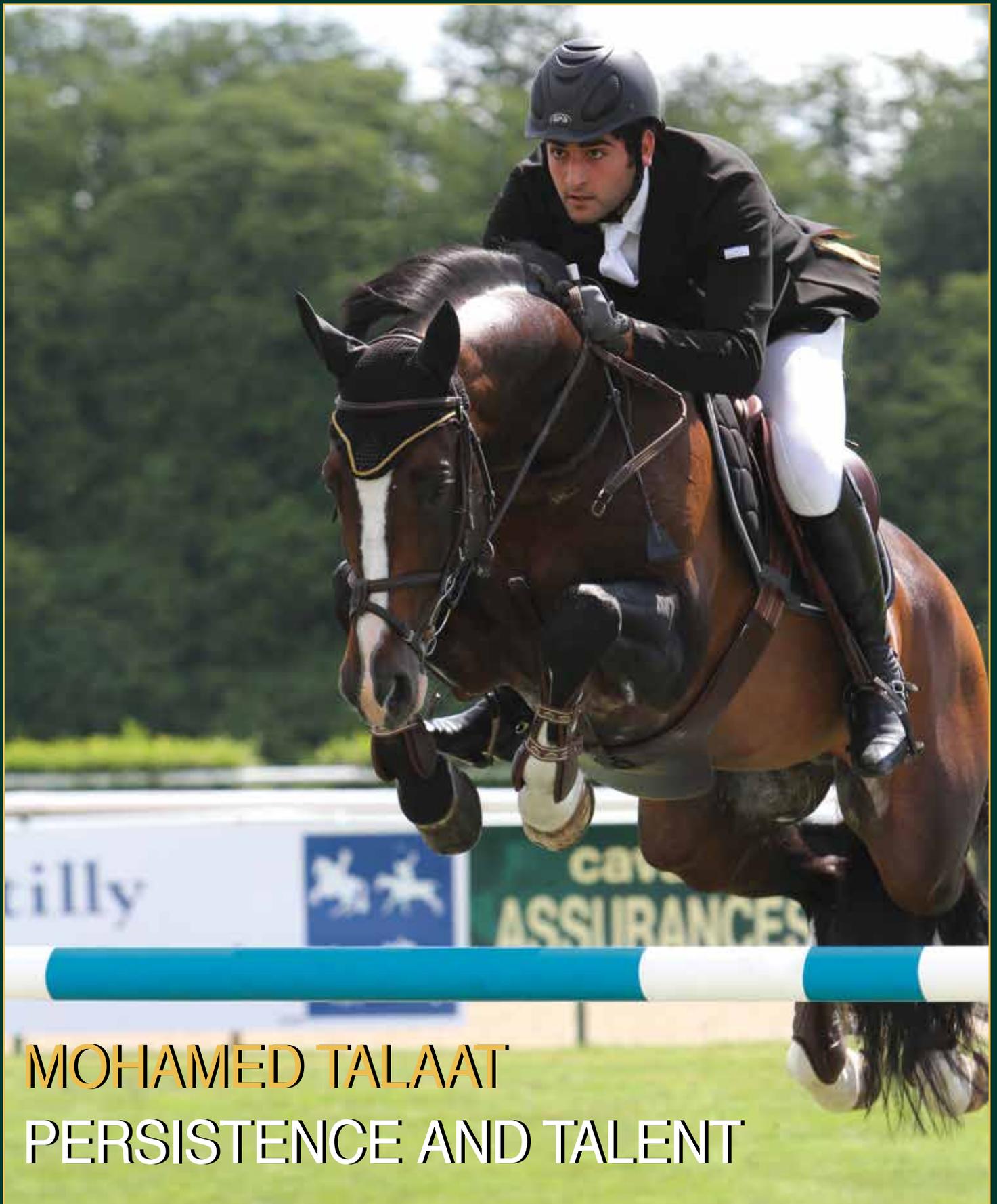




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## MOHAMED TALAAT PERSISTENCE AND TALENT

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## VIEW POINT FROM THE CHAIRMAN



**Dear readers and friends,**

New issues are new beginnings that reflect perception and plenty of work, and in this Spring issue we worked hard on presenting to you several icons and achievers involved in the wonderful world of equestrian sport.

One of my favourite articles featured here is the one written by my friend Bernie Traurig who, like a wonderful storyteller, explains the cornerstones of the development of show jumping sport as we perceive it today.

We then move from the iconic male Traurig to iconic and accomplished females. Olympic Team Silver medallist and World Champion Helen Langehanenberg gives us insight about her daily routine and hopes for the future, and we profile women in polo: Her Highness Sheikha Maitha bint Mohammed bin Rashid Al

Maktoum, Her Serene Highness Princess Anna Oettingen-Wallerstein, and Sunset "Sunny" Hale. You will read about how these three remarkable 'Queens' of the Sport of Kings are trying to level the polo field by creating more interesting and exciting playing opportunities for female players worldwide.

With the Alltech FEI World Equestrian Games Normandy 2014 coming up and all their managerial details, we wanted to help lift their spirits by featuring the man in charge of organising the biggest equestrian event in the world in our light-hearted and fun-themed 60 seconds interview, Fabien Grobon.

Mohamed Talaat is an Egyptian rider showing talent and persistence and is on his way to the World Equestrian Games; we caught up with him to hear about all his preparations for this event.

A successful venture for Sycamore Stables and Sameh El Dahan, another Egyptian on his way to the World Equestrian Games; we had a chance to catch up with Joanne Sloan Allen for her views on her facility, her training programme and the preparations for the Games.

With sponsorship and its outcome on the sport along with perspective and room for development, we continue with the third part of our Select International Equestrian Sponsorship series and Shady Samir, the rider and entrepreneur

behind the concept of a convoy to success.

Along with the sport, we feature artists intensely passionate about horses. Sculptor Andy Scott, with the cooperation of SH Structures Limited, completed sculpting and inaugurating 'The Kelpies', 30 metre high horse-head sculptures, a magnificent monument to horse powered heritage across Scotland.

The Arab League's 2014 CSI-W Dubai illustrated immaculate details of preparation in the United Arab Emirates as always, while despite the difficult political and economic conditions affecting Egypt, the Egyptian Equestrian Federation managed to host and organise CSI1 Cairo 'Egypt On The Rise International Show Jumping Competition'; a plus for the Federation.

In our Medical Tips, Matthew T Swarbrick of Rosssdales, England, explains to us about the perils of Degenerative Suspensory Ligament Desmitis, a largely unknown debilitating syndrome affecting many horses, especially in the Middle Eastern region.

We continue with Wael Ibrahim and his love for horses, horse art and wood burnings, and the second part of the 'Art of Classical Dressage Riding'.

We hope you read on and enjoy.

Sincerely,  
**Khaled Assem**

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MOHAMED TALAAT

## PERSISTENCE AND TALENT

By Khaled Assem

BECOMING SUCCESSFUL INTERNATIONALLY IS NEVER LUCK, IT TAKES HARD WORK AND DEDICATION BUT, ABOVE ALL, GOOD PLANNING. UPGRADING YOUR SKILL IN THIS SPORT REQUIRES MANY DECISIONS SUCH AS WHO TO TRAIN WITH AT THIS LEVEL, WHICH HORSE IS MORE USEFUL, AND WHICH SHOWS TO CHOOSE AND WHEN. UNDOUBTEDLY, ONE FACES MANY CHALLENGES SOME OF WHICH DON'T DISAPPEAR EASILY AND ONLY THROUGH TIME AND PERSEVERANCE CAN ONE PREVAIL. YOU NEED TO BE READY FOR ADVERSITIES ONE AFTER THE OTHER AND ONCE YOU ARE SOLID ENOUGH IN YOUR SKILLS YOU ARE ON THE CORRECT PLATFORM TO TAKE IT FROM THERE TO SUCCESS. SHOW RIDER MOHAMED TALAAT KNOWS THIS LESSON WELL. WE CAUGHT UP WITH TALAAT RECENTLY AND THIS IS WHAT HE HAD TO SAY.



With Goldex in Abu Dhabi



With Connaught, the horse that helped Talaat qualify for the 2014 World Equestrian Games

**You have ridden most of your life. When did you begin to take your riding career more professionally?**

I started taking my riding career more professionally in 2007 after competing in my first Grand Prix which was a four-star show in Syria on my horse Lion Heart. Before that I thought that jumping a Grand Prix was something that was not possible for me.

**What were the differences you made in your training or showing that made a dramatic positive change?**

The distinctions in my path were riding everyday with Ludger Beerbaum, Marco Kutcher Philip Weishaupt and Henrik von Eckermann everyday at the yard in Riessenbeck. They were all helping me and were great

mentors seeing them work with their horses and communicating with them and asking them questions. The build-up for shows was great and priceless knowledge for me. I was also really keen on learning from them so I spent almost 10 hours a day in the stable watching them working and training with their horses.

**Who were the most influential coaches that you had and why?**

The most influential coaches in my career were, firstly, my father Tarek Talaat Moustafa who provided me with many opportunities in my life and he made me believe and achieve! Helena Weinberg, Cian O'Connor and Ludger Beerbaum were also great coaches. I started with Weinberg in 2010 and she taught me some really important basics that

helped me compete internationally, then in 2011 O'Connor was great at motivating me and taught me how to ride fast and have a winning attitude and be able to clear the fences regardless of what's happening. In 2013 "Sir" Beerbaum, a true horseman, really changed my point of view in everything that had to do with horses; he taught me how to communicate with my horses, how to develop connections with them, and how to let them work with me and not against me. In his stables I had the great opportunity to work with Kutcher, von Eckermann and Weishaupt.

**Which horses were milestones in your career?**

The horses that made a change in my career where first Lion Heart who I jumped on at my first Grand

Prix; he gave me confidence on the bigger level. Tallulah, which I won with at my first Grand Prix which was held in Alexandria at Kings Ranch, a horse I was also placed with at a couple of World Cup shows in Jordan and Sharm El Sheikh. After, came the legendary Goldex who was a real winner and made me really believe in myself; I jumped with him in 2013 the five-star Furussiya FEI Nations Cup with the Egyptian team competing against the greatest teams in the world. Then comes Beltone Partner who is a real partner as he is very careful and a real winner; I had many successes with him in addition to three finishes at the World Cup qualifiers of Amman and of course now, Egypt On The Rise CSI1\* Grand Prix here in Cairo two weeks ago. And last but not least, Connaught, which is the horse that Beerbaum introduced to me and he

is my top horse at the time being. I qualified with him for the 2014 World Equestrian Games and hopefully he will be the horse I will ride there.

**What are your most memorable achievements or top shows you were proud to compete at?**

After I started competing in 2009 in Europe I had the opportunity to participate in many shows. Memorable ones would be the GCT in Valkeswaard and Chantilly, shows in Maastricht, Poznan, Dortmund, Geestern, Steinhagen, Cervia, Salzburg, Porto, Kapallen, and Zandhoven. Proud moments I would have to say were winning the Grand Prix of Alexandria and being placed 2nd and 3rd at 2013 CSI2\*-W Amman. Coming in 3rd place with Goldex in the Porto accumulator, 8th in the Grand Prix of Roosendal, and

4th in the Roosendal qualifier were also great moments, along with top 10 finishes in the Grand Prix of Geestern and the Abu Dhabi GCT, 6th place at 2014 Sharjah CSI3\*-W, 4th place at the Abu Dhabi Grand Prix, 8th place at 2014 Abu Dhabi CSI3\*-W, 6th place at 2013 Abu Dhabi CSI3\*-W with Connaught, 5th and 7th place at 2013 Doha CSI4\*-W with Connaught, as well as 1st at 2014 Cairo CSI1\*. I guess they are all memorable!

**What are your hopes and plans for the future?**

My plan for the future is to go to the World Championships in Normandy and to compete well and hopefully get a medal, but I also want to go to the Olympics and get a medal, which has been my dream since I was a child. 🙏

# BERNIE TRAURIG THE MAN WITH A MISSION

By Khaled Assem

TAKING TIME OUT OF HIS BUSY SCHEDULE, THE WORLD-RENOWNED RIDER, COACH, AND HALL OF FAMER BERNIE TRAURIG SPOKE WITH HT ABOUT HIS TECHNIQUES, HIS MOTIVATION, AND HIS INSIGHTS. THE MAN AT THE VERY TOP OF HORSE SPORT OVER THE DECADES, EXCELLING IN HUNTERS, JUMPERS AND DRESSAGE, HAS TURNED HIS INCREDIBLE TALENTS TO TRAINING AND COACHING, PASSING THE GIFT OF HIS LONG EXPERIENCE, SKILL AND PASSION TO THE NEXT GENERATIONS.

**Bernie, the “American School of Equitation” has long been and remains a very special and unique one. Who were the most important founders of this School and what makes it so different?**

We actually refer to it today as the American Hunter/Jumper Forward Riding System, rather than the American School of Equitation. The system is composed of three parts and is not only about a particular seat, but incorporates Position, Controls (aids) and Schooling.

