

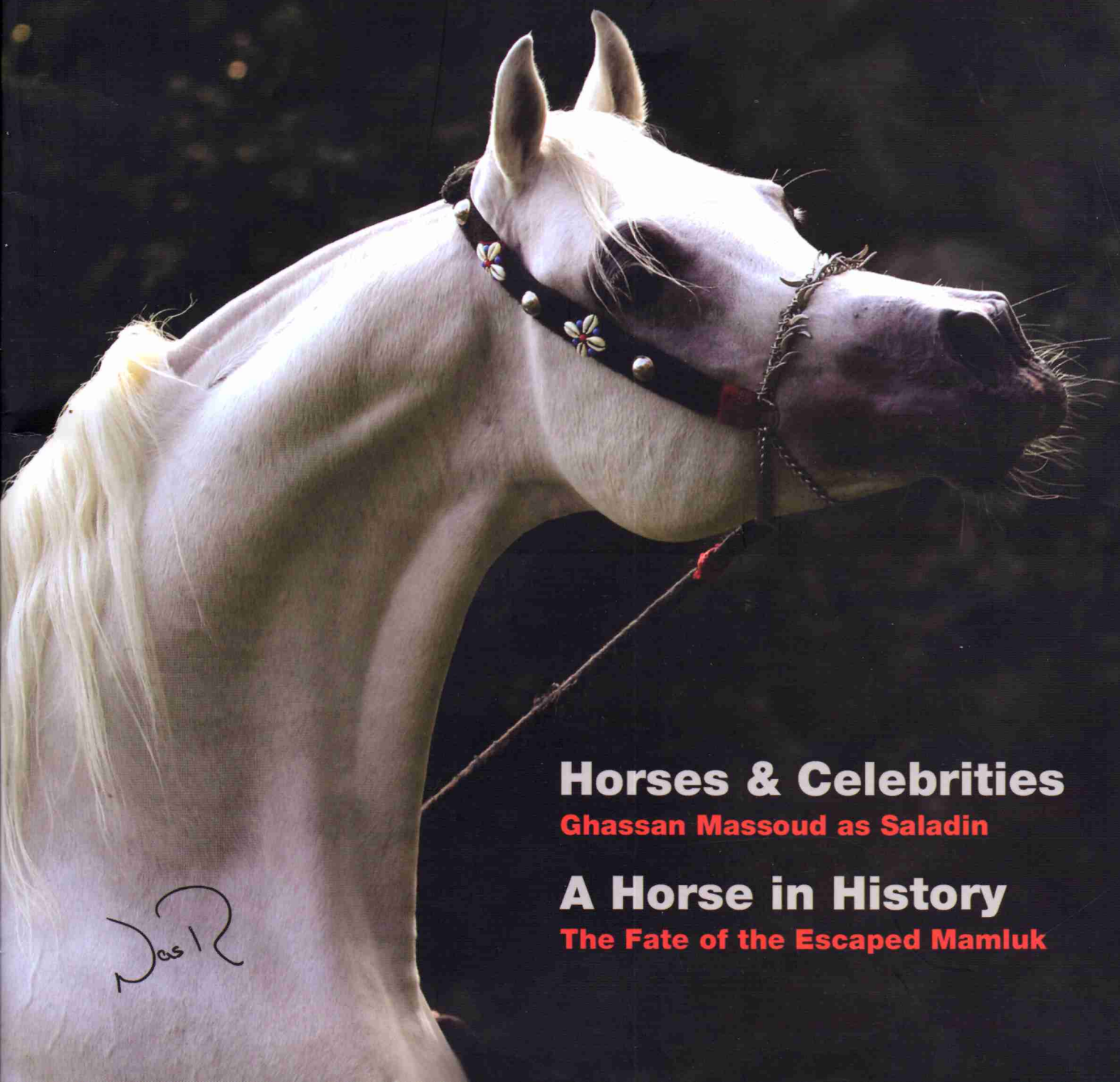
HORSE TIMES

Egypt's Official
Equestrian Magazine

Free Copy Issue No. 22 - April 2007

The Classic Arabian

The Sumptuous Beauty
of an Arabian Horse



Horses & Celebrities

Ghassan Massoud as Saladin

A Horse in History

The Fate of the Escaped Mamluk

Nasir

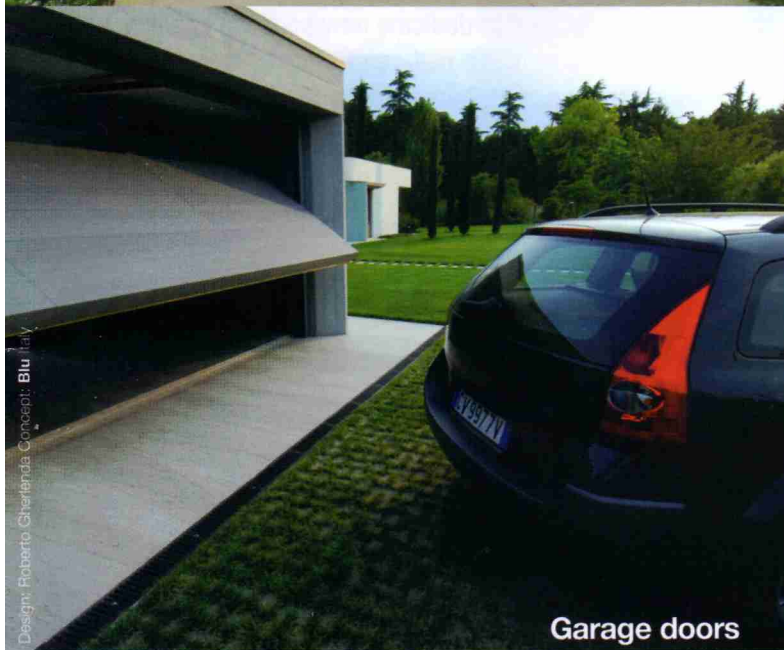
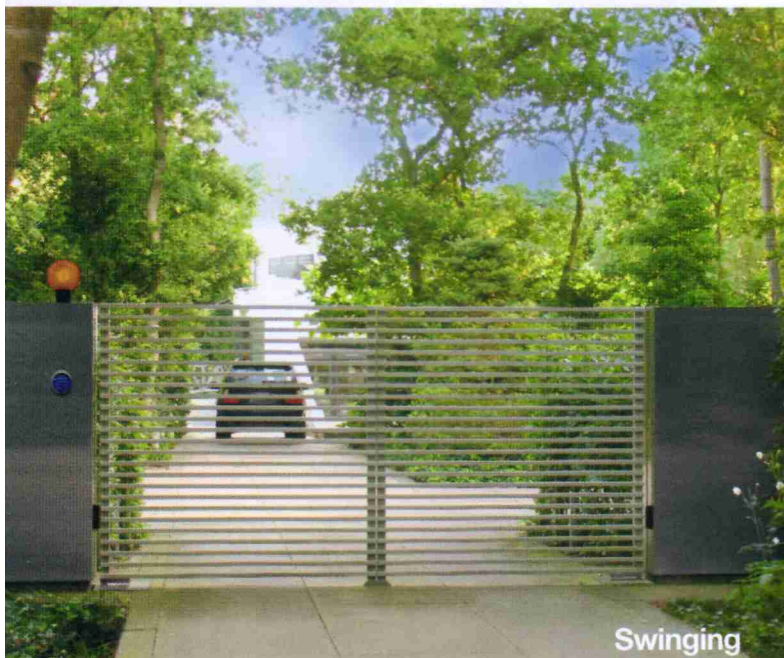


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Issue No. 22

April 2007

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Dear readers,

With every issue of Horse Times our vision grows and our goals expand further. A part of our new goal is to extend more light on how the horse plays an integral part in our civilisation; in poetry, in conquests, in art and in concepts of chivalry. So we decided to dedicate new sections to show how horses were and still are a part of our culture starting by the story of an escaped Mamluk during the era of Mohamed Ali. With another tale of chivalry for children through a book about Antar ibn Shadad and his horse Anbar by Kuwaiti author Mrs. Huda Al-Shawa, and the great actor Mr. Ghassan Massoud portraying to the West Saladin the Islamic conqueror, this issue is full with exciting informative articles.

Another great year for the Dubai international Arabian horse championship where Horse Times is participating again in addition to the universally recognised judge Dr. Nasr Marie continuing his explanation about judging an Arabian horse.

Mr. Ullrich Kasselmann gives his impressions about the Asian Games 2006 in Qatar and his vision for the success of dressage in the Arab world.

Presenting news about the Tierras de Al-Andalus endurance ride in May and the British Open show jumping championships in April 2007, training techniques and dressage tips, I hope you read on and enjoy this issue.

Sincerely,

Khaled Assem

Chairman

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The Classic Arabian Head & Neck

By Khaled Assem
Photos by Dr. Nasr Marei

One more time, the briskly charismatic Arabian horse breeder and accredited international judge Dr. Nasr Marei clumps the vibrant, sumptuous beauty and stamina of the Arabian horse. He not only gauges the authoritative guide to a perfect Arabian horse, but also highlights the importance of the breeders' vision. With Type, Movement, and Legs discussed in our two previous series of The Classic Arabian, Dr. Marei focuses on Head & Neck, a peak of the Body, and a tad of selective history.

To my little knowledge I feel that people are so keen to breed a pretty Arabian horse with its dish forehead and think that this is the most beautiful thing about an Arabian. Am I right?

You're right in assuming so and this actually happens quite often, especially with the younger breeders whether in Egypt or abroad. A beautiful head as defined by most Arabian horse experts and breeders has big eyes, small ears, crescent-like jaws, a wide forehead, a dish, a small head, and large nostrils especially if the horse is excited, with a jaw bone that is pronounced and pretty with a very fine throat lash. The definition of the parameters of judging a pretty head is almost universal. The problem in my opinion is that some people put too much emphasis on the head and the neck. The method of judging an Arabian which is popular and mostly used is the 20 point system, and you may see that the head and neck score is given 20% which is a justified one-fifth figure of the total score. Once people who are really keen on heads only see beautiful eyes and heads, they forget about the rest of the horse...which is terrible. It's quite tricky actually because you would see them go nuts over such a horse, forgetting that it lacks proportion, movement, grace and coordination; and I have seen people who buy Arabians just because they have pretty heads. Focusing on just the head is a poor choice because forgetting the rest of the body plus the movement, the owner will end up breeding no horses.

