother are great supporters and my wife is also a rider and a great supporter. Our family business also involved in the horse industry.

Do you feel you influence others with your results as well as your character?

Yes, I do feel that, successful riders are always role models to the younger generation. They look up to us.

What would you say to: family and friends, younger riders, people who govern the sport?

Keep up your will and efforts in the hard times that we are in now. We pray that things get better for our country, and that the horse quarantine debacle also gets resolved soon. I personally would love to be able to travel with our horses again and compete smoothly like before. 🙏

*Photos courtesy of Luis Alonso
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ABOUT SPSS:

Founded in 1968, today SPSS has more than 250,000 customers worldwide, served by more than 1,200 employees in 60 countries. Smart Vision (SPSS-ME) is an IBM partner after the IBM acquisition to SPSS Inc. and assists a wide variety of customers in the region in different business areas, playing the role of helping researchers in getting deeper insight into their existing data and applying these insights and forecasts at both the strategic and tactical levels to number of critical business problems.



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Doha, Qatar - November 2013
Scott Brash riding Hello Sanctos
Great Britain



MEDICAL TIPS

EQUINE CLONING

By Dr. Oliver Pynn, England

MUCH HAS BEEN REPORTED RECENTLY IN THE EQUINE MEDIA ON THE SUCCESSFUL CLONING OF HORSES, WITH THE EMPHASIS ON THE POSSIBILITY OF REPRODUCING A HORSE OF EQUAL TALENT AND SUCCESS TO ITS DONOR. SINCE THE FIRST EQUINE CLONE IN 2003 THERE ARE NOW PRIVATE LABORATORIES OFFERING THIS SERVICE TO HORSE OWNERS, TO REPRODUCE AN EXACT GENETIC REPLICA OF THE CLIENT'S HORSE. THIS IS CERTAINLY AN EXCLUSIVE SERVICE WITH COSTS RISING INTO SIX FIGURE SUMS, BUT NO DOUBT THESE COSTS WILL FALL AS THE EFFICIENCY OF THE PROCESS IMPROVES. THERE HAVE BEEN GREAT ADVANCES MADE SINCE THE FIRST MAMMAL CLONE, "DOLLY" THE SHEEP THAT WAS CLONED IN 1996. INDEED, IT APPEARS THAT HORSES ARE WELL SUITED TO CLONING, AND NOT AS SUSCEPTIBLE TO COMPLICATIONS AS MANY OTHER SPECIES ARE.

WHAT IS CLONING AND HOW IS IT DONE?

Cloning is defined as making a genetically identical copy of another cell or organism through non-sexual means. Cloning a horse means using the genetic material (DNA) from a donor horse to produce a genetically identical foal. This involves collecting the DNA from the donor and inserting that DNA into an egg from another mare whose DNA content has been removed, which then develops as an embryo within the uterus of a recipient mare. This starts with a simple biopsy sample taken from the donor, usually from the neck. At the laboratory cells are then harvested from this sample to extract their DNA content. An oocyte (egg) is then collected from a mare after ovulation, the contents are removed to create an empty shell, and the donor's DNA extract is inserted in its place. This modified oocyte is then activated with a small electric shock to imitate the act of fertilisation, which then develops into an embryo. This can be then cultured in the

laboratory until it reaches a fit state to be inserted in a recipient mare's uterus. With luck, this will then develop normally with the obvious aim of a full-term healthy foal being born.

IS THE CLONED FOAL AN EXACT REPLICA?

In simple terms the answer is 'almost but not quite'. The majority of the genetic makeup will be identical but there is something called mitochondrial DNA that is inherited from the egg. Each egg contains mitochondria that are responsible for energy production and these cannot be stripped from the egg and so this will contribute, albeit a tiny fraction, of the genetic makeup of the clone. However, it is still unknown if this mitochondrial DNA leads to any differences in the resulting appearance or characteristics of the clone. The mitochondrial DNA does not get transferred to the offspring of a clone stallion, and so such a stallion only passes on the genetic material from the donor horse.