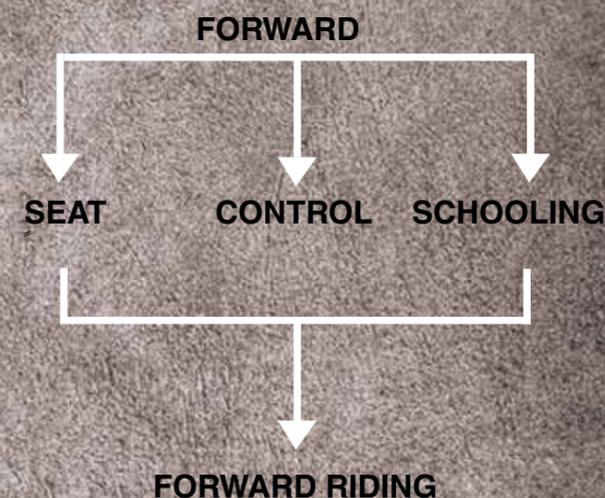
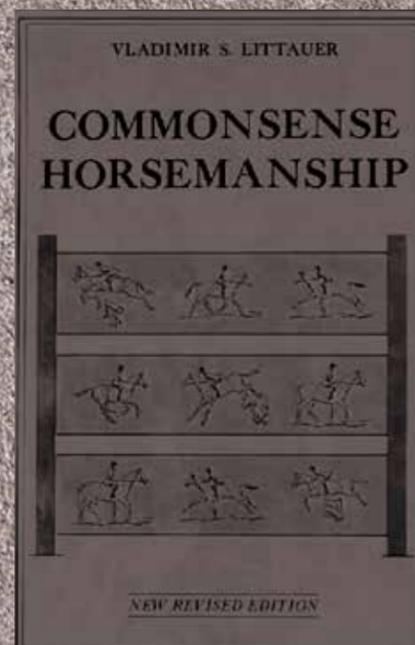
Captain Vladimir S. Littauer, one the founding fathers of the system illustrates this in his book “Common Sense Horsemanship” as depicted in this video from the early 50’s, see <http://tinyurl.com/mf4vt7g>. The system is very old and its roots are heavily Cavalry based. Its origin dates back to the beginning of the 20th Century with Frederico Caprilli, an Italian Cavalry Officer. His forward riding methods were revolutionary at the time and the Italian Cavalry School adopted Caprilli’s methods into their teachings entirely in 1907.

The Italians were very generous about sharing their methods and invited Cavalry officers from around the world to train

with them at Pinerolo and Tor di Quinto, Italy. Soon officers from around the world were gleaning Italian methods and incorporating them into their own systems. American Cavalry officer Harry D. Chamberlin spent a considerable amount of time training in Italy as well as the French school in Samur and brought back techniques from each. He incorporated his new techniques into the US Cavalry Manual which leaned heavily toward the Italian’s system. Captain Vladimir S. Littauer, a Russian Cavalry Officer and my coach for six years as a junior, both fine-tuned the works of Chamberlin and promoted them across America to the civilian show riders and fox hunters. Gordon Wright, who spent a short stint in the US Cavalry, was also instrumental in refining the techniques of the Italians and the French and produced many championship and Olympic riders. Bertalan de Nemethy, a Hungarian Cavalry Officer, immigrated to America and got the job as Coach of the United States Equestrian Team, a position he held for 25 years. Bert’s background also included some training at the German school in Hannover. Bert now blended in the best of the German system, which was more dressage based than the Italian system, and his

results with our US Team were amazing. Bill Steinkraus, Captain of the US Team for many years, was one of the most intelligent horseman ever and a rode with a beautiful forward style, as did our whole US Team from that era. (This video link also includes clips of our US riders from that era <http://tinyurl.com/mf4vt7g>)

These riders gave America a visual image to follow of a beautiful forward seat. These were the genius masters of the last century and the system still continues to get modernised and refined today with some of our great teachers such as George Morris and hopefully myself. It’s primarily a blend of Italian, some French, and some German which is more dressage based. The Forward system is different as it is based more on the riders balance in his stirrups rather than his seat and more simplistic schooling techniques that suit horses that are galloping and jumping in forward balance rather than the dressage based system which is based on the riders seat and fundamentally suited for horses in central, not forward balance and who compete in small, flat arenas in collected gaits. That said,



*Position, Controls (aids) and Schooling as illustrated by Captain Vladimir S. Littauer in his book 'Common Sense Horsemanship'*



of course, the forward system incorporates in more advanced stages some of the collected or, as I say, semi-collected exercises we feel necessary to expand the horse's education. I think the goal of every rider with high ambitions should be to have knowledge of both systems, both in theory and execution. A top rider should be able to adapt to the horse and be flexible with his/her techniques. A hot blood horse may hate the German system and a colder type warmblood may demand the German system. I was fortunate to learn from some of the best teachers the system of dressage and that I consider a gift!

**You are one of the most renowned coaches worldwide. What do you focus on when you are coaching; young or senior riders?**

To me basics are basics, whether you are teaching a young person or senior rider. I focus on the basics of the system - position, controls, and schooling. They are all interconnected. First, position is so important. I believe that "Function follows Form, in riding". Proper position is essential to control the horse. All the aids work better when the rider is in the proper position. Schooling the horse in this system is so easy when you keep it simple. "Riding Simplified" is my motto. It's easy to complicate the sport for not only riders, but especially the horse. One must speak to a horse in a simple and clear language! I started thinking about how to spread education worldwide in a big way when technology started to facilitate spreading knowledge to the masses. Implementing it took a few years and EquestrianCoach.com evolved from the efforts of many.

**EquestrianCoach.com presents a very special and new idea; how did you come up with such a concept and**

**do you think that E-Coaching could ever replace the ordinary techniques of direct in-person coaching?**

For some folks in remote areas or folks that work a lot on their own, it's an enormous tool that, yes, on its own gives you the tools to be successful. For others it's an invaluable supplement to their training along with their coaches. For coaches, it offers insight to many world class and Olympic trainers' schooling and teaching techniques. For me, it's an invaluable homework source to riders that participate in my clinics. I can help someone with an issue and then direct them to a topic where they get a visual representation and reminder of their homework to resolve their issue.

**You visited Egypt in December 2012 for an intensive training clinic; what are your thoughts on the riders you coached and was the experience up to your expectations?**

The riders I worked with during my time in Egypt last spring exceeded my expectations! Attitude, desire, and talent all together. I was extremely impressed with the style of the riders as well. There were many riders that looked like they trained in America for years. My thought from my trip that stands out is that you have a great deal of talented riders who, with the right programme, can accomplish any of their own goals, dreams and your country's expectations.

**You were a very successful rider; what were your biggest wins (please provide links) and who were your most influential coaches?**

I have been blessed to have had exposure to from many great, great horseman and teachers - Littauer, de Nemethy, Frank Chapot, Mike Smithwick, Johan

Hinneman, Christolot Boylen, Richard Wadjen, and many others. So see some of my biggest wins, visit <http://tinyurl.com/krw2go3>.

**Who are the riders that you find exceptional or uniquely talented, and why? Please give us your insight.**

I think I'm too long in the tooth to give you a few riders that I feel are extremely special, as through the decades there are so many exceptional ones and your readers probably would not know them. Bill Steinkraus stands out in my mind as an exceptionally athletic and intuitive jumping rider. Not only did he win the Individual Gold medal in Mexico over the biggest jumps ever in the history of Olympic Sport, he piloted so many horses to international wins over the span of his career and in a beautiful style! Watch a short video here <http://tinyurl.com/p9bbycn>.

Ben O'Meara, a self-taught blacksmith and perhaps the most amazing of them all in his all too short lifetime. Tragically his career ended when he was killed in a plane crash on April 16, 1966 at the age of 27. Rodney Jenkins, my mentor, and perhaps the most well rounded rider, horseman ever. The list goes on and on.....

Two current riders today that for me display not only great riding but exemplify the Forward Seat are Canada's Eric Lamaze and Holland's Gerco Schroder. In conclusion, George Morris said to me recently that the riding style of the world is coming our way. Watching the riders in the final of the 2013 Global Champions Tour in Qatar stamped his statement! 🇩🇪



Bertalan de Nemethy



Captain Vladimir S. Littauer



Gordon Wright



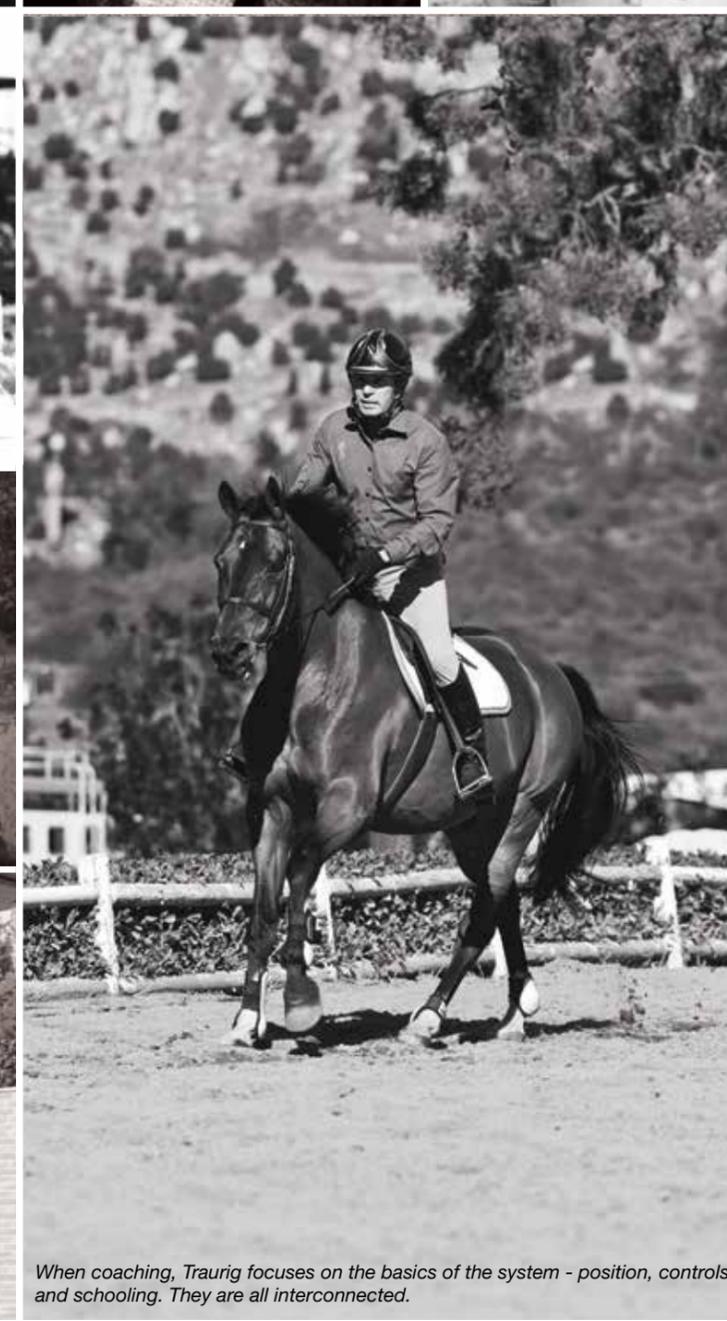
Bill Steinkraus



Bernie Traurig



George Morris



When coaching, Traurig focuses on the basics of the system - position, controls, and schooling. They are all interconnected.



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## WOMEN IN POLO

# THE 'QUEENS' OF THE SPORT OF KINGS

By Bridget McArdle McKinney

I LOVE POLO. I WRITE ABOUT THE SPORT. I USE WORDS LIKE 'THUNDERING', 'POWERFUL', 'FORCEFUL', AND 'COMMANDING', ADJECTIVES NORMALLY RESERVED FOR THE MALE OF THE SPECIES. HERE HT IS HONOURED TO REPORT ON WOMEN IN POLO WHO DESERVE TO BE DESCRIBED IN THESE WORDS AND MORE, LIKE 'DETERMINED', 'FOCUSSED', 'DEDICATED', AND 'COMMITTED', TRUE ROLE MODELS FOR POLO AND FOR WOMEN IN SPORT IN GENERAL, WITH PROFILES OF POLO-PLAYING ADVOCATES HER HIGHNESS SHEIKHA MAITHA BINT MOHAMMED BIN RASHID AL MAKTOUM, HER SERENE HIGHNESS PRINCESS ANNA OETTINGEN-WALLERSTEIN, AND AMERICA'S OWN POLO ROYALTY SUNSET 'SUNNY' HALE.

Why did HT choose to profile these three women in this issue? Yes, there are the other very deserving women in the polo world, female pioneers who heroically broke the first bricks in the gender barriers in the sport of polo, and there are also many legendary and unforgettable women polo patrons, as well as the famous and talented women players with higher handicaps, all of whom we hope to cover in future issues. But what these three women share is a combination of unique attributes exemplifying today's all-around model woman representative of this magnificent sport.



First, they are not just supporters and observers. They are all hands-on players who have participated in such major tournaments as the Queen's Cup, the British Open, the US Open and Soto Grande, as well as other tournaments throughout Europe, the US, Asia, and the Middle East. They are rough and tumble; they have paid their dues in sweat and treasure. They are horsewomen in their bones.

