

SOFITEL HORSE SHOW AT FEROUSIA CLUB

A HOST OF YOUNG FRESH TALENT IN THE HEART OF ZAMALEK

By Engy Adham

AS THE OLD SAYING GOES, "THE FIVE S'S OF SPORTS TRAINING ARE:
STAMINA, SPEED, STRENGTH, SKILL, AND SPIRIT; BUT THE GREATEST OF
THESE IS SPIRIT."

S O F I T E L
LUXURY HOTELS



Spirit was indeed the hallmark of the Sofitel Cairo El Gezira Hotel Horse Show held in late November in cooperation with the Ferosia Club under the auspices of the Egyptian Equestrian Federation (EEF). Not only did the gathering of the riders, families and friends create a warm and friendly atmosphere, but the cultural fabric of the event was a true symbol of the long lasting bond between the Egyptian and French culture, through the involvement of Sofitel.

The French Olympic rider Thierry Pomel, the winner of the Grand Prix in Egypt in 1997 and a team and individual silver medallist at the World Equestrian Games in Rome in 1998, was a special rider invited to participate in the event and his presence demonstrated a revival of Egyptian/French bond through mutual interest in the equestrian sport.

Three days before the horse show, representatives of Sofitel, in cooperation with the Ferosia Club with the support of the French General Manager of UNIC Jean Yves Camenen, organized a technical training workshop to prepare the riders for the competition. The technical training workshop was led by Thierry Pomel.

In celebration of the young and fresh talent, 20 riders received an intensive technical training workshop during the 17, 18 and 19 November. Pomel gave his helpful instructions, instructive feedback and precise tips for each rider. Pomel designed a training course for the riders starting from tricky turns, challenging track and obstacles that required optimum control of the horse in between fences.

“Keep your balance, control, keep him straight, control, make every transition count, keep your pace slow, control, keep your hands soft, and control.” This was Pomel’s voice resonating around every corner in the arena.

Pomel gave step-by-step advice to each rider to make sure they were fully aware



Merit Fanous explaining the course to the audience and the children



The prize giving



Hana El Gharabawy riding Habiba



Thierry Pomel, Mr. Laurent Betourne and his daughter, Ms. Charlotte



The young children during their course



Gen. Said Moawad, Thierry Pomel, Mr. Jean Yves Camenen, Mr. Ramy Iskander, Mr. Bakr Hashem and Mohamed Selim Zaki Junior

of their mistakes and, accordingly, could improve.

The training workshop came to an end with a theoretical session sharing the “dos and don’ts” of horse riding in order to grasp a holistic approach to thinking before the competition. The competitions started on November 20 at 5 p.m. Eyes have been on riders competing and performing at their best. More than 50 riders competed at the Show; family and friends of the riders enjoyed the newly renovated spaces of Ferosia Club.

The event included three levels. The first one was the pony level where young riders had to do cavaletti work. The second level reached a height of 80 – 90 cm. As for the third level, it has been set to 1 to 1.10 meter. The course had been customised to meet, yet challenge, the abilities of the riders. As for fences number eight and nine, believe me, they were the ones that needed full control. After a turn that slow down the pace coming onto three related distances.

The show celebrated the Ferosia Club’s renovations with soft ethereal light shining through freshly watered trees. As for the arena, it has been nurtured with the right amount of sand mixed with enough stabilising fibre along with enough water to produce a perfectly consistent arena and perfect footing.

At the end of the day, special thanks go to the General Manager of Sofitel, Laurent Betourne, and board members of Ferosia Club for making such an event happen and for the President of the EEF for supporting the Ferosia club and equestrian sport.

An announcement of the grand prize winners marked the end of the Show, flashes of cameras captured special moments of winners celebrating the horse show and the deep and abiding Egyptian/French equestrian bond was documented in the memory of an equestrian community. 📸

All photos by Sherif Alyamany