Other factors will obviously influence the outcome of the cloned horse; the uterine environment in which the clone develops, nutrition of the dam and any other variances associated with gestation will all have an effect on the developing embryo. Once born, there will be a huge number of environmental factors, which will all impact on the clone's development to make it an individual, rather than an exact replica. It brings us back to the age-old question of whether it is nature or nurture that makes us what we are?

WHY DO HORSES GET CLONED?

The pros and cons of cloning animals have long been debated and these debates will surely continue for some time. However, people are now willing to invest in the procedure of cloning and many do so in order to preserve the genetics of their horse. In the case of a gelding that then shows exceptional talent in its performance, cloning allows its



DNA to be accessible in the form of a stallion, which may never need to compete but can serve mares and so pass on the DNA of the original talented horse. Other reasons for cloning include, creating a copy of a top performing horse in order to compete or simply to double the breeding capacity of a stallion or mare. Genetic material of a horse can also now be stored so that if a horse dies or is sold, then the owners have the option of making a clone in the future. If buying a horse in the future you may have to guarantee rights to all genetic material so that a seller can't then just replace the champion with its replica!

There are also potential health benefits by cloning horses, which do not have any inheritable genetic disorders. The American Quarter Horse Association was ordered by a court to permit the registration of cloned horses. The argument put forward by those in favour of allowing cloned horses to be registered was in creating a superior gene pool by breeding those horses that were not carrying the genes for hyperkalemic periodic paralysis (HYPP) and hereditary equine regional dermal asthenia (HERDA), both disorders that are characteristic of the breed. Allowing registration of cloned horses free from these diseases therefore enhances the breed.

The FEI has now permitted registration of cloned horses and so this technique will surely be on the rise in the world of sport horses. The world of polo breeding has been among the first to recognise its advantages, by cloning the most successful ponies and then using them in their breeding programs. In the Thoroughbred breeding industry, registration of offspring is still restricted to those conceived by way of natural cover, and

whilst even artificial insemination and embryo transfer are still forbidden, cloning is not likely to be on the cards any time soon.

WHAT ARE THE POTENTIAL COMPLICATIONS OF CLONING?

Health problems associated with cloned horses are not as debilitating as in other species. In cattle and sheep, for example, there is a high reported rate of pregnancy loss and birth defects. In foals there have been reports of increased incidence of angular limb deformities, neonatal maladjustment syndrome, and septicaemia. It is therefore advisable that these cloned foals be delivered in premises equipped to deal with such issues. A bad start can have detrimental effects for the rest of the horse's life and so these complications should not be underestimated. Another issue that may be of some concern surrounds the potential premature ageing of cloned animals.

THE DEBATE WILL CONTINUE....

The ethical debate of whether or not cloning should be allowed will no doubt go on, however the fact that cloned animals are now being allowed to compete under many different equestrian rules indicate that it is a process that is likely to get more widespread rather than less so. The argument that cloning is not natural and akin to playing god is a common counter argument. However, such are the advances of equine assisted reproductive techniques, much of what occurs in the equine breeding industry is not natural any more.

Whilst it is unlikely that cloned horses will enter the human food chain, horses are considered food-producing animals in many



© Laurent Cipriani

A foal cloned from the grand prix champion gelding ET poses next to former Austrian Olympic rider Hugo Simon

parts of the world and this must be considered. It is all well and good if horses are cloned to run faster and jump higher but cloned meat in the human food chain, whilst allowed, is a much bigger debate.