They are achievers and doers. While each of our profilees can and do successfully play tournament polo with the men, each of them is an unabashed, unparalleled, and unrelenting advocate for women and girls in polo. In this capacity, they have each in their way created an institution or path for other women or girls who would dare to reach for the mallet.

Several organisations have been founded to encourage and support women's participation in the sport of polo, including the venerable International Women's Polo Association (IWPA) founded by Pippa Grace in 1989, formally launched in

1997, and sponsored by the Ascot Park Polo Club. Another dynamic force in women's polo is the Women's Championship Tournament (WCT) founded by Sunny Hale.

Beyond the formal institutions, women's matches, teams, tournaments, clinics, and exhibitions also reach thousands of people and introduce more and more women and girls to the sport. Indeed, women's and girls' participation in polo is growing exponentially. According to statistics by the United States Polo Association (USPA), women now account for more than a third of all registered players. New players are introduced and nurtured through events such as Princess Anna's prestigious annual 'Girls Only' Tournament series in Europe and Sheikha Maitha's Ralph Lauren International Ladies Polo Tournament held in Dubai, her Pinkz7 women's team and her very successful high-goal UAE Team.

Social media have a role to play as well. The seriously fun Women In Polo (WIP), active on Facebook, is

a recently formed charity aiming to promote opportunities in polo for women and girls who want to play and/or work in the sport. Recognising that women's polo is not only thrilling and fun, but is also the fastest growth area in global polo, its mission is to "turn these superb advantages into genuine opportunities across the board for female players of any age or ability who share our vision."

They explain: "Started in the UK but already with an international following we aim to create more opportunities for girls and women to play and work in polo...We want to try and level the field by creating more interesting and exciting playing opportunities for female players at all levels – and male players can join in too – if we let them!!!!"

With that, we now introduce you to our three star HT profilees, Her Highness Sheikha Maitha bint Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Her Serene Highness Princess Anna Oettingen-Wallerstein, and America's own polo royalty Sunny Hale.



HER HIGHNESS SHEIKHA  
MAITHA BINT MOHAMMED BIN RASHID AL MAKTOUM

*"I THINK IT'S A SPORT THAT ENCOMPASSES GRACE AND BRAVERY AND COURAGE."*

Whilst spoken about the sport of polo by Sheikha Maitha, these positive attributes could very well describe this caring philanthropist, accomplished Olympian, gracious and dignified royal, and the Arab region's first and foremost female polo player and advocate – grace, bravery and courage!

Sheikha Maitha, a daughter of His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, the Constitutional Monarch of Dubai and Prime Minister and Vice President of the United Arab Emirates, has quietly and elegantly made her mark as an athlete, lady and royal.

Although a rider all of her life, she directed her early athletic attention to martial arts and once she did so, she was on her determined way, starting her rise to the top. She won the Silver medal at the 2006 Asian Games in Karate and represented the UAE in the 2008 Summer Olympics in the sport of Taekwondo.

However, a back injury cut short her promising rise in that sport and led to a series of surgeries, which left her with a dilemma – what to do with the strength, energy and competitive spirit within her. Horse riding was a natural choice, but how could she take a risk with show jumping, the horse sport she knew? It was then that she was introduced to the strong and sturdy, but gentle and responsive and more or less earth-bound polo ponies at Desert Palm by international polo player and patron Ali Alwardy. She immediately took to this special sport and she hasn't turned back.

From novice training to high goal competition Sheikha Maitha made the move in a trajectory that took many of the people involved in the polo world quite by surprise. It is one thing to have a passion and the resources to fulfil it; it is quite another to achieve

the physical skills, strength, stamina, competence, horses, and entourage to actually compete at this level in the big league with the high goal players in so short a time.

She started her serious campaign at the 10-12 goal Cartier International Dubai Polo Challenge in February 2012, then on to the prestigious polo star-studded charity Laureus Polo Cup benefiting Laureus Sport for Good Foundation Argentina, playing with team members Pablo Macdonough and Nachi Heguy in June 2012; and then straight into the big time playing in the 20-goal Bledisloe Warwickshire Cup in July/August 2012 on the venerable Godolphin team.

But her road to high-goal was only just beginning. Warming up 2013 with her win in January at the 16-goal Emirates Cup followed in rapid succession in February by her team's win in the 10-12 goal Cartier International Dubai Polo Challenge and her golden-goal victory in extra time in the April Cup at Desert Palm with her all-girls' Pinkz7 Team, she positioned herself in England for her British high-goal season campaign in earnest.

There on 10 June she assayed the high-goal Cartier Queen's Cup at Guards Polo Club and was just squeaked out of the semi-finals by Alwardy's Dubai Team. A mere one week later, she is back on her pony to win the GCC Trophy. Only three days later, she returned to the Laureus Cup for team IWC Schaffhausen with a near-miss.

The rest of June and July kept Sheikha Maitha busy winning several impressive matches including vis Cortium, Lucchese and Emlor at the mighty Grand Slam-ranked Veuve Clicquot Gold Cup, interrupted on July 14 to generously participate in

the Fifth Chukker Access Bank match to support UNICEF in its anti- HIV/AIDS and anti-poverty campaigns in northern Nigeria.

This is all beginning to make me dizzy...but on she gallops to the 22-goal 42nd International Polo Tournament in Sotogrande for the Hublot Gold Cup in July and August, playing in both medium and high goal. Whew!

But no less impressive than all of this is the effort by Sheikha Maitha to open the sport of polo to women in the Middle East, with her highly successful all-women Pinkz7 team and her historic Ralph Lauren International Ladies Polo Tournament held in December 2013. This tournament, the first women's international polo event in the Middle East, lofted women's polo into the world arena and advanced the reputation of the UAE and the world view of women in the Middle East. Make no mistake, this was an event of historic proportions (Sunny Hale called it "an unbelievable moment in history") and was successful due to the strength and regal persistence of Sheikha Maitha and her supportive royal family, in particular her father HH Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum. The tournament was created to help build awareness of the sport of ladies' polo in UAE and to support Dubai Cares, a leading local charity, which helps to provide children access to quality primary education in developing countries.

This young royal born into privilege learned an important and humbling life lesson through sport: "I love sports. I love athletes. I love what sportsmanship represents, the value of sports. Just win or lose," she said. "It's very fair. There's no class, you know. Everyone is equal. You're on your merit."

HER SERENE HIGHNESS PRINCESS  
ANNA OETTINGEN-WALLERSTEIN

*"I REALLY LIKE LADIES' TOURNAMENTS...THEY'RE A BIT MORE AGGRESSIVE. THE GIRLS FIGHT MORE!"*

HSH Princess Anna is not a heritage player but took to the game like a natural seven years ago when she was introduced to the sport. Her eye and heart are fascinated by the dynamics and elegance of the sport, the power, speed, and technique, but as much as that, the win. Her heart is also with her horses and her beloved Polo Club Wallerstein in beautiful Bavaria, Germany, where she works her horses every day.

The House of Wallerstein has a century old equine history. Prince Eugen and later his son, Prince Carl-Friedrich, had a strong influence on horse racing in their position as President of the International Club Baden Baden (1985 -1991).

Polo Club Wallerstein is located at the estate of the Princes of Wallerstein. Positioned in the splendid and wild countryside of southern Germany, the club emanates a gentle and refined abundance. She and her husband welcome polo players, sports enthusiasts, horse lovers and friends from all around the world to share in the splendour of Schloss Wallerstein and to enjoy their highly acclaimed horses and the sport of polo.

Prince Carl-Eugen and Princess Anna are also dedicated to introducing more women to the

sport and as president of the Polo Club Wallerstein Princess Anna is patron of her 'Girls Only' team and the founder and promoter of the annual international 'Girls Only' Polo Cup tournament series. In this capacity, Princess Anna has emerged as a dedicated and energetic ambassador for ladies polo worldwide. This international event is the most prestigious polo tournament for women in Germany and without doubt a prized and highly anticipated polo event throughout Europe.

Beyond hosting the Wallerstein Polo Cup, British Polo Days, and the 'Girls Only' Polo Cup at home, the sport allows Princess Anna to meet interesting personalities and to travel the globe with her husband to play polo at beautiful venues.

But, in fact, when asked, she would tell you that her own personal polo highlights include ladies' tournaments such as the Pink Polo Tournaments at Thai Polo Club in Pattaya, Thailand, the Royal Salute Cup in Jodhpur, India and recently the first Ralph Lauren International Ladies' Polo Tournament in Dubai in December 2013. As she describes it: "Women's polo is growing and it is good to see that women are respected as athletes in polo."

She looks to certain high-level

polo players for inspiration including the Tomlinson brothers, Luke and Mark, as well as legendary polo player and polo reporter Sarah Wiseman, as well as high-goaler Nina Clarkin who with +4 handicap is the UK's top woman player and one of the world's leading players. "They are brilliant riders, excellent, elegant but tough players and they take a lot of care for horses' well-being and for horsemanship in all of its aspects."

Her love of the sport is deep: "We all need something for which we are willing to make sacrifices, something that excites us and gives us that exhilarating sense of being alive. That something is polo for me. It is never too late to start. There is a lot of space for improvement and we all need to grow from day to day."

"Polo is dangerously close to becoming a downright obsession of mine. I started that sport very late in my life, but I am so thankful for every moment in this sport, in the past and future."

To young and upcoming players she has these words of advice: "It is important for young polo players, first, to be good riders and to be good in horsemanship. It is equally important to know that in order to become a good player you must treat a polo horse with respect."





## SUNSET "SUNNY" HALE

*"TO THOSE OF YOU WHO EVER HAD A DREAM FOR YOURSELF...I SAY GO FOR IT!"*

Reared on polo, Sunny Hale has taken her life-long passion for polo and horses and created a life and career of professional polo in a man's world and in the process has become America's chief advocate for women's polo and the most famous woman player in the world, a true living legend. From an early age, Sunny found her sport and with discipline, hard work, training, as well as an innate natural talent and competitive spirit (and maybe a touch of stubbornness?), she has risen to the top of the sport, not only in specialised women's polo, but in high-goal international polo tournaments as well.

In fact, in her formative years, the only place to get serious high-level competitive experience was on men's teams, so she set her sights on proving herself in that rough tough masculine world. And she worked, and she was noticed, and she worked some more, and she was invited to join tournament play and with luck and drive she found herself a professional polo player travelling the world and being paid for what she loves.

A true pioneer in the sport of polo, she has at one point held a 5-goal handicap, the highest handicap of any female player in the world. She is the first woman in history to win the US Open Polo Championships, which together with the Argentine Open and the British Open are the highest ranked polo tournaments in the world, the polo world's Grand Slam events. She has earned the prestigious Woman Polo Player of the Year award a record seven

times and in 2012 was inducted into the National Cowgirl Hall of Fame.

Whoa, stop right there...now I'm impressed. The National Cowgirl Museum and Hall of Fame is dedicated to honouring women of the American West who have displayed extraordinary courage and pioneering fortitude, so it looks like they got the right cowgirl. Hall of Fame honourees include such luminaries and legends as Annie Oakley, Dale Evans, Georgia O'Keefe, Sacagawea, and Sandra Day O'Connor.

What passion, what obsession, and against so many odds, drives a person to continue to strive to achieve a nearly impossible goal? She tells HT: "I believe if you have a dream, you should go for it. Inspiration is the moment that your true passion presents itself and it is the window you choose to walk through or let close... either way it's all up to you. The by-product of following your dream is a fulfilled life."

Not content with being the best and most famous female player in the world, she set out to pave the road for other women to follow. The effect of the Women's Championship Tournament on the development of women's competitive polo is momentous and historic. Founded in 2005 by Sunny Hale to promote women's polo and top level women's polo competitions, the WCT is now the largest women's polo league in the world, where the top female polo

players compete. From strength to strength this tournament over the years draws women players through a qualification crucible at their local polo clubs all over the world to produce a sterling level of competition at the top, the annual Women's Championship in Wellington, Florida each April.

With pride she enthuses: "Women's polo is experiencing a moment in time where history is being rewritten. The competition is getting better and better and there are more new tournaments being added each season. I created the WCT out of a desire to network all of the women who share the same passion for polo around the globe and promote top level competitions among them. There are so many more opportunities for women arising and with the great success of new tournaments like the first ladies tournament in Dubai, the possibilities are endless."