There is another issue involved here as far as head is concerned. If you look at today's head or what has been agreed as the perfect head, and compare it to two generations before, you shall see a huge difference. In other words, if you get the grandparents of the horses that exist today (which

have pretty heads) and put them in a show ring, they will not even get a 15/20 score. But with selection, the input of the breeder, and the vision of what constitutes a perfect head, the consequences may change. When you use a big term such as classical Arabian, you'll really have to go back in time; if we believe that our horses originated in the Arabian Peninsula, you'll find that there are still individual horses in Saudi Arabia and Bahrain that really represent the Bedouin type horse. Once you look at them, you



wouldn't even consider breeding them because they are totally off-type. They have big heads, no dish, small eyes, and croup sidings. If you judge them today, they will score a zero. In poems, they talk about big heads, small eyes, big nostrils, and strong legs. At a later stage, when you look at drawings by famous French or English artists, you'll notice a difference such as the heads being dishier, eyes bigger, and then we as breeders have taken this as the reference in which we breed according to. We are ending it somehow. I prefer what we have today, I wouldn't go for the desert bred Bedouin type, even if those are more original and unspoilt naturally-selected horses.

In the first series of The Classic Arabian, the TYPE of horse was discussed and it was a little vague; from a judging perspective, is judging a pretty HEAD the easiest task as opposed to judging the TYPE?

Many people would confuse head and neck with type. They would see a beautiful head and neck and would think it's a type-y horse. A beautiful head would add to the type, however please note that type is a very different category and many other factors are involved. In contrast, head and neck

should be the easiest category to be judged. Once again, people sometimes judge the horse by head only, when it's a head and neck category. You can have a head that's given a 20/20 point, but the neck would be thick, with a thick throat lash and is given an 18/20 point and you wonder why? A horse can have a short or thick neck, a very heavy throat lash, and a straight or curved neck. All these factors have to be considered when judging the category. Having said that, there is a new trend in which they are re-categorising the whole judging system wherein head would be judged separately from the neck, and whereas the neck would be integrated

into the SHOULDER. And hence the point system would be divided into HEAD (alone), shoulder and neck, body and top line, movement, type etc. This is going to be implemented for the first time in the upcoming Las Vegas World cup where I'll be judging for the first time. The neck itself is a different entity but its relation with the shoulder is very important. Not only from the point of view of correctness and prettiness, but also from the functional and proportional ability of the horse. We know that the angle of the shoulder is very important where free space is given to the legs as to have them animate, bounce and move. I think this new method of judging will be a PLUS eventually.

Using methods such as neck sweaters to enhance or beautify parts of the horse vs. upgrading through selective breeding; what would you recommend having mentioned that the whole concept of breeding is to upgrade the horse?

Sweating the neck down by either artificial means or by exercising will not solve the problem because in this case it would be a genetical factor. Meaning if you have a horse with a heavy throat lash and neck, most probably the offspring would be the same. Even if his neck is sweated down to a beautiful neck that wins shows, when it comes to breeding, the horse will again produce the same kind of horse that he is. You are entitled to use legal methods to upgrade a horse such as neck-sweaters and then display them in shows, but as a breeder you will have to realise that there is a problem; if you continue on breeding this horse, you will be liable to getting some of his offspring with a second generation heavy neck.

From your experience, how many generations does it take to improve upon and stabilise a "requisite" that you would think a horse needs?

It depends on what character you're dealing with. If you want to improve a head, from my experience, I think that the head is the easiest to fix in one to two generations if it's a stallion, provided that you supply the proper mare and visa-versa. Other problems such as legs, croups, and shoulders, may give you some tricky problems. Again the key word is SELECTION like I mentioned in the past; it is the most important added value to a breeder. The breeder has to have an eye to all problems, if not, he will not be able to solve any of them.

Maybe this question is not focused on the head and neck, but a little bit on the body because the head and neck are the keys to the vision of the proportionality in a horse. Are the sizes of the particularly Egyptian Arabians a bit too small? I have seen different breeders here produce remarkably different sizes, from small, medium to a nice-sized horse. Where does that come from? Is it feeding or breeding?



I think its mostly breeding. However, let me say that Arabian horses are generally smaller in size than any other horse. The Egyptian Arabians which we breeders believe are the more classical type, are the more desert

bred type; they are small, agile, can cope with the weather, and they have very fine bones yet very strong ones, and such refined small bodies which are distinctive qualities in the pure Arabian. Though we are still talking about a range of Arabians; the 14 to 16-hand for instance, you are entitled to use these ranges to produce horses that would be considered to be very tidy and very authentic. If I have a 14-hand horse and am keen on making it bigger, then I have to use a big mare to add to the size. Ultimately, the size is really a matter that is up to the breeder to fixate upon; in breeding, I personally am not focused on a specific size. In the show ring, judges do not judge by size, but they judge harmony, balance, the relationship between the length of the neck and the length of the back, etc.

Knowing that for many years in Egypt we presented our horses differently, where and when did Halter shows start?

They started the way we do have

today in the USA. If I go back with my memory during the 40's here in Egypt, there was an annual agricultural fair where my grandfather used to present horses. Back then, it was not a show, but a small presentation; there was

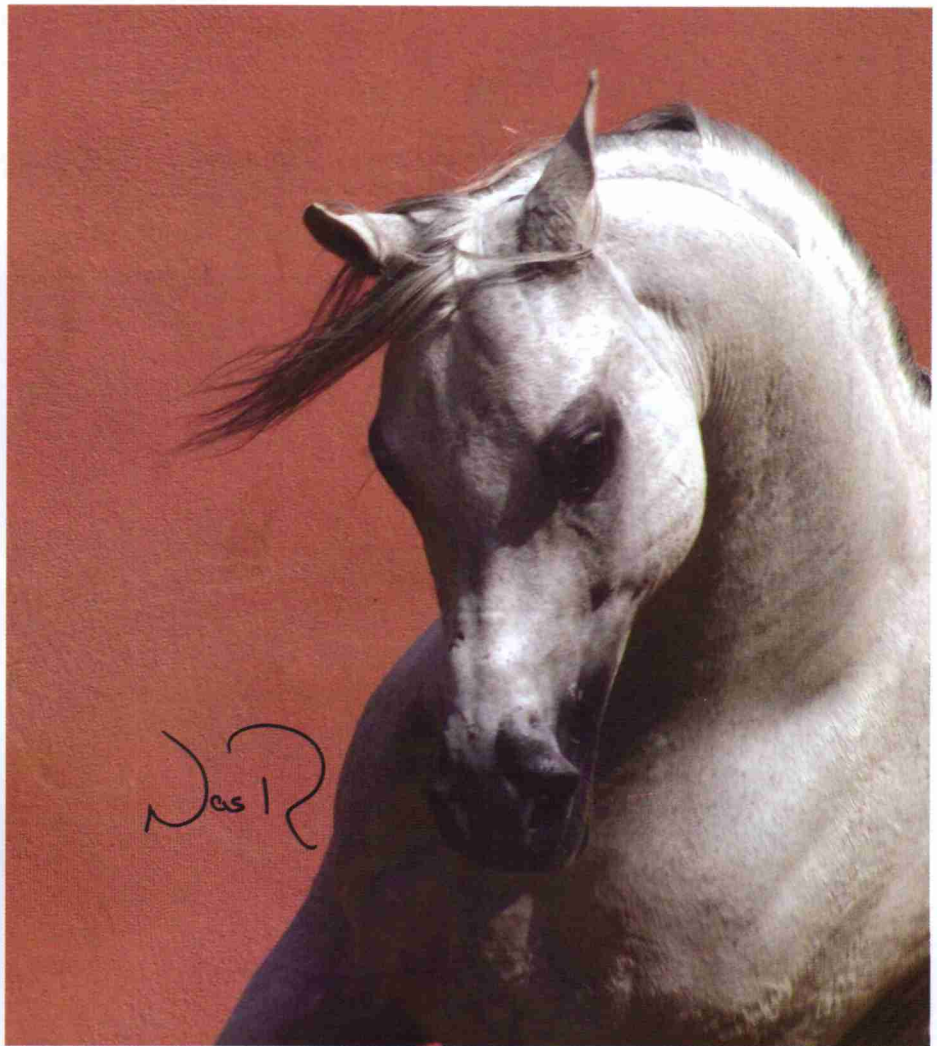
no professional trainer, there was no horse-presenter, the horses were in farm condition and all they did was just stand and trot them for a short period of time. Halter shows go hundreds of years back, but show rings as they stand today were started by the Americans, then the Europeans, and now it's universal.

Some horses respond or may not respond well to the method of presentation in a show ring, does that affect the judging? For example, a horse with so much character but does not respond brilliantly to the presentation, would that represent any inconvenience in judging it?

Horses are like people, some are moody, some are hard to teach, and some have a mind of their own. When it comes to stubborn horses, I don't think they should neither be presented nor even forced to be presented. I have a couple of mares that are knock-outs, but they are simply not interested in being shown...they have no showmanship. These horses are hence pretty and good, but you simply breed them. Not every horse has to be a show horse. A lot of horses may not be very pretty, but are charismatic, have arrogant personalities, have big eyes, and are excited. These are the kind of horses that you put in a show ring, and to fully answer your question, yes of course, this affects the judging. In the category of type in specific, if a horse does not have showmanship, he will score low even if he's pretty.

In regards to what you have mentioned earlier related to the reference of what an Arabian should look like, do you think in the next one hundred years, this reference will change?

Oh definitely. What's happening in the USA and what's happening in Europe and the Middle East? In the 50's, the Americans imported Egyptian Arabians and have taken them miles



ahead of us due to a very intelligent breeding programme. It continued until the late 80's. If you see those horses now, you will see that they are completely different than our type. They have long flat heads and backs because the breeders there selected them for performance riding rather than prettiness and being more classical. Not that ours don't have much functionality, but the American breeders are so affected by American type horses such as the saddle-bred. Meanwhile we stuck to our own type which was originally exported to the USA. We kept it, they changed it.

We also have to consider having our own print in what you turned to as a reference otherwise we won't be needed anymore....