Cloning is a very attractive proposition to those rich enough to afford it and while the cloned horse sounds very good in theory, the success in practice

is yet to be confirmed. And there is a lot of uncertainty as to the future generations of cloned horses. If it becomes a very common practice then there may be significant impact on the gene pool of some breeds. It must also be remembered that horses have evolved to become what they are today without this degree of human interference, and we cannot be sure cloning will improve things still further. Nature

is beautiful in its unpredictability. If we concentrate on cloning our current champions, are we not reducing the possibility of natural advances of evolution? Could it be that the Thoroughbred industry is the one that has got it right? Only time will tell. 🐾

About the author:
Dr. Oliver Pynn is a Partner at Rosssdales, an internationally

renowned equine veterinary practice in Newmarket, England. His professional interests include stud medicine, lameness investigation and the treatment of sports horses, especially eventers. In 2008, Ollie became the Team Vet for the New Zealand Event Team and was part of the bronze medal winning team at the London Olympics.

DONNA BERNSTEIN

URBAN EQUINES

ARTIST'S STATEMENT

Creating my art is a bit of a bareback ride; I combine mediums in new and regenerative ways that evoke movement, energy and life. Many of my works are large or life-sized urban equestrian paintings, "Urban Equines". By that I mean the energy, beauty, and classic equine form expressed in purely contemporary terms. What gives my work its

edge is a deep personal familiarity with the physical horse... and an expansive sense that the movement is bigger than what you see.

My approach combines a passion for the anatomical horse with a love both of classic gestural drawing and the element of surprise. Having been inspired by them at a young age I would sit entire days and watch, noticing every ripple in a muscle;

how they would flick the flies with their ears as they grazed, how they would jump for joy when the feeling arose. I studied their physiology, their bones, their illnesses and cures. I still have those many notebooks I wrote, as a student of the horse. I would then sketch from memory – never when I sat with them. But my memory, my imagination, my energetic connection to horses became stylized in my art.

Now I understand: It is not horses that I paint; I paint how they make me feel.

There is more to a horse than just a "picture" of him; there is a mythology, a symbolism; an ancient connection we can trace, all of which expresses for us a deep aliveness when we see him in all of his endeavours.

My process is infused with this mythology, this spirit, and a sense of the uplifting. Intuitive and athletic I move about large canvases placed strategically on the floor and allow these white spaces to co-create with me. With a focused attention to correctness in the attitude of the

horse, I paint in quick, concentrated actions, much as the horse moves, mixing mediums in a freshly layered spontaneity. Through a final series of wildly contained drips and splashes each horse's unique personality, conformation and place in the overall composition is revealed.