We end this profile with Sunny's words of advice to women players: "My best advice to women players is that if you have a goal, be willing to work hard at what you want and prove yourself with your performance, your goals are reachable if you follow this formula. I have played with and for some of the greatest players of our time in the highest levels of the sport, so I can say this with absolute certainty. I would also say that one of the greatest gifts is to be able to remain a respectable woman and a sportsman as you go after your dream, no matter what the pressure." 🙌

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# DRESSAGE CHAMPION HELEN LANGEHANENBERG IN THE PURSUIT OF PERFECTION

By Randa Henri Barakat

COUNTRY: GERMANY  
DATE OF BIRTH: MAY 21, 1982  
STAR SIGN: GEMINI

THE MAGNIFICENT WORLD OF DRESSAGE IS ONE WHERE ELEGANCE AND BEAUTY MIX HARMONIOUSLY TOGETHER TO OFFER A PERFECT COMBINATION OF CONTROLLED POWER AND SUBTLETY IN MOVEMENT COMBINED WITH GRACE, STYLE AND CLASS. "THE PASSIONATE PURSUIT OF PERFECTION BY THE OBSESSIVELY IMPERFECT..." IS A SLOGAN THAT EVERY DRESSAGE RIDER SHOULD SPONTANEOUSLY REMEMBER EACH TIME HE/SHE MOUNTS HIS HORSE, AND ENTERS THE ARENA, AND, INDEED, MANY SHINING STARS AND QUEENS OF THE ARENA RIDING UNFORGETTABLE HORSES, DO. IN THIS HT INTERVIEW WITH OLYMPIC AND WORLD CHAMPION HELEN LANGEHANENBERG, SHE TALKS TO US ABOUT HER LIFE, HER RIDING CAREER AND HER TRAINING.

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**You are a star in the world of dressage; tell us about your beginnings? How did you discover dressage? How did it click? Who was behind the scene to help you discover the beauty of it?**

I loved animals and my parents allowed me to take riding lessons. The more I could ride the more fun I had. I always liked dressage, but really, I started as a young girl just playing with ponies!

**Dressage is a very hard discipline, it requires commitment, self-involvement, an iron will... how does all of this work into your day-to-day training routine?**

I think it is my passion! I just love it. I do not think of a time or a place when I train, I simply somehow get rid of such thoughts.

**They say "dressage is the passionate pursuit of**

**perfection". How would you comment to that? What are your anxieties, your fears, your expectations and your hopes?**

Yes, I think that's true! I love to work on the small things to ensure that I make it all perfect. I hope my horses and I stay healthy and we can enjoy this sport many more years to come.

**Talk to us about your partnership with Damon Hill. Is he your best horse so far? How many hours do you train him a day? What about his temperament. Does he like to work with you? How does he show it to you? There is a lot of fluidity and communication between you two. How did you reach that level....How many hours do you spend with him outside your training routine?**

He is the best even though I don't train with him too much. He knows everything and wants to keep it fun.

He loves to get a lot attention and to be the centre of attention. I think he likes to work. If not, he would not do it in that easy and uncomplicated way. I try to make a game out of it. Don't take it too seriously. Just play!

**How did this partnership start? Did you feel that he was going to become your best partner? How is his temperament?**

When I first saw him I knew that's the best horse I ever saw! When I sat the first time on him it just felt so right. He is always willing to work.

**How long have you been riding him? Is he being ridden by somebody else from time to time? How do you maintain his mental state of mind?**

When he was five we won the Young Horses World Championships. Then he was trained by Ingrid Klimke. Then when he was 10 I started to ride him again.



Photo by Cymon Taylor

Ingrid Klimke and Klaus Balkenhol!

**What does it require to become a champion?**

To be focused, sequential, patient, to have realistic aim in the short and long run, and to stand up again after you have failed.

**How long does it take to bring a horse to Grand Prix levels? Tell us about the routine, the discipline, the work, the coaching, all that is involved including the sacrifices and the duties in terms of your relation with your partner.**

Normally, they cannot go with a good GP before 9 years. First, you have to train the movements, then bring it together one movement after the next and then make it perfect, easy and harmonious.

**What is your number one "most glorious win"?**

There are several, London 2012, the 2013 World Cup Final win and Herning 2013.

**How do you mentally prepare before a big competition?**

I study videos from really good previous rides and then replay the test in my mind until I have the perfect feeling.

**Dressage is a very demanding discipline; how are you able to keep up your training with your private life?**

I got married five and a half years ago... so while it is difficult to balance between training and my private life, my husband shares the same passion.

**One last question, what would be your message to the thousands of dressage riders all over the world who dream to ride one day in an Olympic arena?**

Believe in yourself and your dream. And step by step you can make it! 🐾

**A best performing horse is a happy horse. How do you keep him happy?**

By giving him fun at work, not exhausting him and taking him out to the fields.

**They also say dressage is dancing with your partner. Can you describe your feelings when you are on Damon Hill? By the way, how well does he respond to Kur?**

I think it is like dancing. We know each other perfectly! He loves the Kur especially going to music!

**We understand that Klaus Balkenhol has been your trainer for quite some time. Balkenhol is a living legend in the world of dressage, three-time Olympic medalist, winner of an uncommon amount of**

**international prizes.... Please tell us more about your professional relation with him; his training approach, his personal impact on your daily training, and most of all, the benefits you derived from his coaching.**

I am lucky to have been training with Klaus for 10 years now. He's the best! He has the perfect feeling for rider and horse and always knows how much he can ask without doing too much. He can really motivate horse and rider!

**Are you preparing another horse? How many horses to you train every day?**

We have a stable for training horses. It's our job. I ride between 10 to 12 horses a day.

**Who were the most influential coaches in your career?**

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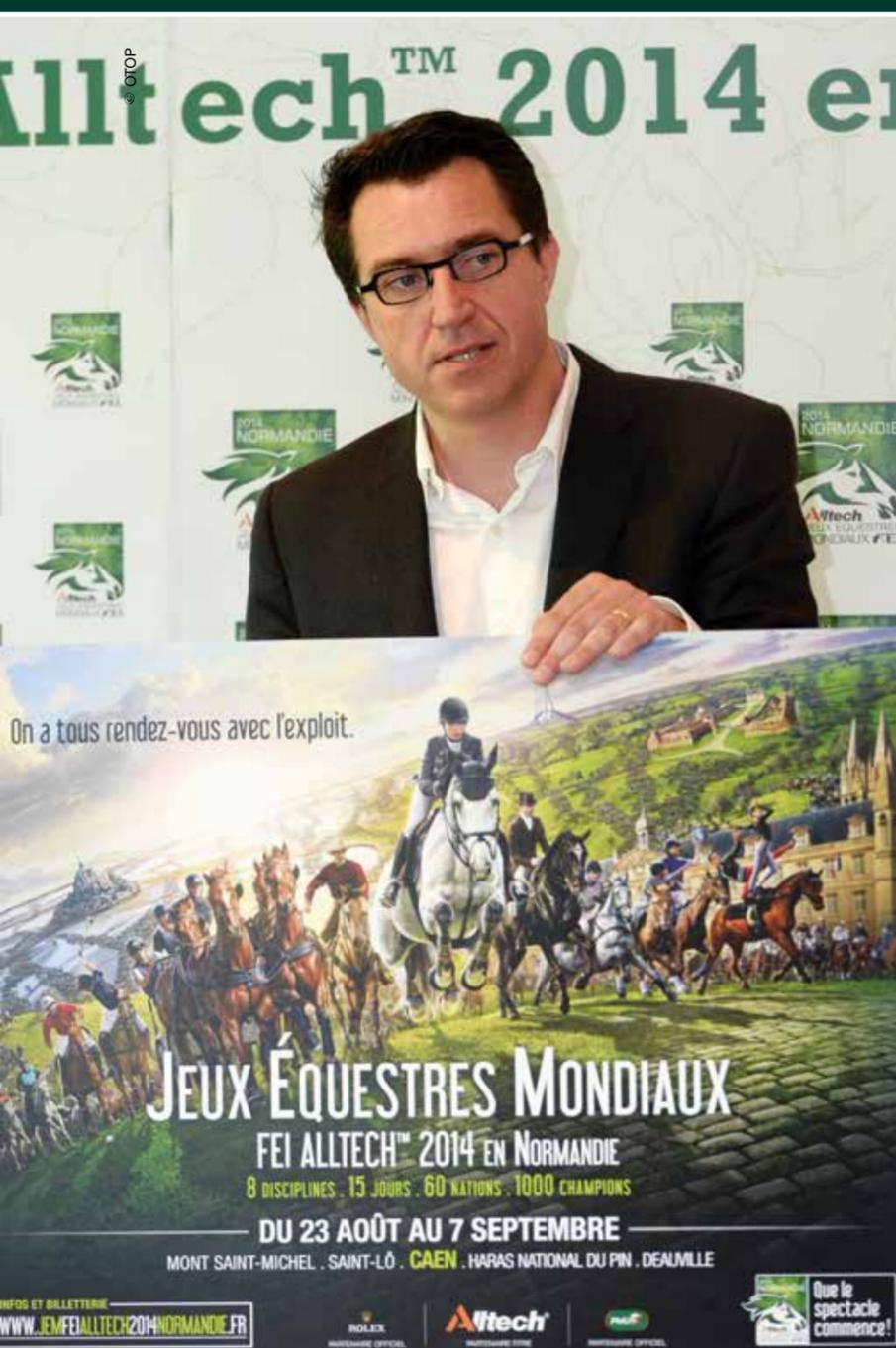
# 60 SECONDS WITH FABIEN GROBON

COUNTRY: FRANCE

DATE OF BIRTH: SEPTEMBER 21, 1968

STAR SIGN: VIRGO

PROFESSION: CEO OF THE ORGANISING COMMITTEE  
FOR THE ALLTECH™ FEI WORLD EQUESTRIAN GAMES  
NORMANDY 2014



IN 2012, FABIEN GROBON TOOK ON A VERY CHALLENGING ROLE OF ORGANISING THE WORLD'S BIGGEST EQUESTRIAN EVENT FOR HORSE LOVERS AND ENTHUSIASTS, THE ALLTECH™ FEI WORLD EQUESTRIAN GAMES NORMANDY 2014. THIS FORMER MANAGING DIRECTOR FOR MARKETING AND LICENSING OF ROLAND GARROS MOVED IN A COMPLETELY DIFFERENT DIRECTION WITH HIS PASSION AND WILL TO DELIVER AT THE HIGHLY-ANTICIPATED GAMES, HELD EVERY FOUR YEARS. AND AS WE ARE CERTAIN THAT HE AND HIS TEAM ARE FACING PLENTY OF DIFFICULT TASKS AND NECESSARY STRUGGLES IN A TYPICAL DAY IN NORMANDY JUST A FEW MONTHS BEFORE THE GAMES, WE WANT TO HELP LIFT THEIR SPIRITS BY FEATURING HIM IN

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### What is your best achievement?

A 25 year-old happy marriage, including my three children, Baptiste 16 years old, Lucas 14, and Anouk 10 years old.

### Who is your sporting hero (any sport)?

Roger Federer, Laetitia Bernard, a French blind rider who is also a journalist for a French national radio, and José Letartre, a French para-dressage rider.

### Do you keep any pets?

Not anymore, although I did have cats when I was a kid.

### What is your favourite movie?

'Field of Dreams' starring Kevin Costner. I love the quote mentioned, "Build it and they will come".

### Who is your ideal celebrity (female or male)?

Larry David.

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

I have a small lead figurine on my desk that I like very much!

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

The Cure, Morrissey, New Order, Yann Tiersen, Julien Doré, and anything from Paul Weller. And yes, I like to dance.

### What is your second favourite sport?

Basketball when played in the USA and Horse Ball when played in St Lô, France!

### What is your favourite book and who is your favourite author?

Book : "The Art Of Possibility" by

Rosamund Stone Zander and Benjamin Sander. As for the Author, it's been Paul Auster since 1988.

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

I cook every weekend and the "Poulet à la Crème et au Vin Jaune" (my mother's confidential recipe) is my favourite recipe. However, Indian is my favourite food.

### What is the most memorable place you ever visited?

Wherever I take myself when I close my eyes.

### Are you superstitious?

No, it brings bad luck!

### What is your strength and what is your weakness?

I am passionate (and I am passionate).

### What makes you happy and what makes you sad?

I am a "happy customer" in general.

### What is the biggest challenge you ever faced?

Organising the 2014 WEG is a pretty pretty big one....

### What is the biggest reward you ever got?

A letter confirming my third kid would be a girl!

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

Creative. Stubborn on subjects that do not matter at all (and creative when I decide to get whatever I want).

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

I would divide the world population by 10.

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

Divide my age in half (but I'd like to keep the experience if possible!)

Currently, if you were not the head of the organising committee for the 2014 Alltech FEI World Equestrian Games, where would you rather be working?

At the place where I will be working next!

Finally, which question would you ask yourself?

Time or money?



Baptiste & Anouk Grobon





## SYCAMORE STABLES INTERVIEW WITH JOANNE SLOAN ALLEN

By Nada H. Abdelmoniem

SET IN THE SERENE AND QUIET HILLS OF COUNTRY ANTRIM IN NORTHERN IRELAND, SYCAMORE STABLES IS A BUSY HIVE OF ACTION, DYNAMISM, PREPARATION, PLANNING, AND DISCIPLINE. IT IS HERE THAT JOANNE SLOAN ALLEN AND THE WKD HORSES AND RIDERS WORK AND TRAIN. HT HAD A CHANCE TO CATCH UP WITH JOANNE FOR HER VIEWS ON HER FACILITY, HER TRAINING PROGRAMME AND THE PREPARATIONS FOR THE WORLD EQUESTRIAN GAMES IN NORMANDY NEXT SUMMER.