Exactly, you have to keep your identity and your personality. And that's why all the Egyptian breeders here

are dedicated to breeding straight Egyptians. If we start mixing them with Polish Arabians, or any other non-Egyptian, we will lose our identity and will be like anyone else. And in doing so, we will also be one hundred years behind because they have already taken long strides ahead of us, and in order to catch up, it will be quite a difficult task. Egyptian breeders are stuck with what they have whether they like it or not. Out of 250 breeders here, there are maybe two breeders who have bought Polish and Russian Arabians. It is obvious what they are after; winning in the show ring. But like I said, in doing so, they will lose their identity and be like someone else in Europe where they are already way ahead of them. It is an issue but not so serious, nevertheless, we are all against it. **HT**

Horses & Art

The Magic Of Originality

By Ali Almimar



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The F.E.I Coaching System

By Sinan Nashashibi, Jordan



The first seminar on the subject of the F.E.I Coaching System took place in Bahrain from the 24th till the 27th of February 2007. It was the first seminar held in the Arab world F.E.I group 7 under the tutoring of Dutch Mr. Peter Strijbosch who has been a successful international show jumper. The seminar was equally organised by the Bahrain Equestrian Federation, the Olympic Solidarity, and the FEI. The seminar included 16 attendees from Palestine, Jordan, Lebanon, Oman, and Bahrain.

The F.E.I coaching system used an agreed syllabus that was created to help developing National Federations to organise their own coaching

structure and develop their sports using local coaches. The courses which are held on regional basis will provide those local coaches at a certain level, with certificates issued jointly by the National Federations and the F.E.I. The system (oriented towards competitions) is based on providing courses for coaches under the direction of F.E.I appointed tutors who will initiate the system in developing regions. They will train coaches at various levels (Level 1 and Level 2) and in the future will identify regional tutors who will in their turn continue the system in their area.

The aim of the F.E.I Assistant Coaching Course (Level 1) is to cover the essential

areas necessary to work competently as an F.E.I Assistant Coach, with an emphasis on skill development, participation, and enjoyment. The Level 1 syllabus also covers all events, and highlights the practical aspects of coaching. Successful candidates will receive a Level 1 Assistant Coach certificate of attendance. The Level 1 certified coach will also be expected to understand the concept of long term planning of training and be able to plan and implement effective training sessions. **HT**

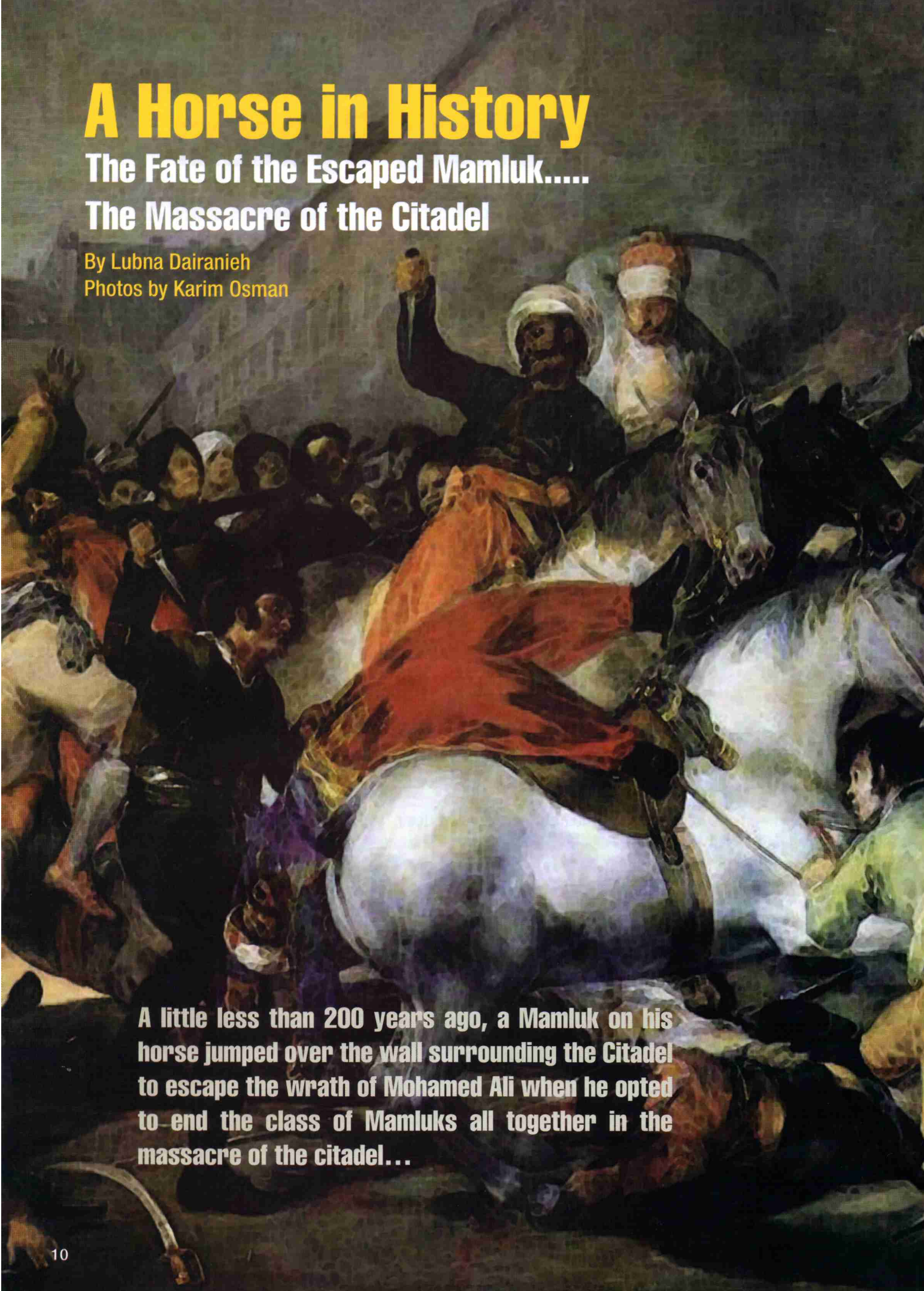
A Horse in History

The Fate of the Escaped Mamluk.....

The Massacre of the Citadel

By Lubna Dairanieh

Photos by Karim Osman



A little less than 200 years ago, a Mamluk on his horse jumped over the wall surrounding the Citadel to escape the wrath of Mohamed Ali when he opted to end the class of Mamluks all together in the massacre of the citadel...

A Window into the Past:

Mamluk has many definitions with very little difference between each. However the most comprehensive was one by the Colombia Encyclopaedia which states that Mamluks were a warrior caste dominant and influential in Egypt and in the Middle East for over 700 years. Originally, Islamic rulers created this warrior caste by collecting and training non-Muslim slave boys as cavalry soldiers especially loyal to their owner and each other. They were known to be formidable fighters and expert horsemen. In the course of their training with the Muslim leaders, the Mamluks converted to Islam.

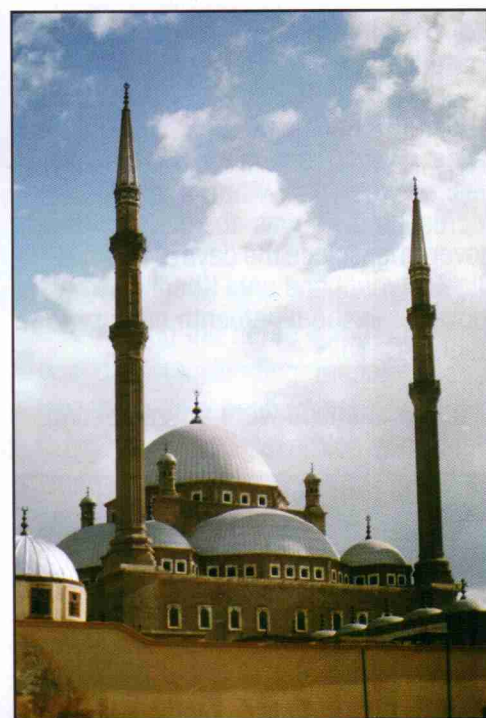
Most Mamluks originate from Caucasian or Georgian origins. The Mamluks were first used in Muslim armies in Baghdad by the Abbasid caliphs in the 9th century and quickly spread throughout the Muslim world. They served the Ayyubid sultans from the 12th century onward and grew powerful enough to challenge the existence of the rulers who were theoretically their masters. Aybak, the first Mamluk to actually rule, persuaded the mother of the last Ayyubid sultan to marry him after she had murdered her husband. For more than one thousand years thereafter, Egypt and Syria were ruled by Mamluk sultans supported by a caste of warrior slaves. The Mamluks took advantage of their power to become the principal landholders in Egypt.

The Mamluk Sultanate survived until 1517, and then it was conquered by the Ottoman Empire. The institution of the Mamluks continued under the Ottomans, albeit not the same strength and independence it previously enjoyed. In 1798, Napoleon Bonaparte's army defeated Murad Bey at the Battle of Pyramids, however the French's stay was short-lived in Egypt, as they had been driven out in 1801 by a Turkish/British alliance. Among the soldiers in the Ottoman forces was an Albanian, who rose to power as Mohamed Ali the great. In 1805 the sultan of Turkey conferred on Mohamed Ali the Pashalik of Cairo.

Mohamed Ali knew that eventually he would have to deal with the Mamluks if he ever wanted to control Egypt. They were still the feudal owners of Egypt and their land was still the source of wealth and power. From his time of rule in 1806 Mohamed Ali tried various approaches

to rid Cairo of the Mamluks; he tried to gain their trust by offering them jobs and positions in Cairo, he initiated treaties of peace, and he forced them to his rule of authority through battles and wars. But none of his techniques kept them under his ruling thumb. The Mamluks did not trust Mohamed Ali and the latter was dissatisfied with their reluctance to his ruling power.

On March 1st 1811, Mohamed Ali invited all Mamluks to a ceremony at the Citadel to celebrate the declaration of war against the Wahhabis in Arabia. There were nearly 600 Mamluks (according to another source about 700) on parade in Cairo. Near the Al-Azab gates, in a narrow road down from Mukatam Hill, Mohamed Ali's forces ambushed and slaughtered almost all of the surprised Mamluks. Only one Mamluk named Amin Bey Murad, having put his horse at the great wall, was able to leap to safety, although his horse was killed in the endeavour. Over the following week hundreds of



Mamluks were killed throughout Egypt. In the streets around Egypt an estimated 3,000 Mamluks and their relatives were killed.

