



The 11TH Pan Arab Equestrian Games

Inside this issue: Show Jumping • Dressage • Endurance

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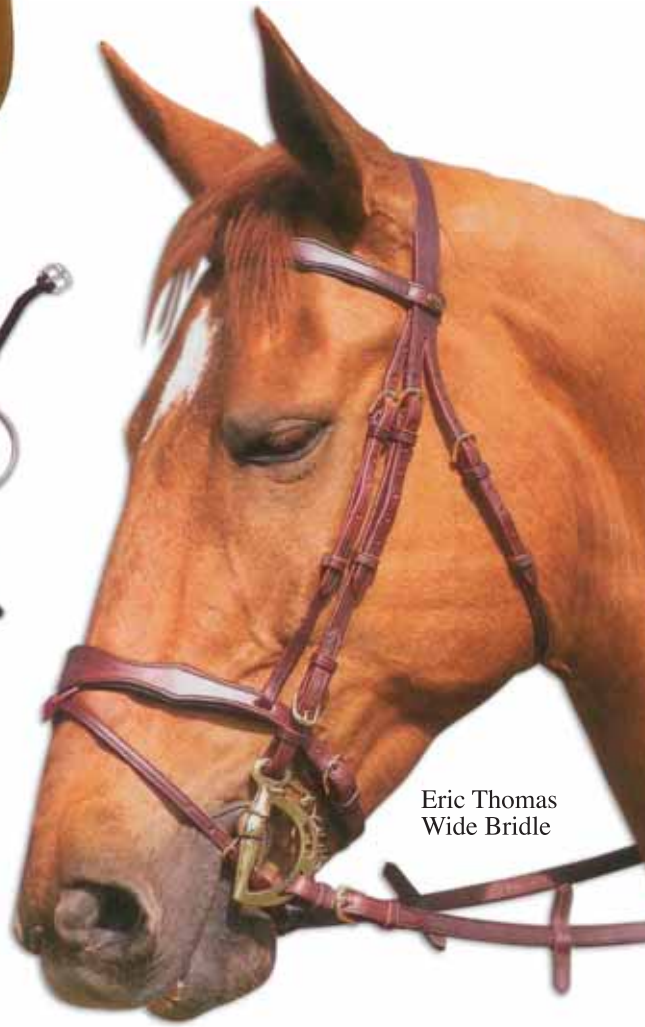
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VIEW POINT

FROM THE CHAIRMAN



This is a special issue...one that is closest to my heart. Firstly, it's the tenth anniversary for our publication Horse Times; ten diligent years of dedication and struggle to bring you substantial information about the equestrian world from a global perspective and a Middle Eastern passion.

Secondly, Egypt hosted the 11th Pan Arab Games and Horse Times dedicated this issue for covering the equestrian events. This issue is different from any other; stride through the pages to view the golds, silvers and bronzes distributed amongst riders from our neighbouring Arab countries. Horsemen from Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Qatar, Iraq, Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya and Egypt glorified the sand fields with their horses.

The professional lens of Jacques Toffi caught moments to be made historical of show jumping, dressage, endurance and tent pegging.

What made the event even more spectacular was the participation of Iraq in the games; a country that from the midst of her hardship rose to compete. In these games we missed the participation of Sudan and Palestine, and we hope they will be present in the next games.

It is unlikely for me to tell you why I chose a particular cover for this issue of Horse Times, however this picture says more than a thousand words...it captures the event; the head of the Pan Arab Equestrian Federation, behind him a female Arab silver medallist, and a pair of hands gesturing the symbol of unity...Arab unity at the Pan Arab Games.

Read on and enjoy...

Sincerely,
Khaled Assem
Chairman

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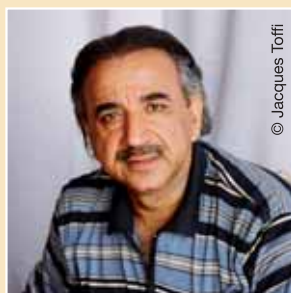
THE 11TH PAN ARAB EQUESTRIAN GAMES



SHEIKH MISHAAL BIN HAMAD BIN KHALIFA AL-THANI

President of the Pan Arab Equestrian Federation

“Today all Arab nations gather in Egypt to revive the traditional equestrian sport. I extend my wishes of success to all competitors reminding them that the most important thing in these championships is not the triumph, but the struggle, and it is not an individual success, but an Arab success that unites all of us as sons and daughters of one nation in one Arab World.”



ABDUL HAMEED ABBAS DASHTI

Secretary General of the Pan Arab Equestrian Federation

“The equestrian games lashed out to an incredible start this year with more than eight countries from the Arab world competing in a well organised and exiting championship. The 11th Pan Arab Games took place a bit after the election of a new President for the Pan Arab Equestrian Federation; Sheikh Mishaal bin Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani. With the help of many experienced executives in the Arab and international equestrian field, the event was brilliantly organised.