### When were Sycamore Stables established?

Sycamore Stables were established by me in 2000 - after I came back from being based in England with David Broome; I was very lucky to train with David, Peter Charles and Graham Fletcher early in my career and I took the valuable lessons I learnt in these top yards and decided to extend my home yard in the green hills of Co Antrim, Northern Ireland, at Sycamore Stables.

The idea behind Sycamore was to try and establish a place where we would aim to breed, produce and eventually sell horses to the top level in our sport, but following the concept of the horses coming first - i.e. the horses would take as long as

they needed to develop, not forcing them to a level before they were ready. Having mostly worked with Irish horses throughout my jumping career I saw how these horses got better and better as they matured and, indeed, were at their best between ten and thirteen years of age - a theory we still hold here at Sycamore with all our young horses being very lightly jumped until seven years when we put "the pedal to the metal" so to speak!

As time has gone on we have gradually expanded our yard to what it is today - three farms with guest and groom accommodation, over twenty permanent boxes, breeding barns, gallop, two fibre menages, grass jumping arena and large horse walker. I am very proud of Sycamore Stables and it is constantly evolving and growing as our business expands!

### Please tell us about some of the horses kept at the stables?

Gosh - we have nearly seventy horses at Sycamore! But the main horses we are jumping this year and hopefully we will have competing at the Vilamoura Atlantic tour will be Wkd Pepperpot, 2002 grey mare, Fortunus x Diamonds are trumps, Irish sport horse - our fantastic Pepper! What more can be said about this amazing little mare with the huge heart and the allergy to wood! She has been mostly responsible for taking Sameh El Dahan to the next level in this sport - with their unforgettable rounds at the 2012 World Cup Finals. Winner of many classes, including the ranking class in Morocco in October 2013, Pepper will jump the "big stuff" this year with her main rider Sameh, the ranking classes and Grand Prix in Vilamoura, and hopefully some five star Grand Prix this year, unless she is sold.

Sumas Zorro, 2004, chestnut mare, Wdl Douglas x Horos, Irish sports horse - our feisty Zorro - the chunky mare with the huge jump!! Sameh and I share the ride on Zorro, with me competing her last summer when Sameh broke his arm - however I think since Morocco he has pinched the ride off me so we'll have to toss

a coin this year to see who rides her where!! This mare is seldom out of the placings and has won many classes for both Sameh and me - But for Vilamoura he will retain the ride - the main aim for Zorro this year is the World Equestrian Games in Normandy for which she has gained her certificate of capability.

Limelight de Breve, 1999, brown mare, French bred - nothing really needs to be said about this incredible speed horse! Fifteen years young, having won nearly most of all the prestigious titles with her former rider, Laura Renwick, including the Queen Elisabeth cup, she is still winning, having just recently been placed fourth with Sameh at the MET in Oliva. Super speedy and fast "Loulou" just wants to win! She was originally bought for me to compete in the global classes in her twilight years, from top rider Laura, but she is, to be honest, a bit strong for me, and although I had some nice placings with her I always felt she was the boss and not me! She and Sameh have now formed an incredible partnership with them securing many wins last season - she is his main speed horse.

Championnes, bay mare, 2003, Come On x Kenwood - my main horse, "Coco" has been with me since an eight year old, and is fantastic to ride - she has a beautiful technique, scopey and careful, and I had a lot of fun with her at the 2013 Morocco Royal Tour, jumping in the World Cup qualifiers with her. She will be my main ride for the ranking classes this year - although Sameh might "borrow" her for the occasional big event!

Vera, 2002, Chestnut mare by Faldo, owned by Sherif El Barway, a long-time supporter of Sameh. Sherif sent Vera over to Sycamore last year from Egypt she has settled in super and has had lots of results with both Sameh and me! - winning second place with me during the Morocco Royal tour 140 class, and third with Sameh in Vilamoura two star ranking classes in October 2013. At the moment the plan is for me to have the ride on her in Vilamoura, but Sameh and I swap amongst all the horses so he will probably do a few



The view at Sycamore Stables

shows with her after that tour.

Lady's Queen, 2004, brown mare by For Pleasure. An exciting new addition to our string "Lady" joined us in the summer 2013 and has mostly been ridden by me. She is an extremely careful and athletic mare whom we have moved up the heights slowly, and we think an awful lot of her - she is so simple to ride and I think she will jump a big track - I will compete her in Vilamoura - although I think after that Sam has his eye on her and she is another we will have to toss a coin for!!

Elegance Casablanca, 2004, Grey mare by Clinton. "Casa" is another Egyptian-owned horse, owned by Sameh's good friend and loyal supporter, Karim Abdel Fattah. She was formerly ridden by Karim, but was sent to Sameh after the World Cup qualifier in Jordan in 2012. Sam is her main rider and has already had some super results with this exuberant mare, with her trademark flick of her back legs, winning just recently the one star Grand Prix in St. Lo. Sameh thinks a lot of her and plans to ride her in more Grand Prix this year and will alternate her

amongst his other top string this season in Vilamoura.

These horses will be our main ones in Vilamoura for the big classes, and they will be backed up by our other younger ones such as Wkd California and Wkd Tokyo.

We also will have horses competing in the CSI Young Horses in Vilamoura, among whom we have some really exciting potential stars including Wkd Diva, a seven-year-old by Balourada x Hors La Loi, a really elastic mare who has had an incredible run of clear rounds so far, being placed every day at the January Cliva show; Wkd Hullabaloo, our home-bred seven-year-old by Balou du Rouet x Fleurie du Manoir, is our oldest progeny of Sycamore's breeding programme and we are really proud of this big jumping scopey mare. We also have six-year-olds in Wkd Milano, or "Bart" by warrant. This big baby is another consistent horse, jumping super at the recent Oliva Tour, he is big, scopey and careful - very easy and a real playful character. "Bart" is a big favourite with our grooms! Our other six-year-old is the home-bred son

of Lupicor, Wkd Mojito, his mother jumped the Puissance of over seven foot at Olympia in 2000, and "Jake" has definitely inherited her scope, but his super technique makes him our one to watch!

With fourteen horses going to Vilamoura it's impossible to mention them all, but we hope they will all go well, and hopefully some of them will find their future "forever riders" and this show will just be the stepping stone to their future careers in other stables.

**Tell us about your training programme at the stables?**

As I previously mentioned, our ethos at Sycamore is to treat each horse individually and we try to tailor their training programmes to them. The young horses are all started from three and then turned away to the grass again. From four they are lightly campaigned on the flat and maybe some training shows, five years to seven they will go to one or two of the big spring tours and then come home to again have a break over the summer. Then from seven on usually we feel they are strong



Joanne & Chmpiones, Rabat 2013

enough to move up a gear and we will travel them to do young horse classes and CSI one and two star shows.

At home our main aim is fitness and rideability. Our horses alternate between flatwork in the arena, lunging "long and low", roadwork, and going for trips around the gallop - all interspersed with time out in our grass paddocks. We also will school the younger ones over poles and small grids as required during the week - the older horses seldom jump at home unless we are having a session with our trainer John Ledingham who regularly comes to the yard to put us through our paces!! They also all go on the walker twice a day - so as you can imagine they are very fit and seldom bored!!

**You are a sponsor for Egyptian rider Sameh El Dahan and together you make a winning team for the stables; when did this partnership start and what are your goals?**

In 2010 I was unlucky enough to break my leg badly resulting in several operations and pins and plates, as a result of this and the

burgeoning number of young horses Sycamore had ready to compete I was desperate for another rider to come on board and help take the stables to the next level which I knew I was not capable of doing alone. Sameh and I had a mutual friend with Cian O'Connor and he recommended Sameh to me for the Spanish Sunshine Tour - and so Sameh was thrown to the lions so to speak, arriving in Spain to eight horses, mostly very green and somehow we muddled through, and what initially started out as a temporary arrangement somehow grew into our partnership and the creation of the Wkd Show Jumping Team!! We started to buy more horses together and Sameh worked his magic on the youngsters producing Pepperpot and Zorro to the levels I knew they could reach. For a small yard I am proud to say that our horses are now competing at the top shows and Sameh has not only been to a World Cup Final, but is now recognised by his peers in Europe for the exceptional talent that he is, his rise up the World Rankings has been exciting to watch and hopefully this season he will get to represent Egypt at the World

Equestrian Games in Normandy.

Our goals as a team are to produce horses for sale that we are proud of - our main aim is to earn enough to keep competing at the best shows, and the most important thing for us is that our customers are happy and go on to be successful at their chosen level. Past horses such as Wkd Monaco, Taekwondo and Wkd Lexington to name a few have gone on from us to great success with their new partners, and this means so much to us as a team. Sameh and I have an amazing partnership of trust and respect for each other which I think makes us such a strong team - we both have the same attitude of the horse must always come first, and we both have an extreme thirst for success - as a team we swap the horses between us to hopefully make the best use of our individual strengths, and to show that the horses are adaptable and easy regardless of the rider strength or size. Our main goal is to have a home-bred Sycamore horse representing Egypt at a championship event - we are both dedicated and focused on making this happen and hopefully through my management of the



Joanne & Sameh with Championes, El Jadida 2013

team, Sameh's natural talent, the support from our amazing sponsors at Wkd and our loyal owners, this dream can become a reality. We have already achieved so much in a short span of time and our belief is if we can dream it, we can do it!!!

**How many shows do you usually participate in annually and what is your calendar for 2014?**

It would be easier to count the weekends we don't jump!! We are constantly on the road as a team - we are lucky now to have built up several strings of horses which we can rotate according to our end goal for that particular period of time. I think we must compete at more shows than most riders - in fact when you consider we are on first name terms with most of the airline staff and know the schedule to most major airports in the world that gives you an idea of how hectic it is to be part of an international show jumping team! It's now all about ranking points, and being at the best shows possible so our horses can be seen by potential clients - it involves a lot of road and air miles and a

very dedicated support crew - in fact there were times last summer that it looked like the circus was arriving in town when the Wkd team rocked up to the shows in some sleepy village mid-Europe with our entourage of grooms, dogs and family members in tow - not to mention the various trucks and trailers to carry us all!

This season 2014 we are already well underway with fourteen horses on their way to Vilamoura Atlantic tour for a month, via a quick show in Oliva! We will be based in Portugal until mid March and then we will head to the south of France and Italy to do several two and three stars. If Sameh is qualified for the World Cup Final then we will work towards that in April in Lyons. May and June are usually worked around the global tours for me - taking in St. Tropez, Cannes and Monte Carlo this year - after that we hope to make a trip to Spruce Meadows for several weeks with some of the horses - which will be really exciting for us - with at least four five star shows. However, the main focus of this year is Sameh and the World Equestrian Games. All roads for us will focus on Normandy

in August! Then it will be back to the World Cup trail again September/October chasing the Arab League qualifiers and then some indoor shows with the young horses at the end of the year!!! Like every year it will go quickly, I'm sure!!

**El Dahan has been qualified for the WEG; tell us about your preparations and expectations?**

As I have mentioned our main aim for this season is to get Sam to the WEG - he has never had such a fantastic string of horses, and Zorro, who will be his main ride there, is the perfect age and has been produced by us specifically for this event. I honestly believe that with the talented riders that Egypt has now they really have a chance of fielding a strong team which will go to the WEG with a realistic chance - with experienced riders such as Nael Nasser, Abdel Said, and Karim Zoghby to mention only a few, this year's WEG should be very interesting - and Sam hopefully will be there as ready and prepared as we can be! 🐾



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**Please tell us about some of your best results to date?**

My best results include: 2nd place in the 2013 National League, 2nd place in the 2013 National Championships, competing at the 2013 CSI Amman Arab League event and being placed 1st in its Grand Prix qualifier, 5th place in the Grand Prix, 5th place in the Medium Grand Prix, 3rd place in 2013 CSI Sharjah Arab League event, and finally, several other placements in the ongoing 2014 A1 season of the National Championships.

**What inspired you to come up with this concept of sponsoring several riders?**

The idea is not just only about moving forward in the sport, in my opinion the idea is extended to the level of achievement that we make inside and outside the

arena, on the personal as well as the professional level, where I believe this could all give a good example for being successful in all aspects.

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

We are all deeply looking into improving the sport and this won't happen until we improve the atmosphere around the sport and have it be more recognised and important locally. This sport is not only about the combination of horses and riders, it's about the entire structure surrounding it: audience, organisers, competitions and the will to compete whilst feeling that with what we try to do, we can actually improve and encourage enthusiasm by emerging teams in the country.

Furthermore, upon enlarging the base of the above mentioned combinations, only then will we be able to move that sport from being a hobby to becoming an industry as we see in Europe. Such will create different environments for competition and consequently, more professionals Egyptian equestrians will be able to participate and actually compete, internationally.