Despite these attempts by Mohamed Ali to defeat the Mamluks in Egypt, a party of them escaped and fled south into present-day Sudan. In 1811 these Mamluks established a state as a base in Dunqulah, Sennar in Sudan. In 1820 the sultan of Sennar informed Mohamed

Ali that he was unable to comply with the demand to expel the Mamluks. In response the pasha sent 4,000 troops to invade Sudan, clear it out from Mamluks, and reclaim it for Egypt. The pasha's forces received the submission of the kashif, dispersed the Dunqulah Mamluks, conquered Kurdufan, and accepted Sennar's surrender from the last Funj sultan, Badi VII.

Now that the history of this story is out of the way, we can ask what ever happened to the escaped Mamluk? Amin Bey Murad, according to some sources escaped to Syria, other sources say he escaped to Upper Egypt.

Present Day Cairo:

I went to the Citadel to visit the scene of the crime intending to meet just anyone who could tell me a little more about the fate of the escaped Mamluk. The surprising matter is that the Citadel has an air of peace like no other in Cairo.....how could a massacre have taken place there?

It is the location of the Citadel that gives it such charisma. Historically, peace was not what the Citadel represented. It was the seat of the government since the days of Salah El-Din Al-Ayoubi and until Khedive Ismail moved it in the nineteenth century to Central Cairo.

The tourist shops were an interesting sight, they sold everything that Egypt



offers, and so you'd find statues of the Sphinx over there for instance, even though the Citadel had nothing to do with Egypt's Pharaonic history. I tried to get a book about the Citadel, not a good idea, the shop keepers looked

at me with bewilderment when I asked this question: "A book about the Citadel? Why would we sell it here their eyes said!!" My journey in the Citadel also took me to Mohamed Ali's mosque. One of the moments I most cherish to capture inside the mosque is the sound of the chimes made by the crystals of the chandeliers of the mosque as the wind blows through pushing them against each other to make fascinating melodies.

I later walked to an area that over



looked Bab El-Azab where the massacre took place. One guide, intrigued by my interest, decided to throw in a bonus piece of information.

We walked through what today stands as the National Police Museum to see a bare tree standing alone over what looks like a wall. The guide pointed to the tree and told me that the tree stands over a secret passage to Bab El-Azab!

My curiosity grew stronger over the fate of the Mamluk; I continued to search for clues until I encountered a young man that claimed to be a descendant of Amin Bey Murad!

Bingo I thought. Of course I was put off by some pessimists that said every passer-by claims to be a descendant of the escaped Mamluk. Nevertheless, I chose to believe my source. His mom was my story teller.

Upon her request she asked me not to mention her name in this article. According to her, Amin Bey Murad escaped to Upper Egypt, his survival was very brief, for Mohamed Ali sent his son Ibrahim to find Murad Bey, and to kill him. It was not long until the Mamluk was found and murdered. He left his Tunisian wife pregnant with a son, and 3 other children. The widow picked her children and fled Upper Egypt to another town called Mithaflah. To conceal her identity from Mohammed Ali's spies, as the rich

widow of Amin Bey Murad, she hid her jewels in her little baby's clothes, until she was able to sell them and buy land in the new town. Amin Bey Murad's widow brought up her children on that land, and lived in sorrow memory of her husband. According to my source, his older son Abbass was a great horseman, just like his father.

Amin Bey Murad is survived by his grandchildren's children. His story echoes until today; the escaped Mamluk who leaped with his horse over the wall of the Citadel and survived only long enough to go back to see his wife and children for the last time end is passed on from one generation to the other. **HT**

A Horse Tale

The Book of Antara

By Lubna Dairanieh

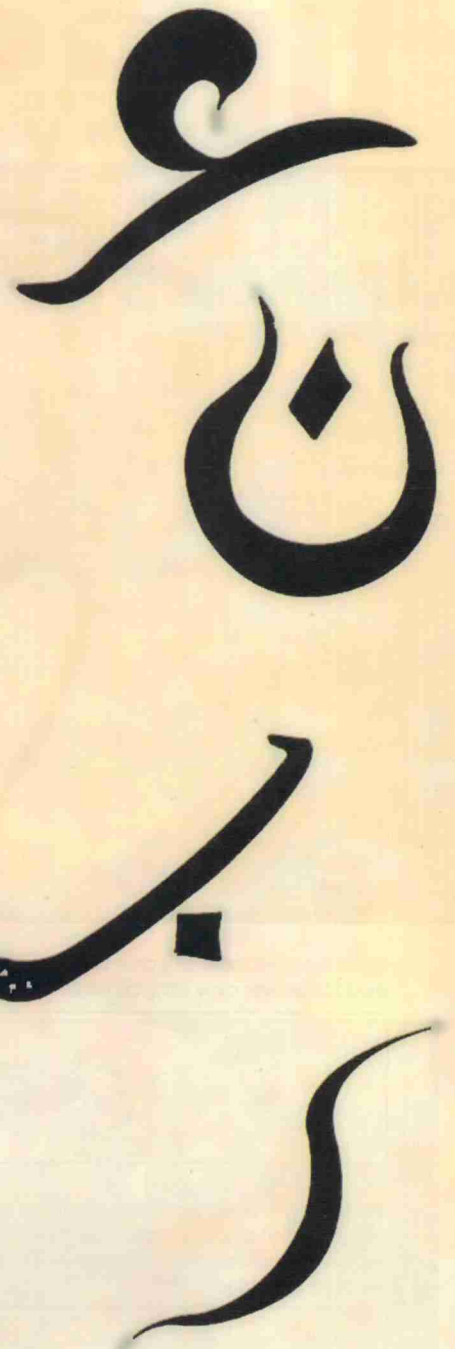
An elaborate idea by a Kuwaiti/Palestinian novelist Huda Al-Shawa was the creation of her book Anbar. The book which targets young audiences is about a horse character whose name is Anbar.

When I interviewed Huda about the book she said “it is an artistic homage to the warrior poet Antara bin Shadad whose relationship with his horse Al-Abjar is quite legendary. I think Antara really sums up what a “Faris” or an Arabian Knight is; bravery, chivalry, and a deep compassion for his horse.”

The book written in eloquent style using simple Arabic words, takes our children back to the time when poetry was the way of speech. Anbar the horse gives vivid descriptions of the desert sights, sounds, and smells and as Mrs. Al-Shawa explains, this makes it a delightful read for adults and children alike.

I also asked Mrs. Al-Shawa what was behind the creation of the book and she said “I intended the book to be used as an introduction to a study in schools of early poetry.” She continues “the added value of his unrequited love for the noble Abla only adds to the drama of the story of the tragic warrior who finds solace to his suffering by pouring out his heart to his only faithful friend, his horse Abjar!”

The launch of the book took place at the Kuwait Riding Centre. And to portray some of the characters to the children during the launch, a short play featuring Antara and Abla performing a scene with music, poetry, and dancing took place. **HT**



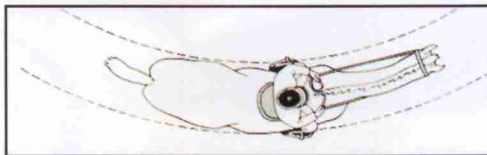
Dressage

By Emmad Eldin Zaghloul



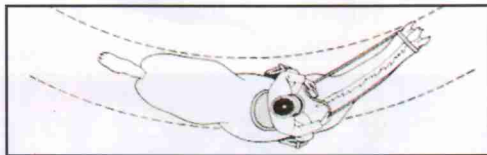
Julia Chevanne-Gimel & Calimucho - Photo by Dirk Caremans

Below, the correct bend on a circle seen from above. There should be an even curve along the length of the horse's spine.

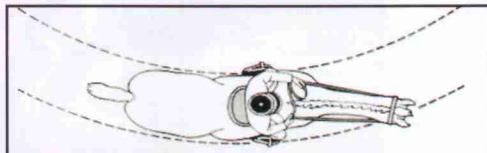


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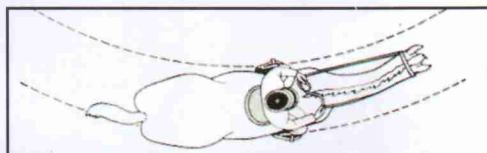
The common mistakes made when turning, as a result of wrongly applied aids, are shown below. If you find that you are unable to maintain an even bend on a turn, return to practising school figures.



Too much inside hand has been used, causing the offside shoulder to escape.



Too much outside hand has been used, causing the nearside shoulder to fall inwards.



Too little outside leg has been used, causing the quarters to fall outwards.

Turns & Flexions Part 1:

Turns and flexions are used as school exercises to improve your riding as well as to supple, strengthen and discipline the horse. A well-trained school horse will be experienced in this area. In fact, a highly trained horse whose muscles are properly developed can bend in a regular arc or curve, with his hind feet following exactly in the track of his forefeet, and on a circle as small as 6m (25ft in diameter). However, it is not easy for any horse to bend throughout his length and you must do everything you can to help him.

Turning exercises will help you to develop and coordinate the horse's flexibility. The aids to turn a horse are complex and you will need to use "feel" as well as very precise aids to make sure the horse is performing correctly. To ride a full circle with the horse bent evenly throughout his length and with his hind feet following in the tracks of his forefeet, your aids must also be clear and precise. If the horse's quarters or shoulders swing outwards or inwards, the circle will not be perfect.

As you have already learned, each hand and leg plays a separate part when asking the horse to turn. Your inside leg creates impulsion, engaging your horse's inside hind leg, and encouraging him to bend around it. (This leg forms the central point of his curve). Your outside leg is slightly behind the girth to prevent the quarters from swinging outwards; your outside hand regulates the impulsion while the inside hand controls the amount of bend and also the direction of the turn. If you use these aids correctly, you will engage the hind legs so that they support the horse in the turn. The more collected he is (that is the more engaged his hind-quarters are and the lighter his forehead is) the more easily the horse will be able to find self-balance. **HT**



Per Sandgaard & Zancor - Photo by Dirk Caremans



Ula Salzgeber & Rusty - Photo by Dirk Caremans



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Views from

Ullrich Kasselmann

By Ina El Kobbia, Germany



A strong team; international horseman Ullrich Kasselmann & his son Francois

The international horseman Ullrich Kasselmann from Hagen (a. T.W.) in Germany is one of Europe's most recognised personalities in the international horse business. Together with his partner Paul Schockemoehle they represent an everlasting success story in the challenging horse business around the globe. With their world-famous PSI-Auction they supply the international riding scene year by year with Olympic and World champions in dressage and jumping. In 2005 Ullrich Kasselmann hosted the European Dressage Championships and received special honours from the German Equestrian Federation for his outstanding achievements. Each year the International Riders' Festival Horses & Dreams on the Kasselmann Estate offers highlights of international equestrian sport in jumping and dressage accompanied by a vivid lifestyle exhibition. Recently Ullrich Kasselmann took the challenge to train and equip the Qatari Team for the Asian Games 2006 in Doha, which gave me another opportunity to ask him about his recent equestrian engagements and views.

