

A rider in a dark blue jacket and white breeches is riding a brown horse with white markings on its face and legs. The rider is wearing a dark helmet and has a braid. In the background, the colorful, onion-shaped domes of St. Basil's Cathedral in St. Petersburg, Russia, are visible under a clear sky. The scene is set in an outdoor arena or park area.

# ST. PETERSBURG INTERNATIONAL FRIENDLY CLUB COMPETITIONS

## A GLOBAL MEETING POINT

BY MENNA LOUTFY

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WHILE ALL EYES WERE ON RUSSIA THIS JUNE AS THE WORLD AWAITED THE FIFA WORLD CUP 2018 THE HT TEAM WAS MORE EXCITED ABOUT THE SECOND STOP OF THE FRIENDLY CLUB COMPETITIONS FOLLOWING OUR FIRST STOP BACK IN MARCH IN JERASH, JORDAN.

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In our last issue we remarked that this experience is not only about competition; it's about cultural exchange and interaction. Riders get a chance to know each other closely, they have their meals together, ride together, help one another, explore the country together and as a result become friends. It doesn't matter where they come from, what mattered was that they were all united by their love of horses and so they'll always be.

By the time we arrived at the beautiful Russian cultural capital St. Petersburg the home team was awaiting us at the airport and drove us to Derby Club that hosted the show.

The place was so serene with nature all around you along with the cool weather of the city; I personally felt that I was in the middle of a beautiful painting.

The second day all club delegations from attending countries which included Egypt, South Africa, Bulgaria and India got a chance to meet up for

breakfast. And then everyone headed to participate in the horse draw and each rider got a chance to meet up with his/her new horse. Some of the riders took their horses for a ride in the greenery that surrounded the club which they really enjoyed and they got more acquainted with the horses.

The following day riders got their second chance to get to know the horses through a flat course and then everyone got ready for sightseeing. Two buses awaited us as we got ready to spend a day out in the mesmerizing city; we visited the famous Cathedral of St. Petersburg, the Palaces of the Tsars, Griboyedov Canal, the Trinity Bridge and many other beautiful landmarks.

After we got to see the city, it was time competition time! With the attendance of international FEI judge Yuri Valev, world class course designer Olaf Peterson and under close supervision of Tatyana Molchanova, the Secretary of IECA and member of the Bureau.

#### RESULTS OF THE GRAND PRIX

- 1- KALOYAN ELISEEV & EVIN – BULGARIA
- 2- IRINA NIKOLOVA & AMULET BLACK – BULGARIA
- 3- GABRIELLE VISSER & ATLAS – SOUTH AFRICA
- 4- JAI SUD & AMULET DERBY – INDIA
- 5- ANIRUDH DEO SINGH & BUGATTI VERONA – INDIA

#### TEAM RESULTS

- 1<sup>ST</sup> PLACE – TEAM BULGARIA
- 2<sup>ND</sup> PLACE – TEAM RUSSIA
- 3<sup>RD</sup> PLACE – TEAM EGYPT

4<sup>TH</sup> PLACE – TEAM INDIA

5<sup>TH</sup> PLACE – TEAM SOUTH AFRICA

During our interview with Colonel Alankar Bhardwaj, Administration Head of Mayo College, India, he said,

“It was an enriching and wholesome experience that has enhanced my vision in the equestrian field. An inter-cultural exchange has envisioned wider prospects of healthy competition between equestrian teams of various countries. Cherished memories of our stay in Russia have left indelible mark in our minds. Looking forward our visit to Egypt in October 2018.”

The final stop this year will be hosted by Platinum Club, New Cairo starting October 29<sup>th</sup> until November 4<sup>th</sup> 2018. See you there!