**Do you feel that you as a sponsor are getting good feedback – and if not, what kind of developments would you see emerging?**

Sponsorship programmes in general don't get much feedback and benefits until they become more public, and to be so, private shows should start introducing this idea, not just in National Championships. I believe this could complement the efforts

SELECT INTERNATIONAL EQUESTRIAN SPONSORSHIP

PART 3: SHADY SAMIR

By Khaled Assem

IN HT'S SERIES OF INTERVIEWS WITH FOUR EGYPTIAN SHOW JUMPING RIDERS SPONSORED BY SPSS, WE CONTINUE WITH THE THIRD PART AND SHADY SAMIR, THE MAN BEHIND THE SPONSORSHIP CONCEPT AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF SPSS EGYPT, AN IBM COMPANY AND 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.



Samir & Mr. Sultan Al Yahyaoui, CSI Sharjah 2013



Indoor Wierden, 2013

exerted by the Federation and this should be the next phase for the sport.

**Tell us more about your family?**

I am married and with two children: Zein Eldin who is nine and I believe is more competitive than I am in sports as he is very much involved in being around horses. Sama, my daughter, is five, and is quite the character. She doesn't seem to be yet determined about what exactly she wants to be involved in!

**Do you feel you influence others with not only your results but your character as well?**

As mentioned, influence is not only results, it's the entire scope of personality inside and outside the sport. Sport in general is such a motivation in life, however the

real impact or influence lies in figuring out ways to look forward to the best in everything.

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

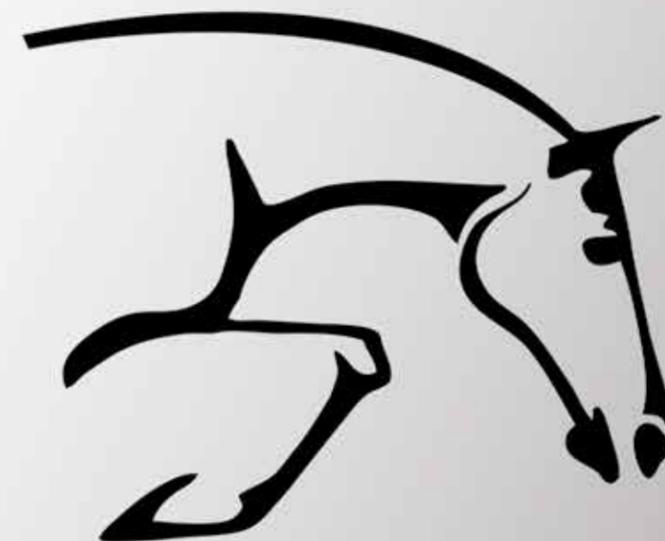
Family is what drives me to achieve so hopefully they are proud of my achievements in and out of the sport. Without my friends from the sport, I would have never reached where I am today even though there is still long way to go. I'd like to give special thanks to Karim El Sobky and Mohamed El Ghayer, my long-time brothers inside and outside of the sport, as well as Mohamed El Boraie and Karim Hamdy for their regular support their deep knowledge and experiences.

To young riders I'd say that the time factor is the main element in

this sport that can't be neglected, so you have to invest some time to help you build your knowledge as horsemen. "It's a lifetime learning process just on different scales." 🐾

**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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FALKIRK, SCOTLAND'S  
**THE KELPIES**



**KELPIES...**

*“ECHO THE GREAT BEASTS  
THAT WORK AMONG US  
UNBRIDLED IN THIS KINGDOM  
BETWEEN CANAL AND FIRTH,  
HERE TO HARNESS THE RIVER  
CARRY EACH WEARY  
TRAVELLER.  
BOW DOWN  
YOUR STRONG HEADS  
TO TASTE THE WATER  
STRETCH UP  
YOUR LONG NECKS  
TO FACE THE SUN  
MIGHTY TWINS OF CARNERA,  
UNBRIDLED IN THIS KINGDOM  
BETWEEN CANAL AND FIRTH,  
SURFACE TO TAKE THE  
STRAIN.  
CLYDESDALES OF THE  
CARRON,  
RARE WILD-MANED KELPIES  
COME TO HARNESS THE  
RIVER  
CARRY EACH WEARY  
TRAVELLER.  
CELEBRATE THEIR STRENGTH  
NEVER FORGET A DEBT OWED  
ECHO THE GREAT BEASTS  
THAT WORK AMONG US*

*BOW DOWN  
YOUR STRONG HEADS  
TO TASTE THE WATER  
STRETCH UP  
YOUR LONG NECKS  
TO FACE THE SUN”*

*~ JIM CARRUTH*

In April this year the Kelpies will finally be open to the public and will undoubtedly become an instantly recognisable landmark that will be visited by many thousands of visitors in the years to come. The journey from the original idea to the completion of the two magnificent heads standing majestically against the Scottish skyline has been a long and fascinating process. The Kelpies stand within a 360 hectare community park known as the Helix, near the town of Falkirk to the west of Edinburgh.

The Kelpies sit either side of a new canal lock on the Forth and Clyde canal creating a gateway into the Scottish lowlands. In 2006 during the early development of The Helix the client partners of Falkirk Council and Scottish Canals felt there was an opportunity to introduce a major piece of public art into the park. The initial proposal was for something

relating to the fabled seahorses of Scottish mythology known as the Kelpies and it was decided to call on Glasgow based sculptor Andy Scott to develop the idea. Scott already had an established reputation for his equine sculptures and he soon produced an initial sketch of his interpretation of the clients brief.

Whilst the Kelpie name has remained, Scott developed the project based upon a monument to the working horses which made a significant contribution to Scotland’s industrial heritage, including the building of the Forth and Clyde canal. Using two Clydesdale horses, Duke and Baron, as models - Scott created two pairs of tenth scale models or maquettes and these were instrumental in securing the Big Lottery funding needed to allow the project to move forward.

To faithfully replicate the original aesthetic of Scott’s work, the maquettes were carefully scanned to create a detailed virtual three dimensional computer surface model of the two heads. Structural engineers Atkins were tasked with turning this computer model into a working structural design and a period of intense calculation and analysis started.

One of the most challenging aspects of the design process was to develop a solution to reproducing Scott’s own unique method of creating his pieces on which he welds hundreds of individual pieces of steel plate to produce that is beautiful and breathes life. The solution was to laser cut much larger stainless steel plates whose profiles with their slots and cut out sections would when installed would create an almost identical aesthetic appearance to the originals.

With a concept design completed, the search for a suitable contractor to build the two 30m high structures began. Award winning UK based specialist contractor SH Structures were initially approached to assist by providing budget and technical guidance and after a rigorous prequalification and tender process secured the contract in January 2011. SH Structures significant contribution to the project started immediately as they were able to undertake the contract on a Design and Build basis and ultimately generate savings of over £750,000 by redesigning the internal structure.

SH Structures’ Tim Burton said, “We have over twenty years of experience of designing, manufacturing and installing complex structures and

love a challenge however the Kelpies soon became something special for our staff. We have developed a fantastic relationship with Scott, who became a regular visitor to our factory during the fabrication process and we feel privileged to have been able to contribute to the successful delivery of this unique artwork.”

Working with international structural engineers SKM the revised design was soon being modelled and the thousands of drawings for all the individual components were being produced and fabrication work started in the SH Structures factory in North Yorkshire. Burton also added, “We build all our projects in large assemblies to minimise the work on site. These assemblies are all accurately measured and trial fitted to each other to ensure they go together first time on the construction site. The job of putting the many assemblies together started in June 2013 and all the careful work in the factory paid dividends with construction taking only 75 days to complete.”

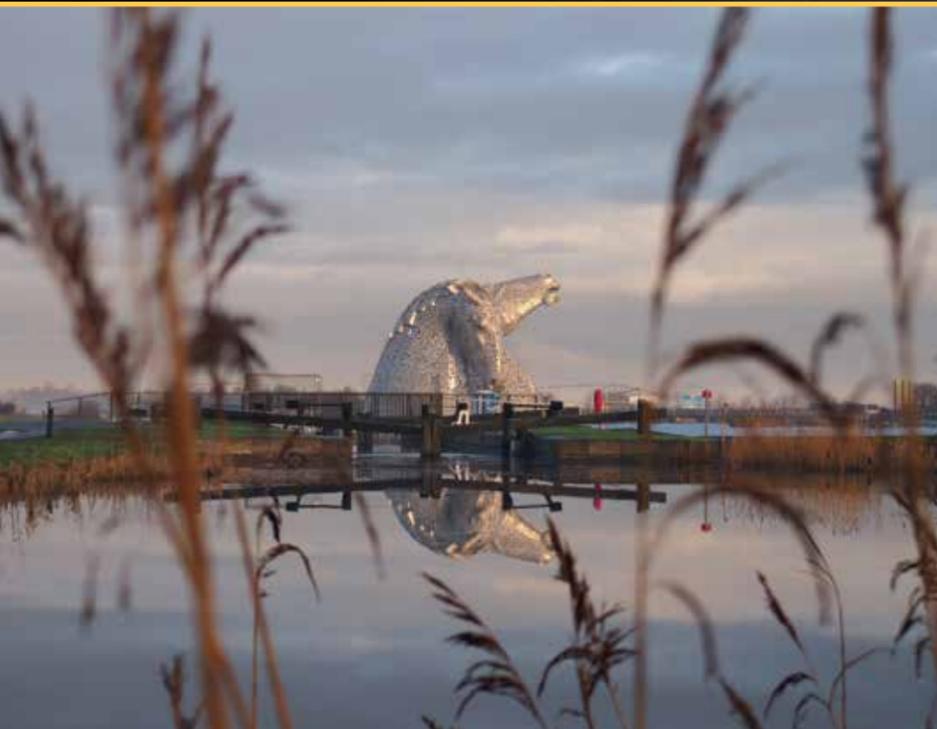
The two massive heads soon began to take shape as each piece was added however it was when the features were added that they suddenly turned from something

inanimate to something whose breath could almost be seen in the cold Scottish air.

The journey is almost over for the creation of the Kelpies and a new phase begins in April when they are opened to the public. Their presence is already being felt locally as 35,000 motorists pass them daily on the adjacent M9 motorway and worldwide interest has been overwhelming says Tim Burton. This has been very much a collaborative process with a fascinating mixture of the latest computer modelling and analysis techniques alongside the more traditional skills of the steel fabricators and erectors involved in the construction. However it is Andy Scott’s understanding of the horses upon which the Kelpies are based that has created something stunning that will stand magnificently in the Scottish countryside for many years to come. 🇬🇧

[www.shstructures.com](http://www.shstructures.com)  
[www.thekelpies.co.uk](http://www.thekelpies.co.uk)  
[www.thehelix.co.uk](http://www.thehelix.co.uk)

*Images courtesy of SH Structures Limited and The Helix*



*Construction of the Kelpies*



*One of the Kelpies ears being assembled at the SH Structures facility in North Yorkshire*



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Jordan's Ibrahim Hani Bisharat with Cleopatra Van Beekhof won the Longines Speed Stakes



Qatar's Hamad Ali Al Attya with L.B. Casanova won Emirates Airline Dubai Grand Prix FEI World Cup



Saudi's Abdullah Al-Sharbatly with Andrea won the Gulf News Dubai Cup-Qualifier



France's Michel Hecart with Nokia De Brekka won the Emirates Airline Two Phases



Paul McAuley & Mohammed Essa Al Adhab



Slovakia's Luka Zaloznik being presented by Ali Moosa Al Khamiri

## WORLD CUP ARAB LEAGUE CSI-W DUBAI 2014

THE 2014 DUBAI SHOW JUMPING CHAMPIONSHIP CSI3\* - W WAS COMPLETED IN FEBRUARY WITH A GRAND PRIX WIN GOING TO QATAR'S HAMAD ALI ATTIYAH AND A QUALIFICATION FOR THE ROLEX FEI WORLD CUP FINAL THAT WILL TAKE PLACE IN LYON, FRANCE, IN APRIL 2014. THIS ANNUAL COMPETITION FEATURES SOME OF THE REGION'S TOP SHOW JUMPING RIDERS AND HORSES AS THEY COMPETE OVER THREE DAYS FOR A SHARE OF THE AED 750,000 IN PRIZE MONEY.

Hamad Al Attya and LB Casanova claimed a career-best victory and provided Qatar with a first-ever win in the Emirates Airline Dubai Grand Prix of the Dubai Show Jumping Championship CSI3\*-W held at Emirates Equestrian Centre. Teammate Yousef Al Rumaihi was second with Palloubet D Halong.

The AED 245,000 centrepiece of the Championship featured a field of 42 entries representing 18 countries. The finals were contested by 11 competitors following the preliminary jump-offs. Al Attya and LB Casanova completed the jumps in 47:79 seconds, while the combination of Al Rumaihi and Palloubet D Halong were three seconds behind in 50:78 secs.

Morocco's Abdelkebir Ouaddar was third astride Quickly De Kreisker. Hamad Al Attya said: "This is the biggest win of my career and I am extremely thankful for the owners of my horse, the Qatar Armed Forces, for bringing me here to compete. This was an amazing win and I am so proud of what we accomplished."

The Longines Accumulator, with prize money of AED 100,000 kicked off the final day of competition. In the lead French rider, Michel Hecart, proved best in the field of 63 entries as he guided Nodi De Brekka to victory in 44.08 seconds. Saudi Arabia's Abdullah Al Sharbatly teamed with Unique to take second in the tightly-contested event with a time of 44.27 seconds. Third was Joerg Naeve of German aboard

Cosimax in 44.51 seconds.