The implementation of some of our aspirations were achieved with dressage, endurance and tent pegging. These disciplines were not held before aside to show jumping and I think having them was a good step forward; credit should be given to the Pan Arab Federation and its Board of Directors for their efforts to construct new and exiting events.

Sheikh Mishaal's efforts to emphasise that the whole concept of the event was to unite all Arabs as one on Arab grounds were of great help to the success of this event. And in light of what's happening in our Arab world, this event has proven to deter the attention away from the political scene and focus on a sport that brings everyone together. The Egyptian Equestrian Federation was tremendously enthusiastic, hospitable, and courteous at managing this event professionally to the last detail.”

SHOW JUMPING

Hisham Hattab

Secretary General & President of the Technical Committee of the Egyptian Equestrian Federation, Board member & President of the Technical Committee of the Pan Arab Equestrian Federation



The 11th Pan Arab Equestrian Games were brilliantly organised and managed given the absence of the Pan Arab Equestrian Federation for more than a year; the election of the Federation took place on September 5th 2007, just two months before the games. With joint efforts and cooperation between the Egyptian Equestrian Federation and the Pan Arab Equestrian Federation, most Arab countries managed to meet in order to participate in those games. This is also the first time for this event to host three different disciplines aside to show jumping such as dressage, endurance and tent pegging; it's a huge achievement and we will continue on hoping for more events in the years to come.

Furthermore, the games this year were under the supervision of the International Equestrian Federation with international qualified judges and that is due to the high levels of riders and horses. The Egyptian Equestrian Federation cooperated with all Arab countries to gather accredited judges which added more enthusiasm to the event. Cairo and Alexandria hosted up to 300 horses with the cooperation of the President of the National Sports Council, Eng. Hassan Sakr, who facilitated in building stables at the Cairo Equestrian Stadium; his consistent presence during the games indicated his delight for his efforts that paid off.

Moreover, the President of the Egyptian Olympic committee Gen. Monir Sabet was very glad with the 14 different medals that were received by the Egyptian riders which gave them and the committee huge moral support enabling them to aspire for more future achievements. Regarding show jumping, our riders are very experienced but unfortunately they have normal horses. However, with their hard work and the excellent management from their trainers and the Egyptian Equestrian Federation, I am sure the best is yet to come.



IRAQ

HISHAM HATTAB

*Board member & President of the
Technical Committee of the Pan Arab
Equestrian Federation*

“It was a great honour to receive members of the Iraqi team. Iraq has just been re-listed in the International Equestrian Federation and is ready to resume their usual activities in the equestrian sport. Although they did not qualify for the Grand Prix, the games would not have been the same without their participation.”



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Ali Hussein Fadel ▶



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LIBYA

HISHAM HATTAB

Board member & President of the Technical Committee of the Pan Arab Equestrian Federation

“The Libyan team performed quite impressively even though they lacked a bit of ring craft, yet the riders were very capable and the horses they rode were definitely up to the standards which showed good management on behalf of their federation. After more exposure and continuity, we’ll see this team in the top level of the sport internationally.”



- ▲ *Abdulfatah Militan*
- ▼ *Abdulmagid Abushkiwa*





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Abdulmagid Abushkiwa



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KUWAIT

HOSSAM RAGAB

Trainer of the Kuwaiti team

“Preparations for this event started late during the hottest season in Kuwait and as the biggest class of show jumping locally in Kuwait still has not reached the level that was at the games, it was a step up for all the Kuwaiti riders to jump such a big and technical track; however it was a very good experience for the whole team.”



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▲ ▼ *Khalid Al Khobeissi*



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▲ *Marzo Al Saeidy*





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▲ Hossam Al Kadra



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▲ Abdul Rahman Al Fozai



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QATAR

JOS LANSINK

*World Champion and trainer of the Qatari team
interviewed during the Nations Cup*

“This is my first time in Egypt. In regards to this event I must say I am impressed with the performance level of the riders. I am currently training the Qatari team; they are young and they lack experience that’s why they performed normally but I think they are on the right track. The other teams are very good as well and I am sure I will see greater performances in the years to come.”



© Jacques Toffi

▲ Sheikh Mohamed Al Thani



Jos Lansink ▲



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JORDAN

HANY BESHARAT

Competing for Jordan interviewed during the Nations Cup

“This is a very important event and it was well prepared; All the teams and the riders have prepared their horses and themselves well. The competition levels are high and we didn’t do so well on the first round of the Nation’s Cup.”



