

ARABIAN BEAUTY ON MOROCCAN LANDS

A WONDERFUL EXPERIENCE !

By Yvonne LAVAGNE

DURING SALON DU CHEVAL D'EL JADIDA, A RIDDEN CLASS FOR ARABIAN HORSES WAS ORGANISED FOR THE FIRST TIME.

It was a real pleasure for me to be invited by Dr. Mohamed Machmoum to come and judge this new competition in Morocco. For this hard work, I was accompanied by Dr. Mohamed Oussidhoum.

Several years ago, the ridden class began in Great Britain, especially for Arabian horses. Now, it is organised in several countries all over the world. It is not a competition of dressage; as judges, we want to see the horses bringing in hand with a light contact, driving action of hind legs in smooth obedience and calmness.

The demonstration has three phases: First, the horses walk all together under the judge's orders, at the principal paces: walk, trot and canter with cadence. The judges can ask to extend trot, or canter, to stop or to rein back. Then, they ask to change hand and the same work is judged on the other hand.

Then, each horse has two minutes to make their individual presentation with the same figures: the three paces, in the order they wish. They can also make some circles or some volts, stop and rein back correctly.

We want to see calm, quiet and well-mannered horses with obedience and lightness. The horses must seem easy to ride under classical equitation.

Finally, the rider leaves the saddle to present the horse in three ways: still, walking and trotting.

As a judge, we have to assign four marks: the main mark is for performance which equals 60 points, then a mark for the type which is worth 15 points, another 15 points for conformation, and at the end the presentation of horse and rider weighs 10 points.

We never know who will win the competition: for example, an excellent performance by a horse with no type, or a wrong conformation, can finish behind another horse that made an average performance, but has a wonderful type and a serious conformation. And the opposite can also be seen.

At El Jadida competition, the judging was very difficult leaving a thin line between several competitors. The horses were extremely well in hand, made a perfect presentation and the riders' level was very high and so pleasant to see!

It has been a wonderful experience to judge this first ridden class in Morocco. Now, I am sure it was the beginning of a new chapter with the Arabian Sport Horse. Let us wait with pleasure for the second competition of this new sort of performance test for our dear Arabian horses. 🐾