The Longines Accumulator is an event that allows competitors to choose the jumps they will attempt. Each of the fences cleared is worth a given amount of points based on difficulty. The winner is decided by the highest point total and fastest time. Hecart's weekend also included a win in the AED 100,000 Emirates Airline Two Phases on Thursday, the opening day of competition and a second in the Gulf News Dubai Grand Prix Qualifier on Friday. Al Sharbatly, a three-time winner of the Emirates Airline Dubai Grand Prix, also collected a win in the Gulf News Qualifier. 

All photos © EEC/Tara Hamilton Photography



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INTERNATIONAL SHOW JUMPING  
AT THE POLICE ACADEMY

CSI1 CAIRO - EGYPT ON THE RISE

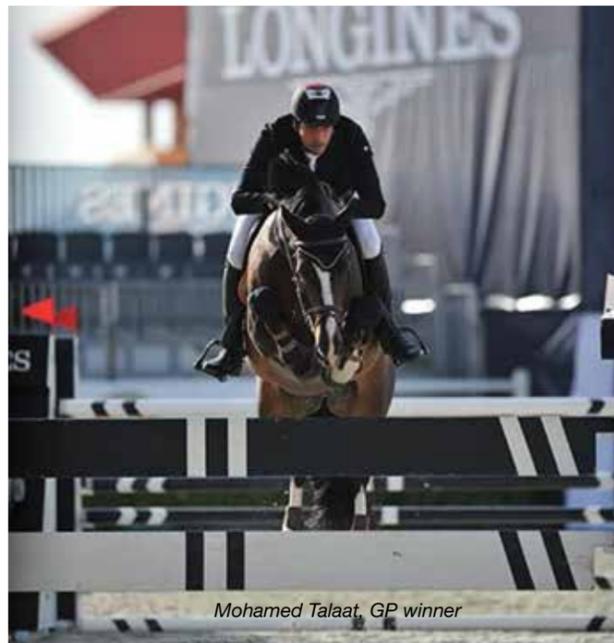
By Bridget McArdle McKinney

A DAY OUT AT THE POLICE ACADEMY GROUNDS TO WATCH THE EGYPTIAN EQUESTRIAN FEDERATION CSI1\*- CSICH – B INTERNATIONAL SHOW JUMPING COMPETITION AND ATTENDED BY THE MINISTERS OF CULTURE AND SPORTS MADE FOR A FUN AND UNIQUE CAIRO EXPERIENCE - AND FOR SOME OPTIMISM FOR EGYPT'S FUTURE WITH THE EGYPTIAN EQUESTRIAN FEDERATION MOVING AHEAD WITH EXEMPLARY ORGANISATION TO HOST INTERNATIONAL RIDERS FROM 10 NATIONS.

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Mohamed Taher Ziyada



Mohamed Talaat, GP winner



His Excellency Tarek Abo Zeid, Minister of Sports



France's Robin Muhr



France's Isabelle Schroeter Taisserec



Italy's Paolo Nuti



Syria's Manaf Jabri, Medium GP winner



Some of Egypt's Police Officers & equestrians!

I had long wanted to see the grounds and competition at the Police Academy show jumping grounds and this FEI sanctioned event held from 19 – 21 February under the auspices of the Minister of the Interior Mr. Mohamed Ibrahim was my ticket in. Held under strictest security, weaving our way through the several checkpoints, I wondered what we would find.

Approaching the grounds we could see the flags of the various international teams participating, snapping smartly in the breeze above the arena. Riders from Sudan, Morocco, Algeria, Syria, Italy, Belgium, Ireland, Zimbabwe, the Netherlands and Mauritius were invited to compete on borrowed horses and efficiency and organisation were obvious as we entered the event area. First, you see plenty of comfortable shaded

raised seating areas in landscaped grounds served by several food and drink outlets. The course itself, designed by Mr. Michel Ismalun was very attractive and challenging and the footing seemed good as the first of the competitors started out.

One after one, each rider pressed quickly through the course and it soon became clear which riders were nervous, or were focused, in control and in perfect sync. The pacing and timing before and between jumps as well as the handling of the turns made all the difference in the results.

The show was an excellent opportunity for Egyptian and foreign riders to compete at different difficulty levels: Small, Medium and Big tours. Because this was the first international show to be organised

in Egypt since CSI 1\* (A) – Cairo HORSES & HOPES International Show Jumping Festival 2012, the organisers, trainers, riders, and grooms were all very excited to do their best, showing their professional capabilities and skilful know-how which reflected very positively on the show. All riders from all age groups were very enthused to excel and to demonstrate their best riding styles, techniques and skills after long hours, weeks, months and years of training and practice. Moreover, professional Egyptian riders were very motivated by the highly competitive atmosphere and put in their best performances at international level.

Egyptian Lawyer Sameh Kamal participating in the Medium Tour explained: "I was a little overwhelmed at the beginning being at my first

international show along with my Holstein mare, Cocco, but as soon as I rode her into the arena, all I could see were the fences and all I could hear were the encouraging voices of the show commentator and the lovely spectators. The result was AMAZING. I rode very well and even got some clear rounds! Building up a horse for such an event is a thrilling experience. Chapeau to all participants to this event!"

By the end of each day the best riders and horses were on the trophy list. As the respective national anthems of the winners were played and all of the attendees paid due respect, I felt that there was a sense of pride in the success of this event in the face of current circumstances here and a sense of Egypt coming back into its own, Egypt on the rise... m



Eng. Hisham Hattab, EEF President & Gen. Sayed Moawed, EEF Technical Manager



*Belgium's Francois Bossu*



*Renowned Dutch Trainer, Arno Neessen*



*Ahmed Alaa Ragab*



*Morocco's Ahmed Derghal*



*France's Maelle Martin*



*Mauritius' Isabelle Labat and Hyder Joonas*



*The esteemed Judges!*



*Jordan's Team 962*



*The esteemed Course Designers*

*All photos by HT*

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# HORSE FEED



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### HOW TO KNOW THE BODY CONDITION SCORE OF YOUR HORSE

SCORE	DESCRIPTION
1	<u>Poor</u> – The horse is extremely emaciated. The backbone, ribs, hip bones, and tail head are all very prominent. The neck is hollow, and the bones of the shoulders, withers, and neck are easily noticeable. Individual vertebrae are clearly seen and easily felt. No fat can be felt anywhere.
2	<u>Very thin</u> – The horse is emaciated. The backbone is prominent and the ribs, tailhead and hipbones stand out. There is a slight fat covering over the vertebrae in the spine, but individual vertebrae are visible. The bones in the shoulders, withers and neck are faintly noticeable.
3	<u>Thin</u> – The backbone is prominent. The tailhead is evident, but individual vertebrae cannot be seen. Ribs are easily visible, but a slight fat layer can be felt over the ribs. Hipbones appear rounded, but they are easily seen. Neck, withers and shoulders are emphasized.
4	<u>Moderately thin</u> – The vertebrae produce a slight ridge along the back. A faint outline of the ribs is visible. The prominence of the tailhead depends on breed and conformation, but fat can be felt around the tailhead. Hipbones cannot be seen. Neck, withers and shoulders are not obviously thin.
5	<u>Moderate</u> – The horse's back is level. Fat around the tailhead appears spongy. Withers are rounded, and the shoulders and neck blend smoothly into the body. Ribs cannot be seen, but are easily felt.
6	<u>Moderately fleshy</u> – The horse may have a slight inverted crease along the spine as fat is built up along the back. Fat around the tailhead feels soft. Fat over the ribs feels spongy. Small deposits of fat are over the
7	<u>Fleshy</u> – The horse has an inverted crease along the spine as fat is built up along the back. Fat around the tailhead feels soft. Individual ribs can be felt, but there is noticeable filling between ribs with fat. Noticeable fat is over the withers, behind the shoulders and along the sides of the neck.
8	<u>Fat</u> – The horse has a noticeable inverted crease along the back. Fat around the tailhead feels very soft. Individual ribs are difficult to feel due to the fat in between. Noticeable thickening of the neck. The area over the withers is filled with fat. The space behind the shoulders is filled in and flush with the barrel of the horse. Fat is deposited along the inner buttocks.
9	<u>Extremely fat</u> – The horse has an obvious inverted crease along the back. Fat appears in patches over the rib area. Bulging fat appears over the tailhead, withers, neck and shoulders. Fat along inner buttocks may rub together and the flank is filled in flush with the barrel of the horse.

### NUTRITIONAL TIPS FOR HEALTHY HORSES

- Horses should consume 1.5 to 3.0% of their body weight per day. At least 50%, probably more, of caloric requirements (80% of feed by weight of feed) of this should come from forages (grass and hay).
- Ample turnout and grazing time is important and will help keep your horse from getting bored. If his digestive system is working as nature intended, however if pasture is limited or unavailable, you can minimize the effects by feeding several small meals per day. Stabled horses should never be fed only one meal, but two works well for most horses. Three meals a day is better for horses under strenuous work such as endurance riding and three-day eventing.
- Don't ride your horse right after he finishes eating. Give him at least an hour after a big meal. Also don't feed him right after riding. Give him at least half an hour, longer if he is still hot. It is okay to ride a horse that has been eating hay or out on pasture.



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## MEDICAL TIPS

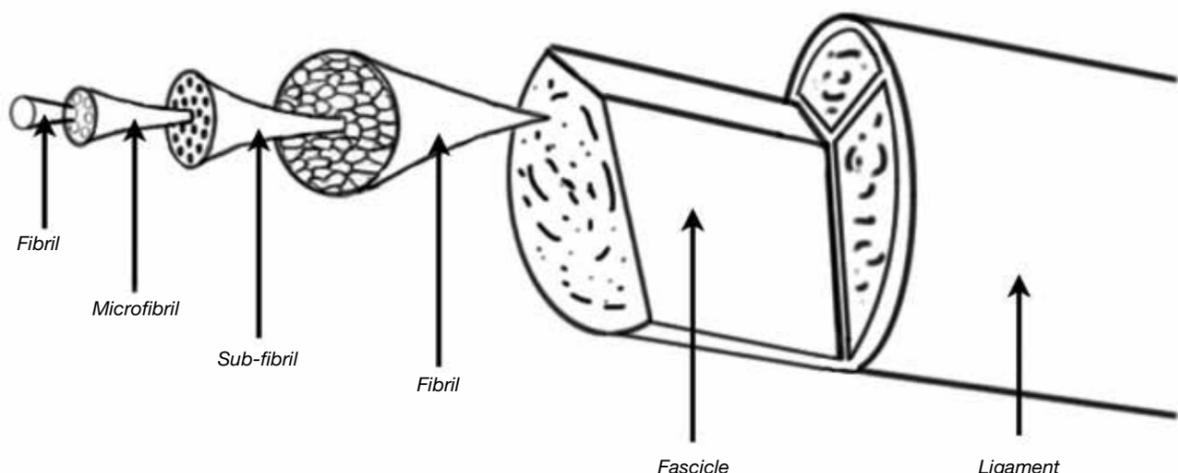
# DEGENERATIVE SUSPENSORY LIGAMENT DESMITIS

By Matthew T Swarbrick BVSc MRCVS, England

DEGENERATIVE SUSPENSORY LIGAMENT DESMITIS (DSLSD) IS A RELATIVELY RARE AND LARGELY UNKNOWN DEBILITATING SYNDROME. IT WAS DISCOVERED RELATIVELY RECENTLY IN 1993 BY DR. JAN YOUNG. IT AFFECTS MULTIPLE LIMBS AND IS CHARACTERISED BY A WIDESPREAD, PROGRESSIVE DEGENERATION OF THE COLLAGEN OF THE SUSPENSORY LIGAMENT AND SUBSEQUENT ENLARGEMENT OF THE SUSPENSORY TISSUE LEADING TO PAIN AND SEVERE LAMENESS. UNFORTUNATELY DSLSD FREQUENTLY CAUSES A PERSISTENT LAMENESS WHICH IS OFTEN INCURABLE AND ULTIMATELY RESULTS IN THE AFFECTED HORSE HAVING TO BE EUTHANISED.



This picture on the left shows the bones of the distal forelimb with the suspensory ligament represented by the red line. The picture on the right shows the same but with the hindlimb



### THE SUSPENSORY LIGAMENT AND ITS COMPOSITION:

The suspensory ligaments are extremely important structures in the horse, their principle function being to prevent hyperextension of the fetlock. A ligament is fibrous band which connects two bones together. Both tendons and ligaments have a similar hierarchical structure; the ligament is divided into multiple fascicles which, in turn are composed of progressively smaller sub-units, as shown in the diagram below. Please note that this is a schematic diagram and does not accurately represent the true anatomy of a ligament.

Fibrils are the smallest sub-unit

and are composed of a structural protein called collagen, which is the most abundant protein in mammals making up 25-35% of whole-body protein.