▲ Saeed Aboura

▲ Hany Besharat



▲ Ghassan Kassar



▲ Ibrahim Besharat



▲ Ghassan Kassar



▲ Like father like son; Hany & Ibrahim Besharat

SINAN NASHASHIBI

*Member of the Jordanian delegation
interviewed during the Nations Cup:*

“I usually attend the event every year and this year it was great! The levels of competition have risen and the teams are doing well. The Jordanian team did well, but they had some laps which happen unfortunately.”

UAE

ALICE DEBANY CLERO

*Trainer of the Dubai team
interviewed during the Nations Cup*



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“We didn’t have the best start; we had two riders who rode well and two that rode nervously which was unfortunate because it put us behind. We did gain a little ground today on the Nation’s Cup with a borrowed horse. The competition from the other teams is very high, and I think the Middle East is getting better. It’s no longer all about the Saudi team! Egyptian riders are living in Europe most of the time so it’s like competing against Europeans frankly, Syria is doing absolutely well, and Qatar has been at it for a while...yes they’ve had their troubles but they are doing well. We are missing some riders like Sheikha Latifah who is preparing for the Olympics and Mohamed Al Kumayti. Furthermore, some of our horses have had a few injuries, and on top of that we have a rider that’s riding a borrowed horse! So we have had our difficulties but I think we are doing well.”



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Arif Ahmed ▲
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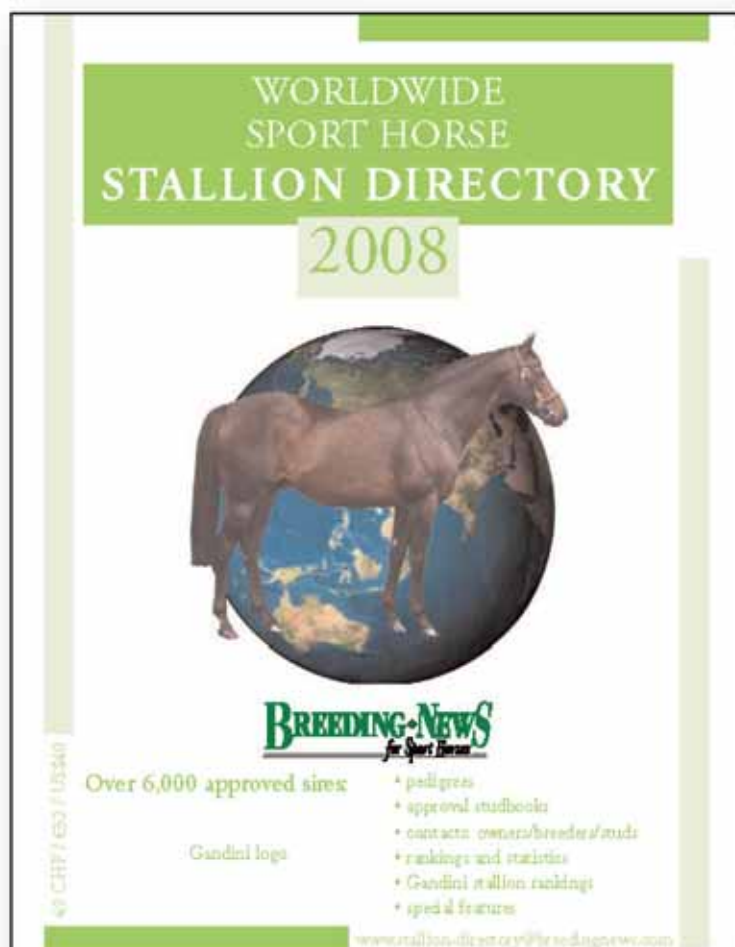
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SYRIA

TEAM BRONZE

NORBERT NUXOLL

Trainer of the Syrian team interviewed during the Individual level

“The Syrian team have not done badly; Shadi Gharib was very good and all round clear until the final round on his nine year old horse. it does not have much mileage although it’s still a good jumper. For the next round I hope they perform better.”



▲ Fadi Al Zbib

▲ Shadi Gharib



▲ Shadi Gharib



▲ Yasir Charif



▲ Tareq Arnaout



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SHADI GHARIB

*Competing for Syria
interviewed during the Individual level*

“I did not do well during the first round and I do not really know what has gotten into my horse! I was very nervous because it lacks experience. We as team are very happy about winning a medal which is a good step forward.”



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▲ *Yasir Charif*



© Jacques Toffi

YASIR CHARIF

*Competing for Syria
interviewed during the Individual level*

“The show is very nice but it was difficult starting with the team’s competition going onto the Individual level; the other teams are highly competitive and their horses are fantastic. The Syrian team has also developed due to the excellent horses we got from Shockemohle stables. I think we are on the right track to develop even more.”