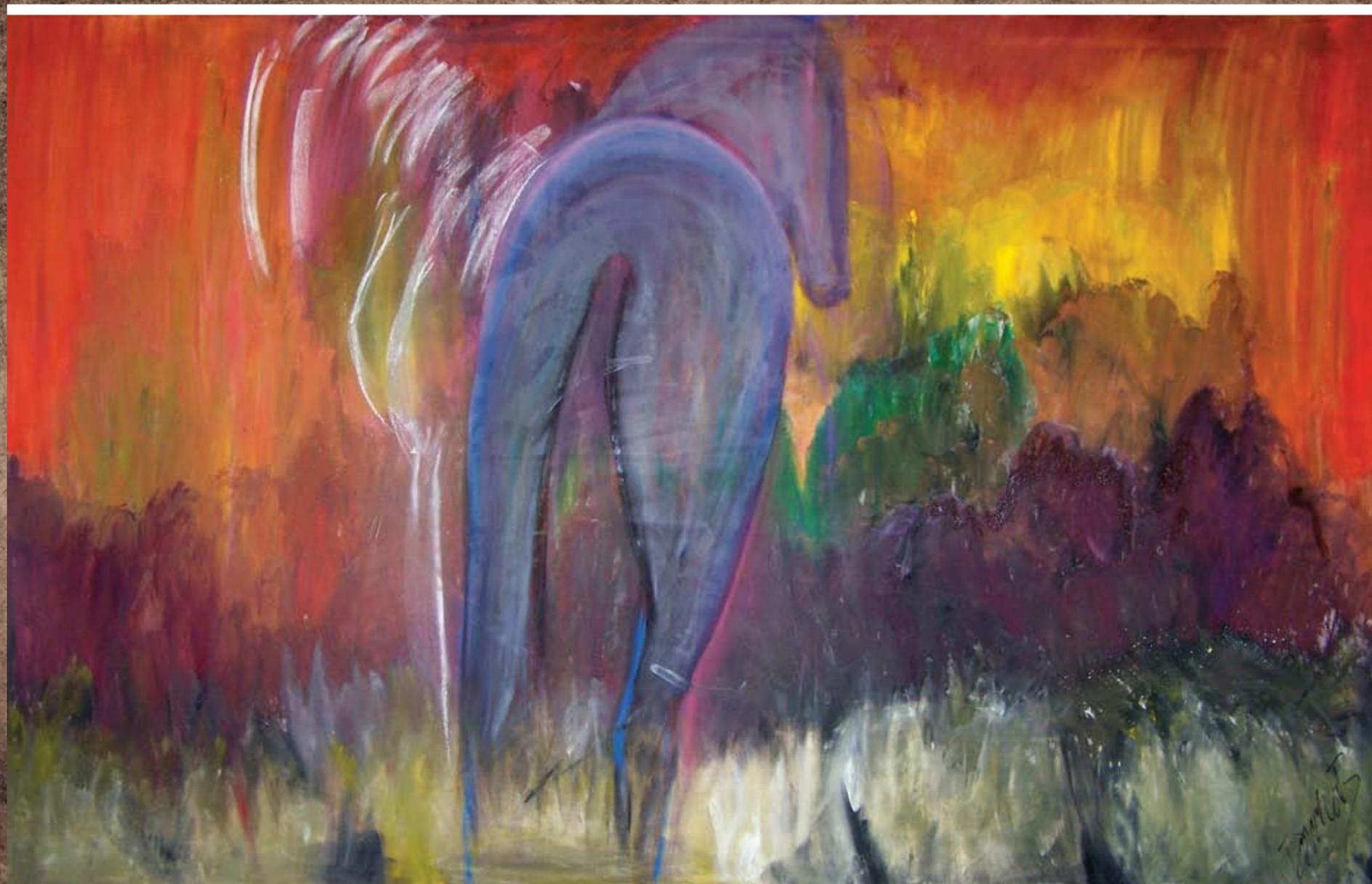
I believe that no matter how our culture moves beyond the speed of the horse, his true horsepower lies in his ability to inspire.

As my art continues to mature I blend the persistent complexities of power and vulnerability. I paint purely abstract pieces as well; these are full of bold lines and dynamic

colours, sparked by the element of the formless. I am seduced by such subtle nuances of feeling to abstraction.

I also co-create with designers and clients regularly on site-specific commissioned works. Elegant and sophisticated, my paintings articulate a simplicity of what is beautiful, and are at home in both formal collections as well as the large-scale spaces of modern design. 

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TRAINING TIPS

MENTAL STRATEGIES FOR WINNING

By Khaled Assem

MANY STRATEGIES FALL UNDER THE CONCEPT OF "RECIPES FOR SUCCESS"; SOME ARE TANGIBLE AND SOME ARE NOT, SOME ARE PHYSICAL WHILE OTHERS ARE TECHNICAL, YET THE MOST ELUSIVE AND CONSTRAINING ARE THE SPIRITUAL AND MENTAL ONES. MENTAL STRENGTH IS NOT GENETIC, IT IS ACQUIRED AND ONE HAS TO UNDERSTAND IT, BELIEVE IN IT AND WORK ON IT.

Proficient athletes in every sport emphasise the importance of mental preparation, strategies and eventually toughness in their success stories.

Mental skills provide more consistent proficiency than the technical ones. In fact, if you take a look at some of the top riders, they remain in the winning posts as long as they are mentally strong and in tune with their game. So what exactly happens when they are not winning? There could be several reasons but one of the most vital elements is the mental consciousness and faith in their ability to win.