In the hindlimb the suspensory ligament (SL) originates principally from third metatarsal, or cannon bone. In the forelimb it originates from the third metacarpal, or cannon bone and also a ligament at the back of the "knee", or carpus. In both the forelimb and hindlimb it then courses downwards along the back of the cannon between the two splint bones. When the ligament reaches the mid-cannon region it divides into two branches which continue distally to insert on either of the proximal sesamoid

bones at the back of the fetlock, thus supporting the fetlock joints and limiting hyperextension. The picture at the top of the following page shows the course of the main part of the ligament and shows how the ligament performs it's function of supporting the fetlocks.

### CLINICAL SIGNS:

DSLSD can occur in most breeds of horses but has a higher prevalence in certain breeds. These breeds include the Peruvian Pasos and Peruvian Paso crosses, Arabians, American Saddlebreds and American Quarter Horses.

In Peruvian Pasos and their crosses, lameness is usually gradual in

onset with no history of trauma or performance related injury. In breeds other than Pasos typically develops in horses that have intense workloads or have sustained a prior suspensory desmitis.

Lameness is often bi- or quadrilateral, meaning it affects two or all four limbs, with the degree of lameness ranging from stiffness to overt. Mild to severe pain can be elicited on palpation of the ligament. In Pasos, the disease tends to be limited to the branches of the ligament after it has divided and not the more proximal part, or body of the ligament.

Other clinical signs of DSLSD include effusion (swelling) and hyperextension (dropping) of the fetlock joints (both at rest and when the horse is moving). This hyperextension occurs because the diseased ligament becomes unable to support the fetlocks in the normal position.

There are also anecdotal reports of horses with clinically diagnosed DSLSD dying suddenly, without any other precipitating cause.

### DIAGNOSIS:

An ultrasound examination of the suspensory ligaments is often the most useful diagnostic tool in reaching a presumptive diagnosis of DSLSD. However, its value is limited

by both the quality of the ultrasound machine and the experience of the clinician performing the scan.

Ultrasonography of affected ligaments is characterised by a diffuse loss of echogenicity and an irregular fibre pattern. Progressive diffuse enlargement of the affected ligaments despite exercise restrictions is a distinctive feature of DSLSD. It is often useful to scan the suspensory ligaments of all four limbs, even if the disease is thought to only be bilateral. Repeated ultrasound examinations are useful for monitoring the progression of the disease, especially in cases that initially have only mildly enlarged ligaments.

A presumptive diagnosis can be made with a combination of signalment, history, clinical examination and ultrasonographic findings. Unfortunately at present, a definitive diagnosis can only be made after the horse has been euthanised, when tissue samples can be taken and prepared for histology (the microscopic examination of tissues).

### PATHOGENESIS:

The cause of DSLSD is currently unknown, but it is thought to be multifactorial. The pathogenesis (how the disease develops) of DSLSD has also not been fully determined but defective ligament

healing by abnormal fibroblasts is thought by some to play a role. Normally fibroblasts in ligaments produce collagen in response to micro-damage as part of the healing mechanism. In DSLSD however, the abnormal fibroblasts seem to produce fibrocartilage instead and as more micro-damage occurs, more fibrocartilage is laid down. This progressive alteration in the normal healing mechanism leads to a failure in the collagen fibres that constitute the ligament. This results in loss in the tensile strength of the ligament. As the disease progresses the ligament gradually loses its structure and becomes unable to perform its function of supporting the fetlocks.

DSLSD is thought to follow familial lines and whilst this has still to be scientifically proven, the disease does show some similarities to several hereditary diseases afflicting connective and musculoskeletal tissues in people. For this reason many believe that this genetic link may be established in the future. It is therefore not recommended to breed from any individuals that are thought to have had the condition or that are closely related to affected horses.

Historically the syndrome has thought to be limited to the suspensory ligaments of the distal limbs of horses. However one scientific study has reported that



The effects of DSLD, photos taken by an expert vet in Cairo

DSLSD is a systemic condition affecting organs and tissues with a significant connective tissue component. Affected tissues documented included the deep and superficial digital flexor tendons, patellar ligaments, aorta, coronary arteries and nuchal ligaments. Conversely, another study which tried to repeat the findings did not find changes in any tissues other than the SL and flexor tendons.

#### TREATMENT:

Unfortunately at present there are no known effective therapies to prevent, inhibit or reverse the disease. Treatments are therefore empirical and supportive and do not alter the progression of the disease. These include anti-inflammatory drugs, such as bute, in an attempt to alleviate the pain. Suggested management and treatment of affected horses include box rest (stall confinement), which may improve the level of comfort. However a recent study found that exercise did not worsen and, furthermore, may improve the clinical signs of DSLSD in mildly to moderately affected Paso Finos and Peruvian Pasos. Results from this study suggest that exercise may have a positive effect on some of the signs associated with early DSLSD and may have the potential to improve the healing capacity of the damaged ligament. However this study had several limiting factors and further work is needed to confirm these findings, both in

horses with similar and more severe signs. With current knowledge lacking we feel that it is extremely dangerous to recommend exercise as a management or treatment strategy.

#### SUMMARY:

We still have a lot to learn about DSLSD. A definitive antemortem diagnostic test and an effective treatment and/or management strategy are both lacking and vital for successful outcome of cases. More research into the pathogenesis and histopathology of the condition is required so that we can develop a better understanding of how the disease develops and in which tissues. It is likely that the genetics will play a key role in helping us reach these goals.

If you suspect your horse is suffering from the condition the horse should be box rested (stall confinement) until a veterinary surgeon can examine the horses and will be able to arrange for an ultrasound examination to be undertaken. <sup>14</sup>

*About the author: Matthew T Swarbrick BVSc MRCVS is an Assistant in Diagnostic Imaging at RosSDales Equine Diagnostic Centre. He graduated in 2010 from the Liverpool University Veterinary School and subsequently undertook a two-year internship at a large equine practice in Newmarket. This*

*was followed by a short period as locum in mixed practice in Cheshire, where he undertook mainly equine work before joining RosSDales in March 2013. His particular areas of interest are imaging and lameness.*

#### DSLSD FACTS:

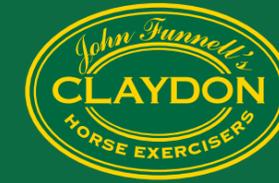
*The cause of this devastating and mysterious disease is unknown; however, it is likely genetic.*

*Its chief symptoms include periodic and unexplained lameness, swelling, and dropped fetlocks, but can include skin sensitivity and tripping/falling without cause. Found mainly in Paso Finos, Arabians, American Saddlebreds, Quarters, and Thoroughbreds.*

*It is thought to be incurable but there are pharmaceutical and natural pain reduction treatments available.*

*Serious research is being undertaken to study this disease, including Dr. Eleanor Kellon's nutritional support study at <http://www.drkellon.com/aboutdrkellon.html>*

*For more information regarding this disease, its symptoms, and possible palliatives, this DSLSD Group is very supportive and helpful: [groups.yahoo.com/group/DSLSD-equine](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/DSLSD-equine)*



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# Wael Ibrahim THE TRUE LOVE FOR HORSES

By Khaled Assem

COUNTRY: EGYPT  
DATE OF BIRTH: APRIL 11, 1982  
STAR SIGN: ARIES  
PROFFESION: FINANCIAL  
MANAGER AT ENTERPRISE SIGMA

THE REAL HEROES OF EQUESTRIAN SPORT ARE NOT NECESSARILY THE TOP RANKING RIDERS, THEY ARE THE ONES WHO STARTED YOUNG, ENCOURAGED BY FAMILY, IN LOVE WITH THEIR SPORT AND THEIR HORSES. THEY ARE SKILLED RIDERS YET THEY ARE TRUE HORSEMEN WHO BRING GENUINE ENRICHMENT TO SHOW JUMPING SPORT IN EGYPT. Wael Ibrahim is one of those many Egyptian riders and in this HT interview, he tells us how he came to be involved in the sport.

**When did you start riding and why did you start?**

I started riding in 1991, but I stopped for a long period of time, but then I started riding again in 1999. My first show was in 2001. The reason was my true love for horses since my childhood, thanks to my uncle who encouraged me to ride and love this sport. He was the first person to put me on a saddle.

**Which horses were the most important milestones in your riding path?**

I consider Janah to be my real start and Tuskana as the first mare to jump in the big classes, but Adios (the horse I am riding now) is the best horse I have ever ridden.

**How does show jumping affect your life?**

Honestly, show jumping sport

and training almost every day is affecting my life positively where I exert my utmost effort in the latter, releasing all negative energy resulting from a long stressful working day. Equestrian is one of the great sports where it affects the riders' personality, teaching him how to be ambitious, patient and ready to face any challenge as well as overcome any obstacles.

**Who were the coaches who had an effect on your riding technique?**

I owe everything I achieved earlier or will achieve in the future in this sport to Mr. Ashraf Abdallah; he is my true mentor who provided me with full support and guidance. But I can't forget Eng. Samir Abdelfattah, my lifetime friend Karim Assal and Dr. Karim El Sobky who have all helped me a lot.

**Will you try to encourage your**

**children to practice the sport?**

To be honest, I will not force my daughter Hana to practice or love a certain sport. She will be totally free to choose the sport she may like.

**What were your most memorable moments with horses?**

Any horseback rider goes through happy and sad moments, and there were always extremely emotional moments. For me the most unforgettable and happy moments were winning many important classes, also raising a young horse to be one of the top horses (and that's the case now with my lovely horse Adios). My sad memories include ones where I had a bad course in any show, but my most unforgettable bad memory in this sport was losing my great young horse Alexander which was really heart-breaking. 🐾

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# THE ART OF CLASSICAL DRESSAGE RIDING

## THE TRAINING SCALE PART 2

By Emmad Eldin Zaghoul

IN THE WINTER ISSUE OF HT (44) WE EMAAD ZAGHLOUL EXPLAINED THE IMPORTANTACE OF GOOD TRAINING AND THE BASE TO BECOME A GOOD DRESSAGE RIDER. IN THIS ISSUE HE CONTINUES WITH THE SECOND PART OF THE TRAINING SCALE AND EXPLAINS HOW IT WORKS.



### HOW THE TRAINING SCALE WORKS:

The elements of the training scale describe the essence of dressage training whether you are working at backing a 3-year-old or perfecting your piaffe-passage transitions. Any problems encountered during training, provided they are not due to physical or

psychological problems, can be traced to a weak link among the building blocks of training.

The first and most important building block is rhythm. Because rhythm is at the base of the pyramid, you cannot be focused on improving straightness if the rhythm at any gait is poor. In fact, you cannot be entirely focused on suppling exercises

(building block #2) if the rhythm is poor. Likewise, you cannot be entirely focused on contact (building block #3) if the horse is tight and tense (absence of suppleness). The key to adopting the Training Scale is to understand how each block or element is related to the next.

**Training Scenario #1:** Let us assume you have been trying to teach your horse shoulder-in. As you trot up the long side of the arena, the trot becomes sluggish, the horse stiffens, offers you the neck instead of the shoulder, and goes above the bit. It is a mistake to jump to the conclusion that the horse is resistant. Okay, he may be resistant, but not necessarily due to stubbornness. Let's examine all the things that went wrong:

-The horse lost impulsion caused by lack of response to the rider's leg (no contact) and/or tension of the back (no suppleness). No suppleness and contact lead to no impulsion.

-The horse became stiff in the neck and jaw means an absence of suppleness.

-The horse went above the bit means an absence of contact with the rider's hands, legs, and seat, also leading to loss of impulsion.

### LET US LOOK AT THE TRAINING SCALE ONCE MORE:

- Rhythm
- Suppleness
- Contact
- Impulsion
- Straightness
- Collection

The above scenario describes an absence of suppleness, which lead to loss of contact and impulsion. The rider had been trying to teach the horse a movement that is impossible to perform if the first four elements of the training scale are not established. Because the horse was initially stiff, it was physically impossible for him to offer a correct shoulder-in. In this situation, the rider must go back to developing the horse's suppleness, and try to establish a more confirmed contact.

**Training Scenario #2:** You have been struggling to get your horse on the bit in the trot. You heard that lots of impulsion from the hindquarters helps bring the horse on the bit, so you chase the horse around the arena, sponging, see-sawing, vibrating, and restraining the bit with your hands. The horse drops his back, stiffens more every time you kick him forward, and throws his nose up higher. Furthermore, the trot becomes uneven, and the horse starts short-stepping with one foreleg, almost resembling a lame horse. What is going on?

- The horse was becoming stiffer and more tense in the jaw. The absence of suppleness has made the presence of contact impossible.

-The horse was also stiffening against the rider's leg, which was asking for impulsion during the absence of suppleness and contact.

-The rider's struggles with contact during the absence of suppleness created loss of rhythm in the trot, resulting in what is called, "rein-lameness".

The rider had been trying to bring a horse on the bit when the horse was not supple and loose, therefore not mentally or physically ready to accept contact. As the rider struggles with contact in the absence of suppleness, the trot rhythm is also sacrificed, and the entire training structure collapses. In this situation, the rider must abandon all attempts to force contact upon the horse, and simply try to re-establish true rhythm while relaxing the horse. 🐾



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