▲ *The Syrian team with their trainer Norbert Nuxoll*

KSA

TEAM GOLD

RAMZY AL DUHAMI

Competing for Saudi Arabia interviewed during the Individual level:

“I have been part of the Saudi team for a while and I think the other teams have been competitive. We had two good rounds during the Nations Cup, but our horses lost a bit of condition during the Individual level. We will try to keep riding well and keep the pressure on. The other teams have also developed on the horse and rider levels and they are starting to acquire more experience which will give the upcoming years more tougher competition.”

Ramzy Al Duhami ▶
HRH Prince Faisal Al Shalan ▼



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HRH PRINCE FAISAL AL SHALAN

Competing for Saudi Arabia interviewed during the Individual level

"I love this sport and I hope it gets bigger and bigger in this region. The show is good for the time being, but I'm sure the organisers and riders will have enough experience to modify the important details in the future. The stables are good as well as the footing and I think in general the show has been super. The competition levels this year have been the highest and I see tough and challenging riders which I think is excellent because it's fulfilling. This sport is also strange because today the horse and rider can do well but tomorrow they won't; I am very happy with the team's Gold medal and I wish everyone the best during the Individual level."

◀ ▼ *HRH Prince Abdullah bin Meteb Al Seoud (Individual Gold medallist)*



▲ *HRH Prince Faisal, Abdallah, HRH Prince Abdullah & Khaled Al Eid*

KHALED AL EID

Team Manager & Olympic Bronze medallist interviewed during the Individual level:

"The show is very good and all the riders have done well due to the high levels of competition. I cannot really point my finger at a winner because the performance keeps changing."



© Jacques Toffi



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◀ *Abdallah Al Sharbatly*

ABDALLAH AL SHARBATLY

Competing for Saudi Arabia interviewed during the Individual level:

"I am so happy the team won the gold medal! There is lots of competition going on which is excellent, and I hope it continues on this level because it's all exciting which could probably be the best for all riders! The organisers deserve a thank you because it's a very nice show and I hope we have similar shows in Saudi Arabia."

“I am very glad with our win. I have expected good results and some luck was on our side. Our horses are a squeezed lemon with little juice left...compared to other countries that are supported by their governments in getting the best horses. We aspire to get the same support in the future.”



Abdelfatah Ragab

EGYPT

TEAM SILVER

ABDEL FATAH RAGAB,
President of the Egyptian Equestrian Federation

On Samir Abdelfatah: “Samir Abdelfatah has done a good job in regards to technicality and management with all the turmoil surrounding him.”

On horses being owned by the federation: “The problem is if we take any money from the federation to buy a horse, we will not have much left for preparation and training, but hopefully it could be an option to consider; it’s not easy, but we can stay positive!”

On Karim El Zoghby: “It’s unimaginable how touched I was by him! We have a reliable soldier here.”

▼ Abdul Kader Saeed
(Individual Bronze medallist)



▼ Karim Hamdy





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▲ Karim El Zoghby
(Individual Silver medallist)

SAMIR ABDEL FATAH,
*Technical Manager of the Egyptian team
interviewed during the Nations Cup*



On the general performance: "I expected that the Egyptians would be in a good position for a medal of any kind. Even though the favourites for

the team gold were the Saudi's, the silver for our team is a good achievement."