Mental training can be divided into six different rules or tasks that a rider can focus on and take up individually. Every rider experiences mental challenges in

the arena although with experience accompanied with knowledge, he can develop his skills, not just technically but also mentally.

YOU HAVE TO WORK ON BEING:

STEADY:

Being conscious and consistent is required to maintain a successful relationship with your horse. Alternatively, your mental toughness in committing to the regularity of your riding schedule, fitness schedule and everything revolving around your goal is an element in that recipe for success. It is the aim to persist in working hard and being calm yet firm. This is an everyday exercise that a rider has to be dedicated to.

SIMPLE:

A proficient rider will always be defined by his logic and efficiency. That could be done through analysing and working his problems out by dividing them up into smaller ones that are more manageable, and certainly by testing his solutions when put next to those problems in order to create a learning curve that will be locked in his memory. This becomes a data map to define and refine his skills continuously.

POSITIVE:

All self-help books in the world unanimously agree that the first rule that leads to success is a "Positive Mental Attitude". You need to be optimistic and constructive, to realise the importance of working with others and how that may strengthen you. Yet mostly, believe in yourself and your ability, not your shortcomings. Always think of your mainstream goals and stay in tune with them.

FLEXIBLE:

While searching for innovations, new methods or simple answers need an open mind as well as creativity. Always think out of the box, be accepting to unorthodox options and solutions. This is about adapting to new situations and making the most out of them. Sometimes simple ideas lead to magical solutions. Believe that "there is always a solution", and if it wasn't the one you tried then there must be another one, one that you will search for and find.

PREPARED:

It is crucial to make a realistic plan and follow it. Practice setting deadlines and following them as well as making decisions and taking control. As they say, a successful surfer has to be on his board, in the sea, fit and ready for the wave.

HUMAN:

Be ready to cope with the ups and downs of life. Realise that it is not necessarily mathematical, sometimes you have to lose in order to win and sometimes you win unexpectedly. Accept the diversities and adversities of life and most importantly, wish others well because that will simply keep you happy, inspired and will cleanse your soul. There is a spiritual dimension that you have to believe in and account for in your plans to remain human.

Surely the pursuit of success in your sport and in life generally is not inborn, it is not a given. It is an educated choice. Finally, remember to enjoy the journey and not just the ending. 🏆

About the author:
Eng. Khaled Assem is a certified Level 2 FEI trainer. He has been training for over 15 years, competing internationally for 10 years and locally for 25 years.



THE ART OF CLASSICAL DRESSAGE RIDING THE TRAINING SCALE (PART 1)

By Emmad Eldin Zaghloul

THERE IS NO SHORTCUT TO QUALITY. TWO THINGS MAKE A DRESSAGE HORSE GREAT: 1-QUALITY BREEDING, AND 2- QUALITY TRAINING. IF YOU SEEK INTERNATIONAL SUCCESS AT GRAND PRIX LEVEL, YOU NEED BOTH A QUALITY HORSE AND QUALITY TRAINING. BUT IF YOU, LIKE MOST PEOPLE, RUN ON AN AVERAGE BUDGET AND YOUR HORSE IS OF AVERAGE (OR EVEN BELOW AVERAGE) QUALITY, YOU SHOULDN'T NECESSARILY WORRY THAT YOU CANNOT MAKE A VERY GOOD PERFORMER OUT OF HIM. INDEED, QUALITY TRAINING APPLIES TO ALL HORSES, REGARDLESS OF TYPE, AGE, BREED, OR BACKGROUND. AND CONTRARY TO WHAT YOU MIGHT THINK, QUALITY TRAINING DOES NOT MEAN HIRING AN EXPENSIVE TRAINER; IT IS SOMETHING YOU CAN ATTAIN SIMPLY BY FOLLOWING 'THE TRAINING SCALE'.

THE TRAINING SCALE:

Bad training can make the best horse look terrible; good training can make the average horse a star. The question is, what is good training?