Mr. Kasselmann, how were the Asian Games 2006 in Qatar for you? What was your strongest impression?

The Asian Games carried the motto: "... the games of your life" and I really felt it lived up to it. The opening ceremony was breathtaking!

You trained and equipped the Qatari national dressage team that qualified for the first time for the Asian Games and ended up in an admirable 6th place. Are you satisfied?

It is the first time ever that an Arab country qualifies and competes on such an international level in dressage. I really would like to express my greatest respect to the riders who took the challenge and managed in a very short time to pass these demanding competitions well.

Dressage is considered one of the most elegant, yet one of the most difficult equestrian disciplines. In the Arab World dressage has yet to be broken in, but the Asian Games 2006 proved that with excellent horses and professional training you are able to catch up and challenge even Eastern Asia, such as Korea and Japan who are still considered the region's forefront riders. What are you hoping for as to the development of dressage in Arabia?

I hope very much that the Asian Games 2006 will be the spark that sets the dressage world in Arabia alight.

I would like to think that dressage could be a particularly successful challenge to the female riders in the region; whereby, with good horses at hand you can quickly catch up and enjoy the success of riding at the highest level.

International commerce celebrates China as a country that offers enormous economic opportunities. How would you describe your involvement in China and what chances do you see for developing horses business there?

In the next years to come, China will witness an economic boom in equestrianism. This country has a long historical tradition for horses. Moreover Chinese riders like to come to Germany and to learn about its training and education methods for horses and riders alike.

At the World Equestrian Games in Aachen, the horse world celebrated the new F.E.I President, H.R.H. Princess Haya bint Al Hussein; she received plaudits throughout and German newspapers described her as having "the Games winning smile". You have known the Princess since her earlier days. What do you think has changed already since the start of her presidency and what are

your expectations?

In her earlier riding career H.R.H. Princess Haya stayed for quite a while at my partner's estate (Paul Schockemoehle) in Muehlen. She is a young woman, who thinks strategically and has great leadership qualities. Due to her riding career, she really knows what she is talking about; she is close to the riders and understands their problems well. As new F.E.I. President she is already a great asset for the riding sport through her radiant and charming appearance.

Mr. Kasselmann, the International Riders' Festival Horses & Dreams at Kasselmanns' will take place from the 28th of April till the 1st of May this year. What will we be able to look forward to?

Many international riding stars will join and compete at the festival. Besides, the renowned Nations' Cup in jumping with the most promising young riders from Europe will take place again in addition to the German Dressage Championships for Professionals. Along with our yearly lifestyle exhibition we will host China as this year's guest country; a special attraction will be the Chinese National Circus.

Ending this interview, I would like to add a personal note and thank Ullrich Kasselmann, who in order to make this interview possible and to meet his very narrow time schedule, sat down and answered all these questions, in writing, for Horse Times at the same morning he received them from me by e-mail through his office. **HT**

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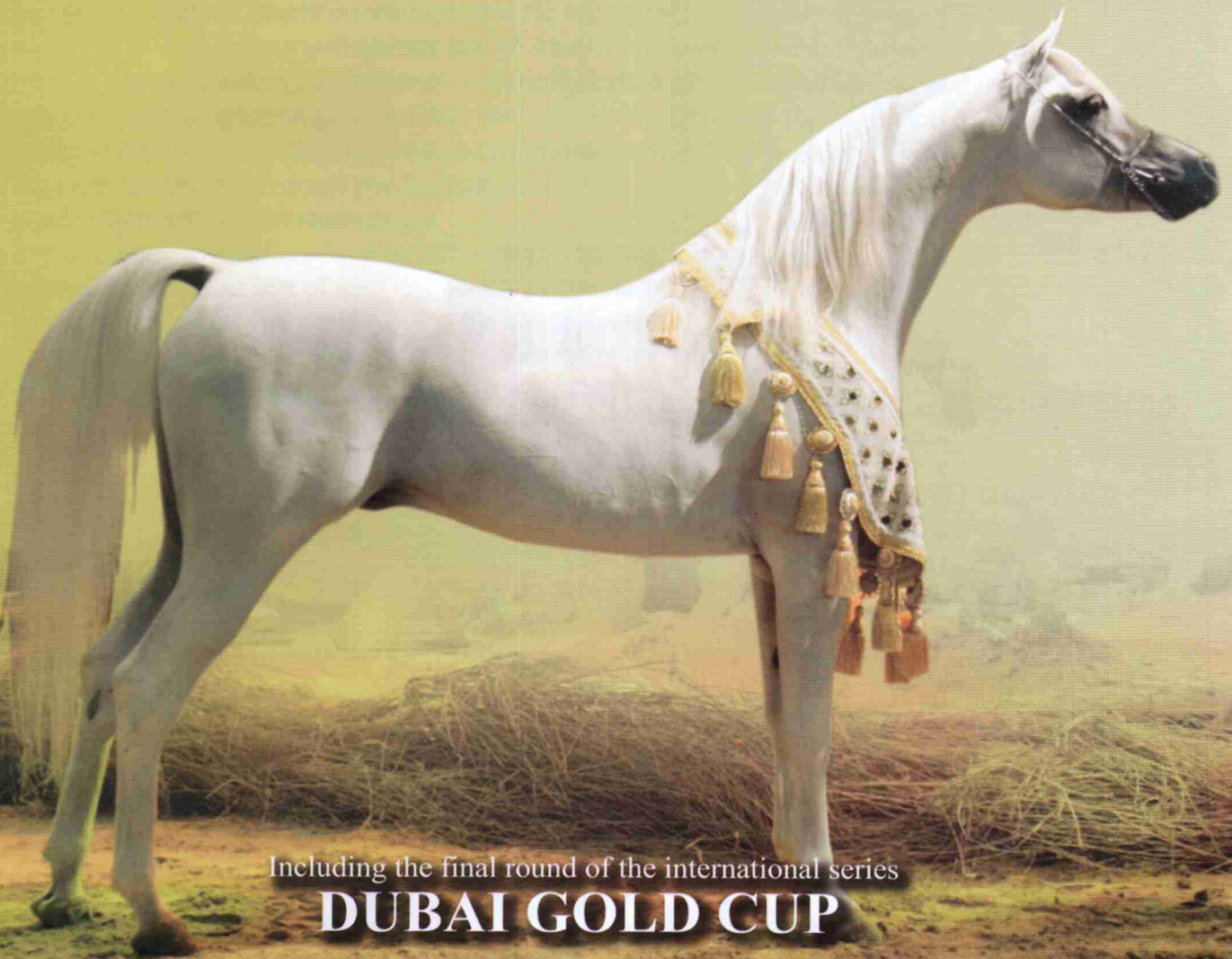




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The 2007 Tierras de Al-Andalus

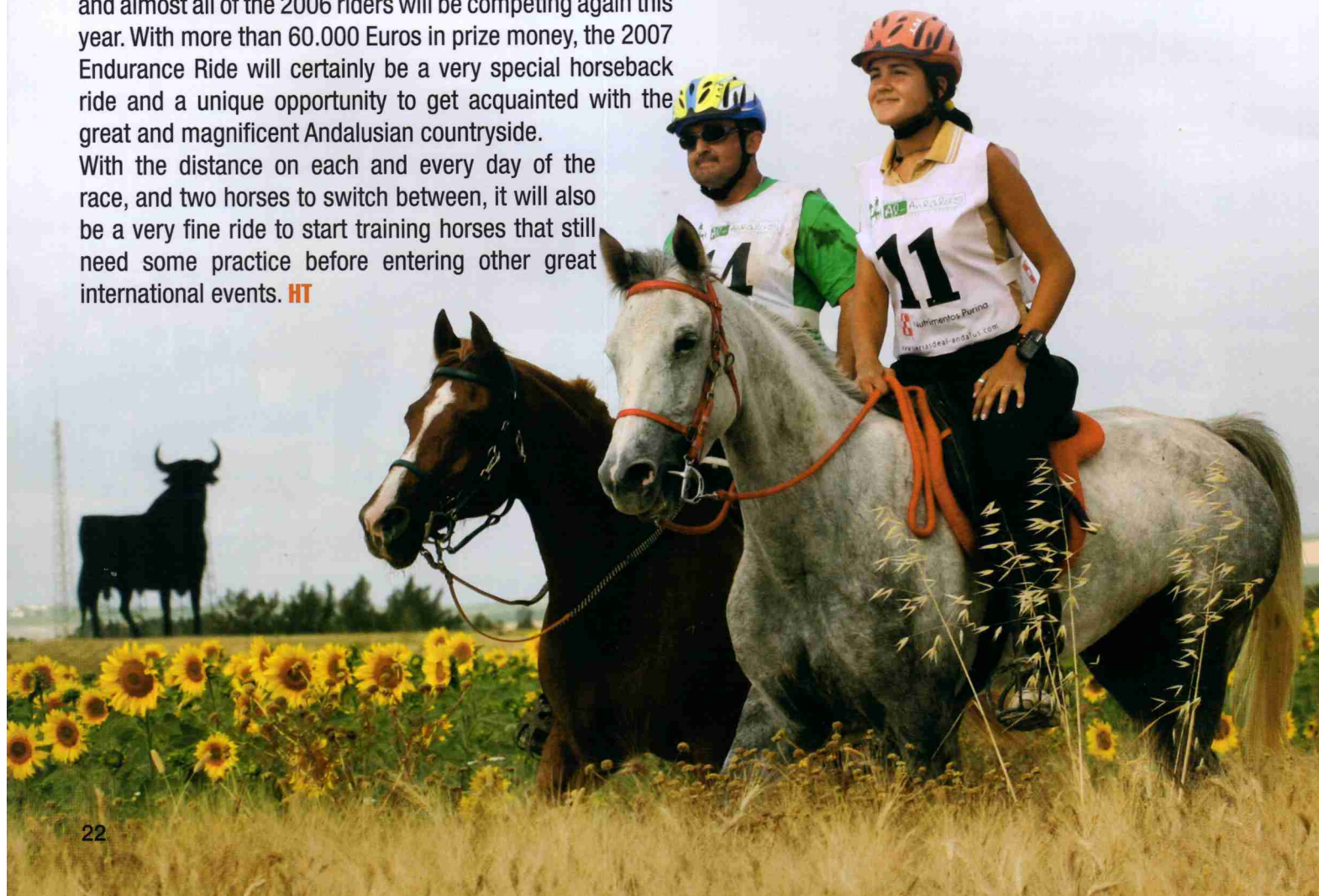
Endurance Ride By Kristian Fenaux

The huge success of the first Tierras de Al-Andalus endurance ride held in 2006 prompted a second contest to be held from the 11th until the 19th of May 2007. The event will be held in the southern Spanish region of Andalusia. The 2007 ride will go from Sierra de Cazorla in the east to El Rocio in the west, with eight days of competition separated into four days of riding, one interval day, and another four days of more riding. The ride is open to teams of two riders with two horses, teams of one rider with two horses as well as solo riders with two or more horses.