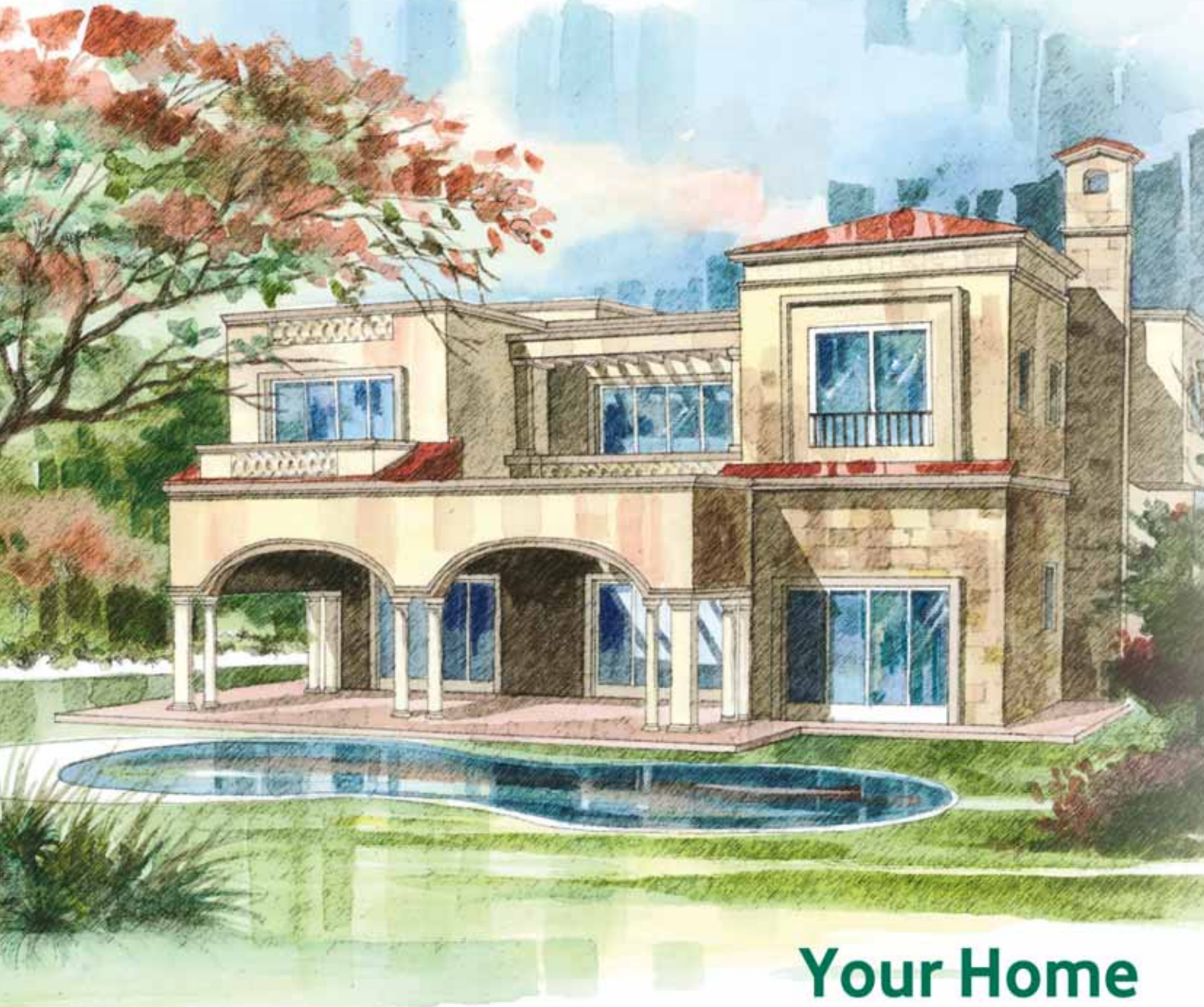
His views on the Egyptian team: "There is no space for mistakes and the riders must be able to reserve their performance and this is what the team did."

On winning a medal: "We always have to stay positive because a win of any medal does not mean we got ten out of ten, there constantly has to be room for more and more development. We have to improve our horse power and our technical know-how because our goal should not be limited to the Arab games, it should be extended to international championships."

◀ Mohamed El Boraei



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ANDRE SAKAKINI

Egyptian Olympic rider interviewed during the Nations Cup:

“The Egyptian riders have done well so far, and I hope they will be able to do better on the Individual level especially when one’s nerves are bound to start kicking in. The riders have trained here a lot and the grounds are maintained very well which is a plus. The general view is that the other teams are highly competitive and have excellent horses. The Saudi’s for example train in Europe and they ride superbly; they also follow a meticulous system. The most organised team is the Syrian team, they are trained by German trainers from Shockemohle’s stables and they are starting to acquire more experience. In regards to the Individual level, I feel that Abdallah Al Sharbatly is an excellent rider and has an excellent horse.”



Karim El Zoghby



Abdul Kader Saeed



Karim Hamdy



Mohamed El Boraei

ABDUL KADER SAEED

Competing for Egypt and Individual Bronze medallist interviewed during the Nations Cup

“It’s very nice to see all the riders performing here at higher standards. I am currently riding with Team Harmony and being trained by Emile Hendrix. My parents are supporting me financially on this sport and I hope I do well on the Individual level.”



▲ Abdul Kader Saeed



© Jacques Toffi

◀ Karim El Zoghby

KARIM EL ZOGHBY

Competing for Egypt and Individual Silver medallist interviewed during the Nations Cup

“I am so happy to be part of the Egyptian team! I was worried at the beginning of the event because the horse I was supposed to ride got ill. We all had a fright! The horse I am currently riding is not qualified for this jumping level but thankfully all went well eventually. We were also apprehensive about the skilful performance of the Saudis, Qatari’s, Syrians and the Emirati’s. We did well as a team but the Saudi’s did better. (Smiling) However I am naturally biased to Egypt of course and I’m hoping on coming out with a medal during the Nation’s Cup.”