The best riders and trainers in the world will tell you that good training is that which is built block by block onto a strong, solid base. That base is comprised of the following six elements in that particular order:

1. Rhythm
2. Suppleness
3. Contact
4. Impulsion
5. Straightness
6. Collection

Together, these elements make up what is known as The Training Scale—also known as The Training Pyramid, the German Training Scale, or the German Training System. It may help you understand how the Training Scale contributes to your horse's training if you visualise it as a pyramid, with Rhythm at the base, and every layer built upon the other.



There are some variations of the Training Scale, but the above is the simplest. Variations may add an element or two, but those extra elements are already integrated into the ones mentioned above, such as 'Relaxation' being part of or leading to 'Rhythm', or 'Looseness' as a synonym for 'Suppleness'. Because the order of the elements is based on logic, there are no variations of

the Training Scale that alternate the position of one element over the other.

THE ELEMENTS IN BRIEF:

1- Rhythm: It is the result of mental and physical relaxation. When the horse is relaxed, he is able to step into the natural rhythm of the four natural gaits: walk, trot, canter, and the rein-back. The walk is a 4-beat movement, the trot 2-beat, the canter 3-beat, and the rein-back 2-beat. A horse that trots in rhythm is trotting in a clear 2-beat rhythm in a steady tempo. There is good rhythm and bad rhythm: Good rhythm is when the horse's canter is a true 3-beat, bad or incorrect rhythm is when it becomes a lazy 4-beat. Rhythm faults in the walk are when it comes close to 2-beat, and in the trot when it resembles a lame, hopping horse.

2- Suppleness: A dressage horse is ultimately an athlete, and every athlete requires a certain degree of flexibility. Suppleness is the looseness and flexibility of the horse's body. There are two types of suppleness: longitudinal and lateral. Longitudinal suppleness is the looseness of the horse's haunches, back, neck, poll, and jaw, giving him the ability to swing forward while remaining fairly on the bit. Lateral suppleness is the degree to which a horse can bend his body and neck sideways, either to produce a circle or to move sideways.

3- Contact: When the horse is accepting the rider's hands, seat, and legs, it is said that he is offering good contact. Many people mistake contact for the horse being on the bit. That is not necessarily true and denotes riding with the hands alone. A horse moving under a rider is in contact with his seat, legs, and hands. Good contact is when the horse accepts and responds to seat and leg aids while maintaining a round outline with a mouth that is relaxed and accepting the bit. You can point out good contact when the horse's back is raised, his quarters engaged, his poll the highest point,

his jaw relaxed, and his nose a hint in front of the vertical (That is also a sign of good riding and training).

4- Impulsion: Free-flowing energy initiated by the rider, causing the horse's back to swing, his quarters to engage, and his forelegs to articulate is impulsion. Good impulsion is reflected through a horse that appears to have an innate desire to go forward with active, lively steps. How far the horse steps underneath his barrel and how much he engages his hocks are both measures of impulsion. Basic training regulates the horse's engine so that impulsion becomes second nature to the horse and the rider does not have to push all the time.

5- Straightness: Horses are naturally crooked, so straightening them is the job of the rider/trainer. For example, many horses canter with their quarters slightly in. Crookedness is caused by uneven lateral suppleness, i.e. one side stiffer than the other, and a weaker hind leg. Good training focuses on developing both sides and hind legs of the horse equally, which eventually leads to absolute straightness. A horse is truly straight when the hind foot steps in the line of the front foot (or sometimes a little deeper to the inside in the event of collection).

6- Collection: The pinnacle of the Training Pyramid, collection is the ultimate goal for the dressage horse. When all the previous elements are present, collection just happens! Collection involves the lowering of the croup, lightness of the forehand, and shorter and higher steps. Collection is possible in the walk, trot and canter, and is achieved by collecting exercises and refined by little half-halts. A rider on a horse doing a great collected canter feels as though he/she can let go and the horse would still maintain perfect rhythm and self-carriage without any interference from the rider. HT

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