Each day is around 60 kilometers of riding with a vetgate halfway and another vetgate at the end of each day. Rankings are made with vetgates in time except for the last loop of the last day where the finish line is the final line. The ride goes through some of the most beautiful Andalusian landscapes, travels across mountains and close to the seashore visiting some of the most important historical towns of Andalusia such as Granada, Antequera, Ronda, and the Doñana National Park between Sanlucar de Barrameda and El Rocio.

A total of 52 riders and 62 horses will be competing in 31 teams which raced during the 2006 Tierras de Al-Andalus Endurance Ride. Organisation and logistics were outstanding, and almost all of the 2006 riders will be competing again this year. With more than 60.000 Euros in prize money, the 2007 Endurance Ride will certainly be a very special horseback ride and a unique opportunity to get acquainted with the great and magnificent Andalusian countryside.

With the distance on each and every day of the race, and two horses to switch between, it will also be a very fine ride to start training horses that still need some practice before entering other great international events. **HT**



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Horses & Celebrities

Interview with Ghassan Massoud

By Nada H. Abdelmoniem

“Where you not close enough to a great king to see how to imitate one?” (Salah Al-Din Al-Ayoubi)

During the long history of Arabs, poetry has enjoyed a unique position among them, and it was very apparent when I spoke with the uniquely eloquent Syrian actor and film maker Ghassan Massoud. The dynamic star didn't just talk about horses, he praised and symbolised them with words that wouldn't just be exclusive to poets...he quoted Arab poets and even sang verses of passion to horses during the interview.

The star who has extravagantly starred in Ridley Scott's Block Buster 'Kingdom of Heaven', portraying the role of the great charismatic Muslim leader of the Saracens Salah Al-Din Al-Ayoubi (Saladin), has taken a leap forward into becoming an internationally recognised actor. He was recently awarded a prize at the Cairo International Film Festival for writing and directing a satirical play called 'Diplomassiyoun' (The Diplomats) which tackles the problems of leadership in the Arab world. In the theatre, he also starred in Jawad Al-Assadi's production of August Strindberg's 'Miss Julie'. He has appeared in numerous films in his native Syria, including Haytham Hakki's 'Memories of the Forthcoming Age', and Basil Al-Khatib's romance set in rural Syria during the 1940's 'Unshudet Al-Matar' (The Chant of the Rain).

How did you get into acting?

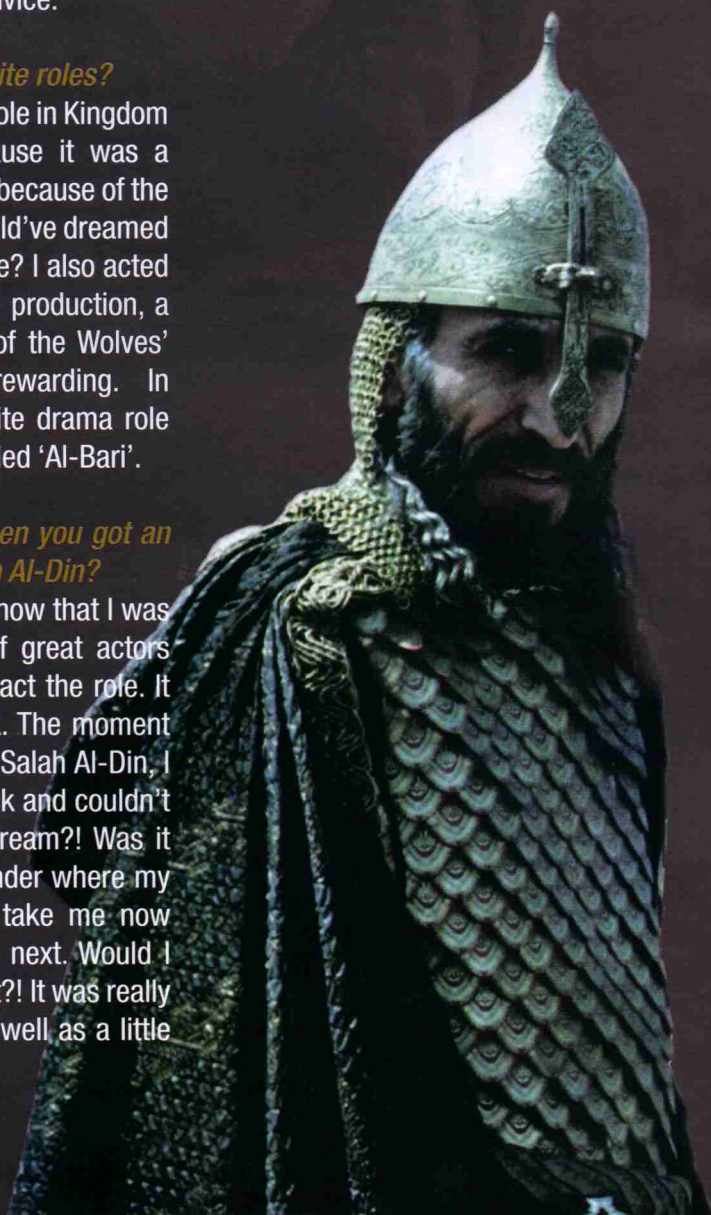
(Smiling) What gets a lot of people into acting? Sometimes it's not a choice, and as far as I remember, I think I was simply dragged into it. However, I was personally given words of advice and praise in regards to being an actor; friends told me that I would do well as an actor, and so I took upon their advice.

What are your favourite roles?

Honestly?! It was my role in Kingdom of Heaven. Not because it was a Hollywood movie, but because of the role I played. Who would've dreamed of such an intense role? I also acted in a Canadian/Turkish production, a movie called 'Valley of the Wolves' which was also rewarding. In Television, my favourite drama role was in a TV series called 'Al-Bari'.

How did you feel when you got an offer to portray Salah Al-Din?

Initially, you have to know that I was picked from a line of great actors who had potential to act the role. It was not an easy task. The moment I was told I would be Salah Al-Din, I was in a state of shock and couldn't believe it! Was it a dream?! Was it real?! I started to wonder where my acting career would take me now and what would I do next. Would I act the role well or not?! It was really happiness I think, as well as a little bit of disbelief.



In these troubled times where Islam is not positively symbolised by the western media, how did you take on representing one of its greatest leaders?

I felt that I was passing on a message that would serve the culture of our nation. I felt I had to do the role so well because I was not just serving the viewers, I was also serving my religion, which gave me a majestic feel. It was my duty and responsibility, and I felt very lucky to have played such a role; it was a unique experience. I see Salah Al-Din as first and foremost a statesman, and second, he was a man of war, and the winner of many battles who made dialogues with the enemy which was a very important role for a leader at that time. He was a very charismatic character yet very human and very sweet from the inside.

How was the experience of working with the British director Ridley Scott like and what was his perception of Salah Al-Din?

Ahhh, I can go on and on about this man. Ridley is not just a great director, but also a cultural and noble dreamer. He was so free, fair and objective, and when someone is like that, then his vision is bound to come alive and well presented. The way he looked into details was so delicate and he felt a responsibility towards history, and that was his perception of Salah Al-Din; a genuine leader who played a significant role in our history, also revered as a great Muslim leader, a politician, a gentleman, and a great strategist who wasn't just adored by the Saracens but who was also very respected by the other side. From the directing perspective, his concentration on the presentation of the horses was overwhelming! Many of the viewers would not notice the details of the horses in action, but he always made sure, trial after trial, that it was imperative that everything

should look accurate, down to the details of the horse shoes. As you know Ridley was nominated for two Academy Awards in the Best Director category for his movies 'Gladiator' and 'Black Hawk Down', so you can imagine how meticulous he is as a director.

How was it like working along with Alexander Siddig, Orlando Bloom, Edward Norton, Liam Nesson, Jeremy Irons and the rest of the cast?

They are such nice people! I would like to call them friends and they were so enquisitive about our culture. And Alexander Siddig's father is Sudanese, which made me feel I had another Arab acting beside me. It was a lovely experience, and they were all lovely.

What can you tell us about your skills with horses in real life and in film?

As a human being, it was a responsibility for me to learn how to ride and so I learned. As an actor, it was crucial to extend my skills further, as horses are part of what I do nowadays. But then again, riding is not just a spectator sport, it's an idea of many meanings which may point out a person's moral values and conduct. Arabs sing to horses, what more can I say?! I don't feel that horses are animals, for if they were, then they are the most noble of animals. Horses are much better than humans; they don't hurt, they don't command, they don't hate and they don't conspire. Horses are a product of beauty, nobility, freedom, they dance with the air, and air gives us humans feelings and passion.

What do you think about Arab productions that feature riding and horses? With Syria being one of the leading countries when it comes to classical Arabian drama and horse riding, what about other countries?

To tell you the truth, generally speaking, horses in our productions are misused terribly. They are improperly presented and they look fake and poor. The presentation of horses in our Arab dramas should be taken more seriously and it's the producer's obligation, not the actors'. At the end of the day, you will simply give the actor a horse and tell him to ride. But the producer needs to concentrate on the horses more. A knight and a horse are considered to be one; you can't have a knight ride a poor horse. In the future, I truly hope that the producers invest more time and money when using horses, it would make a difference.