KHALED ASSEM

Former member of the Egyptian National show jumping team:

“This competition has added to the achievements of the Arab riders as a whole, and I am positive that the future still holds much more advancement.”

◀ *Karim Hamdy, Karim El Sobky, Abdul Kader Saeed, Samir Abdelfatah, Karim El Zoghby and Mohamed El Borei*



IT WAS AN HONOUR TO HOST THE
11TH PAN ARAB GAMES AT OUR NEW
CAIRO EQUESTRIAN STADIUM

SHOW JUMPING COURSES

at the 11th
Pan Arab Games

By Ahmed Talaat
International Course Designer

Several factors helped the show to be a great success such as the very good footing for the main riding arena, and the way it was maintained during the event helped the course designers to go as tough technically as needed.

The show lasted for 4 days with 1 day off before the last day that was scheduled to be the final for the individual classification. On the first day, a technically moderate speed class table C was built; the most important thing in the class was to construct alternatives for the fences and also give space for the riders to test the ground and speed among fences.

On the second day, the Nation's Cup or the final for the team competition was held. It had two identical rounds where

the riders jumped 2 similar tracks. Subsequently in this type of class, riders should try to keep their horses fit for the second round. It is however tough to maintain a high total of team points due to the pressure. Accordingly, every rider carries the total faults of all the team which creates more stress and pressure as opposed to individual riding. As a result, the course designers make this class more challenging; they always try to balance it between pressure and technicalities in the course.

After a day of rest for the riders and their horses, the final classification for the individual medal was held, and having rested, the horses were more fit and in a better condition than the second day. The courses on this day were extremely



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- ◀ Ahmed Talaat
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Paul Weier

technical courses and they were big enough as any big grand prix courses in Europe. The class was 150/155 cm in two non-identical rounds and so the riders jumped two different courses starting with a sturdy first round to a conclusive second round that would bring forth the gold medallist.

COURSE ANALYSIS:

On the second day the Nation's Cup course was a difficult 145/150 cm class. As seen on Fig (1), the course started by an oxer coming out of the corner and facing the spectators which distracted the horses not allowing them to fully

concentrate, therefore leading to a possible 4 faults on the first fence.

Number 2 was an upright facing the in-gate which made the horses move in too close to a possible knock-down.

Number 3 was an easy oxer that had open space facing it, on the other hand, adding golden poles to the oxer created some difficulty for the horses to pin it well. A wall (number 4) leading to number 5, a triple bar with a distance of 21.50 meters in between, made the horses draw back a little; the distance for the triple bar grew longer which caused some riders to fall on the back bar.

Number 6 displayed the first combination in the course; a double combination (oxer – upright) 2 strides with a distance of

10.80 meters which is almost normal for this height, except the entrance of the combination was coming from a broken line, a possible 6 or 7 strides. Most of the riders put 7 strides and as a result they approached the wide oxer slightly slow where the distance inside the combination grew longer.

Fence 7 was a plank with two flat cups which made it too fragile coming to fence 8, a pretty wide oxer.

The second combination in the course (fence 9), was a triple combination: (upright – oxer - upright) two strides (10.60 meters), to a one stride (7.80 meters). The distance to the combination was 25.50 meters, a long 6 or short 7 strides; going on a long 6 (which was the choice of most riders) brought the horses in too close to the oxer (the second element of combination) and consequently left the horses too far from the final upright where they were sometimes too far to clear it.

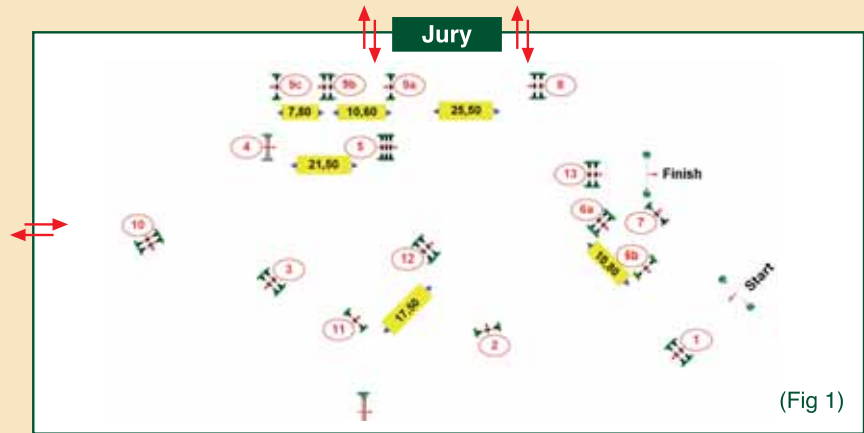
Fence 10 comes too fast as well after the combination and short 4 strides (17.50 meters) between 11 and 12 on a curve that leads to the last big oxer of the course.

On the last day the first round was technically tricky. As seen in Fig (2), the related distance between fences 1 and 2 (oxer – wall) is 29.50 meters giving the rider the option of riding them in 7 long strides or 8 short ones. The wall (fence 2) is just beside the in-gate prompting the horses to lose a little of their focus going on to fence 3.

Fence 4 was the first double combination: (wall – oxer) 1 stride 7.80 meters, which is a long 1 stride. The wall led the horses to slightly draw back making the distance much longer; hence the rider had to put extra pressure on the horse before the double and in between. Some riders didn't put enough pressure in between so they landed on the back pole of the oxer.

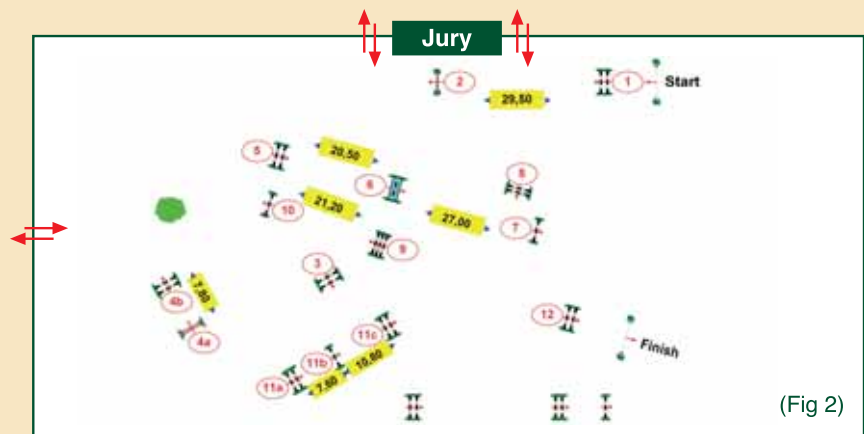
The oxer, fence 5, was also very technical due to it coming very fast out of a very sharp turn, and a lot of horses knocked down the back pole of the oxer, and then went to 5, the liver pool, with an upright on top going in 5 short strides at 20.50

NATIONS CUP Competition over two rounds



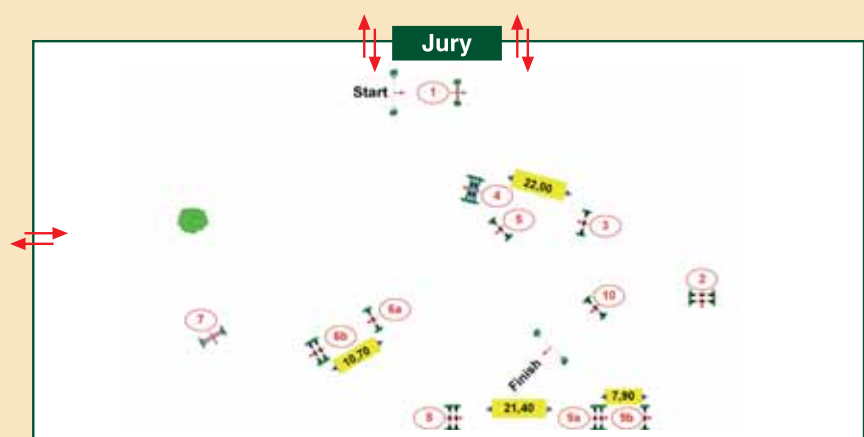
(Fig 1)

INDIVIDUAL ROUND - 1 Competition over two rounds



(Fig 2)

INDIVIDUAL ROUND - 2 Competition over two rounds



meters. Going on to fence 7, a 155 cm upright in a 27 meter distance, which is a tricky distance because it's a long 6 or short 7 strides, the riders had to be extremely decisive.

Fence 8 was a narrow oxer coming out of the turn then going on 6 strides to fence 9, the triple bar, but in a broken line going in a related 21.20 meters which is short 5 strides to fence 10, another 155 cm

upright.

The last triple combination, fence 11, came on at the end of the course where the horses were tired, less focused and just about ready to finish. It was an oxer - upright – oxer, a short 1 stride (7.60 meters) to a long 2 strides (10.80 meters) where the tired horses had to stretch to cover the oxer on the last fence of the course number 12, another wide oxer.



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The show jumping timekeeping, which must rigorously respect the FEI rules, is not the easiest task we can imagine. The technical perfection of the infrastructure is 1 thing; the handling of this technique is another. In addition, there is the further requirement to obtain official results as fast as possible by using the most modern techniques of communication. So far, only private timing teams have been responsible for this task. TAG Heuer, eager to change this irrefutable fact, have implemented its experience of Official Timekeeper of Formula 1 and of the World Alpine skiing Championships accompanied by its range of extensive and professional technology to develop a modern Jumping timing installation.