Do you own any horses?

(Laughing) No, sadly I don't, but I would



love to own some, and I'm planning on doing that soon. I love Arabian horses of course, and to buy some, I'll have to invest a lot of time and money, and hopefully I will be able to do so soon.

Do horses influence you as a human being?

Of course they do! Poetry and horses surely must have a huge impact on us humans. Our finest classical Arabian poet of all time Abo Al-Tayib Al Mutanabbi once wrote:

"I am known to the night and the horses and the desert, to the sword and to the lance, to parchment and pen". HT



President of the E.E.F Eng. Abdelfatah Ragab with the junior riders

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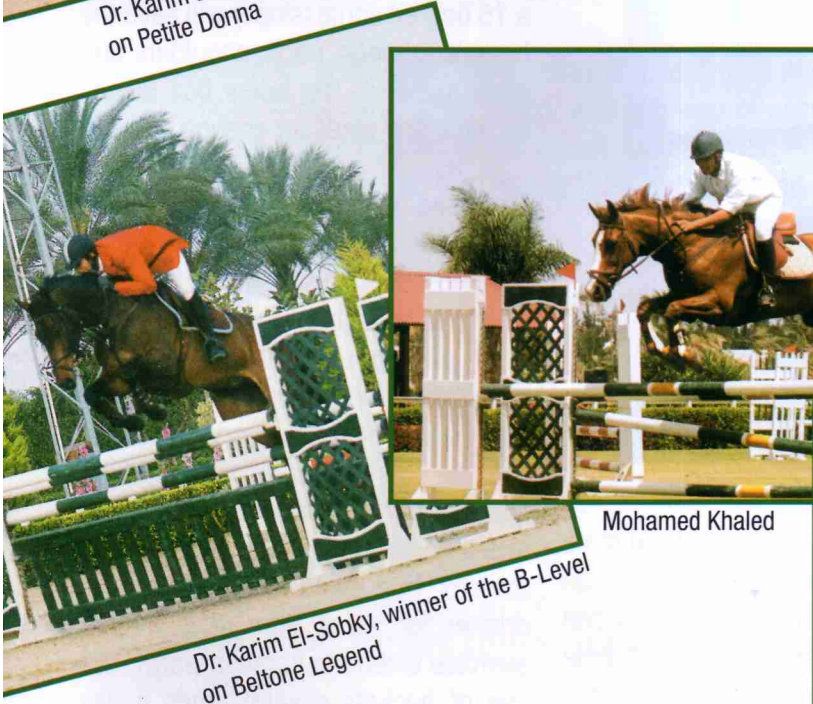
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Mohamed El-Naggar

How to be a Trainer - Part 4

Horse Maintenance (Part 1)

By Dr. Mohamed Elsherbini



The rider, horse and the coach form the core of any team, but the work of the farrier, groom, vet and dental specialist (backup team) keeps the show on the road. With the possible exception of the horse, there can be no stars in the team. All the roles of the members are respected, but we have to remember the quote "No sound horse, No sport". In this part of how to be a trainer, I explain how to keep your sport horse fit, happy and healthy. Horse maintenance includes stabling, health, fitness and shoeing, and in this issue of Horse Times we focus on stabling.

Stabling

1.Handling: Some horse breeders err for far too long when bringing up young horses with little handling. Such

horses will grow up in a natural state with a lot of difficulties when broken and even after. Such difficulties can be avoided by saving a lot of time and effort in training. If the horse was initially handled properly from the time he was born, developing confidence in human beings would be easy. Difficulties in handling, shoeing, putting the tack on, and mounting, etc. come from old and bad horse management. The groom hence plays the biggest role in providing safe, secure environments and the daily routine that a horse needs. A groom is in the best position to spot small changes in behaviour or health that may require attention, and can also provide companionship for the horse, making him psychologically balanced for training.

2.The Box: Most horses stay 23 hours a day in their boxes. Pawing the straw backwards will make the horse stand at a lower level in front putting extra weight on his forelegs. Normally when a horse is standing, 3 fifth of the horse's weight is on his forelegs. Raising the floor, in the area where the horse is standing mostly, by a 15 degree angle (slope) will save the horse's forelegs, back, shoulders and neck muscles. The horse box should be wide and pleasant enough.

The feed manger should be large (75x30x30 cm) to prevent the horse from nosing out his feed. The height of 65 cm is enough to prevent the horse from pawing and will at the same time make use of his neck and back muscles. Drinking is very important for the horse. Automatic drinkers should be in a corner to avoid injury to the horse's legs when rolling inside the box. One might need to close the drinker for some time after a hard exercise when the horse is warm. The use of buckets several times a day for drinking is another alternative, but one should never leave the bucket in the box.

If the hay net is fixed high in the box, a problem to the horse's neck and back muscles could be caused whilst reaching the hay together with dust in his eyes. If it is in a low position, the horse can get tangled in it with his legs. The best way is to put hay on the ground to be eaten in the natural position.

Bedding is important for the horse and straw is the most convenient. If a horse

eats his bedding then wood shavings would also do the job. Unfortunately hocks and elbows are often capped and spoiled; muscles would then stiffen from lying on insufficient bedding. Some boxes have 3 horizontal grooves along the sides (1-1.3 meters high). In the event of the horse being cast, he can get a firm grip with his hooves to free himself from the wall.

Good ventilation in the stable is a must as much as it's essential to have plenty of fresh air, but it still mustn't be drafty. During winter time the stable should be warm (not over 18 degrees Celsius), but never humid. Windows should be high enough so that the horse's legs cannot get caught when he rolls. Bad ventilation and dust cause bronchitis, chronic coughs and broken wind. Always shake the straw when the horse is not in the box. Hay should also be shaken well outside the box before feeding.

3. Feeding: It's not within my intentions to give a feeding schedule as to what and how much a horse should be fed! However the quantity and type of food required depends entirely on the horse's digestion, the amount of work on each particular day, the horse's age, size, and temperament. Incorrect feeding can seriously affect the horse's health and training. His physical condition, muscles, wind, temper and sight are affected by feeding. To keep a horse's appetite, he must not be overworked and the food should not be monotonous. The food should be rationed into small portions given 4 times a day. Don't overload the sensitive stomach of the horse and give at least 2 hours of rest after each feed or colic may occur. The horse needs a total of 1 kg of food per 50 kg of body weight a day (both hay and dried food) as well as not more than half a kg of dry food (oats) per 50 kg of body weight a day divided into 4 meals. Hay provides about 12%

proteins. The horse also needs 30 to 60 litres of water a day close to him all the time or frequently offered. Don't forget to provide a salt lick in the stable and give electrolytes after a hard and sweaty exercise.

4. Boredom and stable vices: Horses are herd animals that live in groups. But when they are exercise horses, lonely in a relatively small box without enough attention and exercise, they

of minerals or the presence of worms. There is a risk of bacterial infection or re-infestation with worms. The use of a better balanced diet and a block of rock salts (in the manger, to be used, better than hanging on the wall) could improve this vice.

Wind sucking may cause indigestion and loss of condition. Boredom is also the main cause but other causes include internal parasites or giving too



can get bored and develop stable vices.

Eating the bedding is a bad habit due to boredom and to a lesser extent insufficient food or food without enough bulk. This is unhealthy for the digestion and kidneys of the horse and will make him weak. The use of wood shavings may solve the problem.

Pawing the door is another bad habit that might cause swollen knees and other horse injuries. An iron bar on top of the door will make the horse stand further away from the door.

Eating timber (splinters) is very dangerous. The use of a mixture of Vaseline and red-pepper on the timber will keep the horse away.

Eating droppings could be due to lack

much sugar or food from outside the box making the horse lick the soaked box door (or feeding manger) and use them as a support to suck air by holding their edges by its teeth. A crib-biting strap is used to cure this together with regular exercise. Care should be taken to keep a wind sucking horse from others so that he doesn't pass on this undesirable habit.

Box walking and weaving are provoked by loneliness, boredom and lack of exercise. This will cause continuous strain on his tendons and joints which may also cause loss of physical condition. The company of a dehorned goat or a gelded donkey in the box may work wonders! Another method is to install a metal grille in the wall between the horses in order to let them communicate. **HT**

Al-Futtaim Group (Honda Egypt)



The Al-Futtaim Group is an integrated commercial, industrial and services organisation that is one of the leading business houses in the lower gulf region. Today it operates collectively over 40 companies bearing Al-Futtaim name dominating many market segments in the United Arab Emirates. It has also further expanded its sphere of operation to include Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, Oman and Egypt.

The success of the Al-Futtaim Group can be attributed to a business approach that combines the ability to change with the traditional values of integrity, service and social responsibility that defines its core business philosophy. Accordingly, Honda Egypt, being part of Al-Futtaim Group is keen to demonstrate its commitment towards the strategy of contributing in the development of its society.

Along with the Egyptian national strategy of leveraging health awareness among Arab youth, Honda Egypt has taken the initiative upon itself to be the leading automotives company promoting this concept among them. As part of its programme is aiming at achieving this target, Honda



has been taking part in and sponsoring a number of sports championships. The show jumping championship is one example of these events in which Honda's effective participation was widely witnessed and recognised. Honda Egypt took part as an official sponsor for the championship that was held at the show grounds of the Ferousia Club in Gezira Land under the auspices of The Egyptian Equestrian Federation. **HT**



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A MINI SHOW GUIDE TO THE BIGGEST BRITISH OPEN EVER



Ellen Whitaker

The British Open Show Jumping Championships has been heralded as the most exciting development in British show jumping for over 30 years, immediately becoming one of the most prestigious Championships in the International show jumping calendar. Following four years at Sheffield's Hallam FM Arena, the British Open is continuing to evolve and has announced that this year's Championships will be staged at the NEC Arena, Birmingham. With prize funds exceeding £150,000, the four day event will take place from Thursday the 12th till Sunday the 15th of April 2007. The move follows the organiser's Grandstand Group successful relocation of Horse of the Year Show to the NEC in 2002.



Mark Kyle

This four day equestrian feast is action-packed with awe-inspiring displays and equestrian entertainment combined with sensational competition of the very highest calibre interwoven into each performance. This unique event is the only Show in the UK where you can witness such a broad range of equestrian disciplines. The top British riders take on some of the best in the world for the prestigious British Open title whilst an action-packed entertainment programmes includes the highest goal Arena Polo staged in the UK, the world-famous Jean François Pignon, high speed Scurry Driving, the world's top eventers challenging for the British Indoor Cross Country title, a unique Pony Club display, harmony with the horse by the English Vaulting Squad, exquisite Dressage to Music, Barrel Racing and superb shopping at over 100 stands in the new Shopping Forum. If there was ever a year to visit the British Open then it is certainly this year. Added to which, what better way to kick off the Easter holidays than with a treat for the whole family to enjoy!

The ten top British Riders on the latest BSJA ranking list (as at 31st December 2006) who will receive automatic invitations are:

1. Michael Whitaker (Nottingham)
2. Nick Skelton (Warwickshire)
3. John Whitaker MBE (Yorkshire)
4. Robert Smith (Warwickshire)
5. Robert Whitaker (Yorkshire)
6. William Funnell (Surrey)
7. David McPherson (Kent)
8. Ellen Whitaker (Yorkshire)
9. Paul Barker (Yorkshire)
10. Ben Maher (Essex)

In addition to the top ten riders, two other British riders will have the opportunity to qualify for this year's British Open at the Addington Manor Equestrian Centre (29th March -1st April). **HT**



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A Success Story

The Suez Canal Equestrian Club S.C.A, Ismailia

The Suez Canal Equestrian Club was established during the time of the Universal Company of the Suez Canal that was responsible for the administration of the navigation

been of great support to the club in various ways. The General Chief of the S.C.A club Eng. Mohamed El-Khuli has also given help by providing facilities in the club which are now

and strategically direct the team's future goals. He has successfully set up a specific programme to help riders achieve more in higher classes.

expanding to include 120 stables in addition to improving technical aids and equipment.

Eng. Khaled Assem and Eng. Mohamed Sultan aided in leading the team to a strong competitive performance in the B-class where Kareem Sultan is ranking 3rd so far in the under 18 age group and



Before

of the canal. After the company's nationalisation in 1956, it became the fourth club to join the Egyptian Equestrian Federation in 1959. Under the patronage of the President of the S.C.A Lieutenant General Ahmed Fadel, the development of the club took place in 2002 in order to attain remarkable levels of the equestrian sport in relation to the elite name of the S.C.A.

Several phases were instituted to develop the club such as preparing a team of young riders. All training equipment and stables were provided with the support of Eng. Mohamed Abdelhamid El-Bessyoni to serve the essentials of the club. Presently, the club has several arenas and has successfully hosted two national championships through the Egyptian Equestrian Federation that has also



After

Being guided by Eng. Fuad Hosni, the former Managing Director of the club and the vision of the former rider and competitor Eng. Mohamed Sultan, the club hired General Galal Fuad followed by Mrs. Claudia El-Nafarawy as coaches for the riding team. And due to the success of the 2006/07 results in the national championships, Eng. Khaled Assem has been chosen as a technical consultant to technically

has qualified for the A2, and Ahmed Sultan in the C-class in the under 16 age group almost qualifying for the B-level. Khaled Adel, Salma Sultan and Mohamed Elhami competing in the D-level in the under 14 age group where Khaled's ranking is 3rd so far and has qualified for the C-class. Moreover, Abdallah El-Bassel competing in the E-class and ranking 4th so far, as well as Enji Elhami ranking 1st so far in the B-level in dressage. **HT**



From left; Eng. Hesham Hattab, Capt. Mohamed Roshdi, Eng. Mohamed El-Bessyoni, Eng. Mahmoud Abdelwahab, Eng. Abdelfatah Ragab - President of the EEF, Dr. Mohamed Elsherbini, Col. Tarek Khalifa & Capt. Elhami El-Babli.



From left; Col. Tarek Khalifa, Cap. Elhami El-Babli, Eng. El-Bassel Abdallah, Eng. Abdelfatah Ragab, Eng. Mohamed El-Khuli, Eng. Khaled Assem, Mr. & Mrs. Mohamed Elsherbini, Eng. Mohamed Sultan, Capt. Mohamed Roshdi & Eng. Emmad Zaghoul along with the junior riders.



Ahmed Sultan



Khaled Adel



Kareem Sultan



Abdallah El-Bassel



Enji Elhami



Salma Sultan



Mohamed Elhami

From the Horses' Mouth...

...on Death

So many ideas and thoughts travel through horses' minds, but few are the ones that put them into human words.

You see today I am writing because the rider who used to ride me has passed away...he's gone...puff...does not exist on this earth any longer. Well not as a human who rides me at least...if you believe in re-incarnation.

It is the idea of death that brings a swirl of thoughts into my mind always...whenever I hear of someone I know who has departed this world...I am bewildered with thoughts, and questions.

What kind of a creature does it make us to wonder? How could someone I know go away...leave this world and never come back? He was fine yesterday my rider...and what a fine rider he was...I enjoyed having him on my back...he was a great rider...he had his way with me...all the horses in the stables just envied me for being his favourite...the angel of death...can I ever befriend you? Or think of you as an angel? I am too upset for the loss now.

All sorts of questions swim around in my head. Swim is an understatement, storm around is more like it! I just think why are we here? What brought us to this earth? What are we supposed to accomplish? Are we supposed to accomplish anything at all?

And then my mind moves to think of greedy people, I don't know why they are always the villains in these moments.... I just can not help but think...what the hell are they after in this world? They want and want and want...power, money, land and food; they just cannot get enough of anything.... Don't they realise that it will not last for long?

Once they are gone, it all goes with them; they don't take anything with them down there...nothing at all. Everyone goes under that pile of sand...everyone is equal only under that pile...where there is nothing to compare.

The only thing that is ever left behind is what good you've done...THAT lives on. You see my rider was a good man...our tears will not dry fast...he's gone, but he left all the good things he's done behind him...for me to remember, other horses to remember, and for his family to remember as well.

I am a horse that mourns the death of his rider...but I am also trying to understand what happens next? Why are you people so consumed with life as though it is eternal? Did you ever think what happens to you after you depart this world? The riders boots are hanging down from my saddle...his boots outlived him...a cruel thought...but real.

I think you humans can be a little bit vain sometimes...yes you...not all of course...because there are always great men like my rider...but some of you go on in this life without knowing what really matters most...you go after more horses, more stables...less mercy, more competitions, less glory. Take it from a horse...take it easy...live your life as though you are dying tomorrow...take care of your loved ones...do good in this world...leave it with your good deeds and good seeds. **HT**

Photo by Gloria Kifayeh

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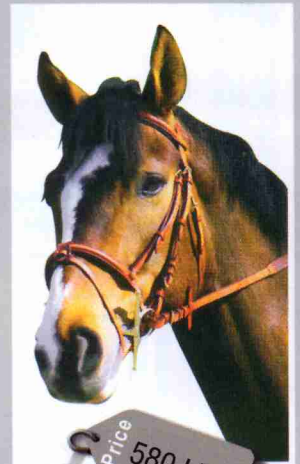
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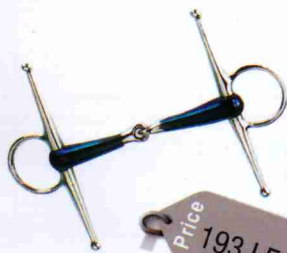


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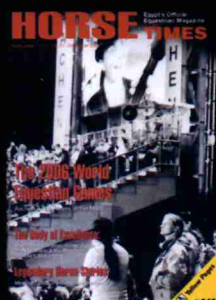
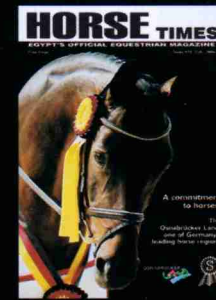
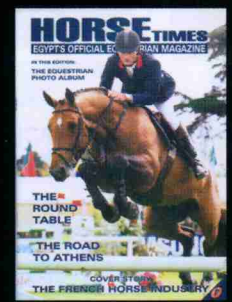
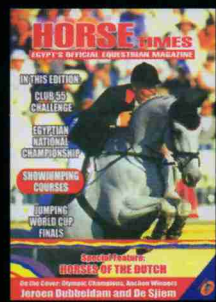
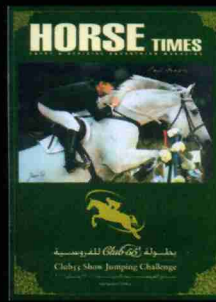
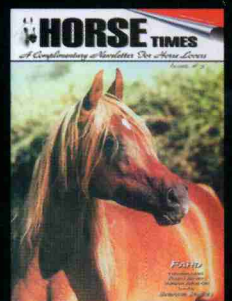
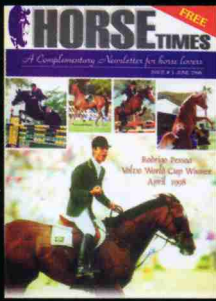


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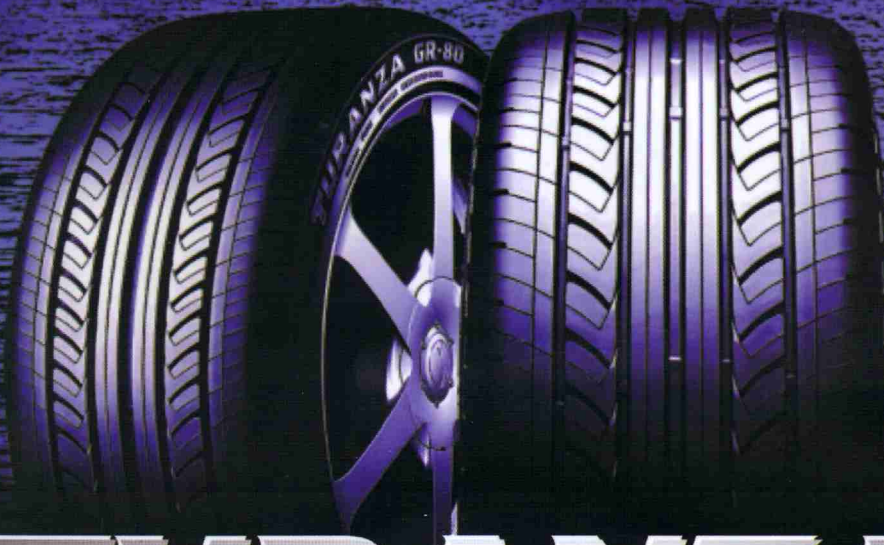
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