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A grey horse is shown in profile, running across a sandy desert landscape. The horse is wearing a red saddle pad and a black saddle. The background is a hazy, desert scene with a large pyramid visible on the left side. The sky is a pale, overcast color.

ENDURANCE

AT THE 11TH PAN ARAB GAMES

By Maryanne Gabbani

Endurance racing made its first appearance in the Pan Arab Games this fall with a 120 km, 5 loop race based at Sakkara Country Club. An Abu Dhabi based firm prepared the impressive base camp at the club prior to the November 19 race with stables for the participating teams, entertainment and service tents, the vet check facilities and a hospital tent for any horses that might require it. Eight countries, Egypt, Jordan, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Libya, Bahrain, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates, participated in the event.



Endurance racing requires a great deal of preparation on the part of the horses and riders and the teams brought horses of the highest standards to this contest; horses bred and trained all over the world in some cases. The horses are examined by veterinarians the day before the event to assure that each horse is capable of the demands that will be made during the race, and there is an additional vet check after each of the five loops of the race. If a horse is judged to be unfit to continue it is withdrawn from the competition. A rider may also pull a horse from competition if he/she feels that the horse is not performing at the necessary level. Additionally, after each vet check, the horse and rider have a mandatory hold time of approximately thirty to forty minutes during which the horses eat, drink and rest.

The race began at dawn from the desert in front of Sakkara Country Club with forty-two horses accompanied by even more SUV's left for the first loop at 6 am. The initial loop was the longest, 36 km out to the Bent Pyramid at Dahshur and back. The footing was ungrouted natural desert sand with a light cover of rocks, a footing that was to cause many pulls due to lameness during the day. The UAE team went out at a blistering pace of about 22 kph and took an early lead that they held

all day. Each team was allowed six horses and riders, three of whom had to finish for the team medals. Most teams brought more than six horses and selected the best of the group the day before the race. The UAE horses were for the most part European and Australian horses that had been bred, trained and raced in their original countries prior to coming to Egypt. The Qatari horses had been at Sakkara Country Club for a couple of weeks prior to the race on their way home from a summer of racing in France.

Most of the day saw a strong competition among the UAE, Bahrain, Qatar, and Saudi Arabia for the top spots, with all but the UAE and Qatar falling victim to the trail, so that at the end of the day the UAE took team gold and Qatar took the silver. The race for the bronze took place at a slower pace but with no less intensity as the Syrian and the Egyptian teams rode a conservative race designed to keep their horses in the competition rather than to attempt to match the burning pace of the UAE. The final loops were, in fact, ridden at much the same rate by the front runners (who had by now eliminated most of their competitors) as by the more conservative teams. The bronze was finally awarded to the Egyptians and the Syrians jointly as both teams had the same number of finishers.



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Hani Ismail Ramadan ▲
Abdul Rahman Al Sulaitin ▼





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Mohsen Abood



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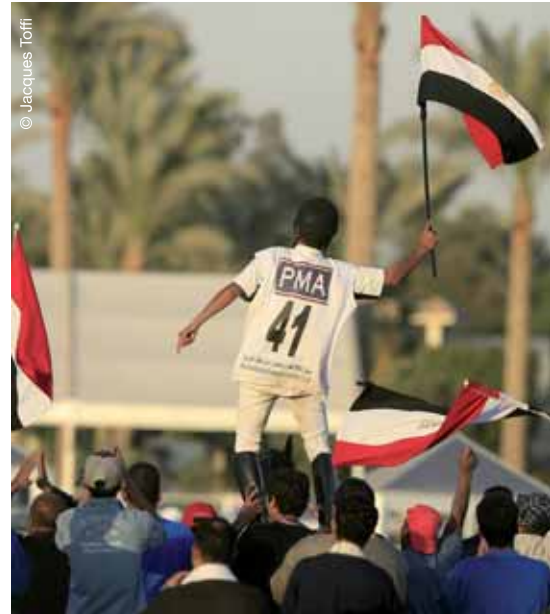
▲ HRH Princess Alia bint Al Hussein,
President of the Jordanian
Equestrian Federation



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THE RACE FOR THE BRONZE TOOK PLACE AT A SLOWER PACE BUT WITH NO LESS INTENSITY AS THE SYRIAN AND THE EGYPTIAN TEAMS RODE A CONSERVATIVE RACE DESIGNED TO KEEP THEIR HORSES IN THE COMPETITION RATHER THAN TO ATTEMPT TO MATCH THE BURNING PACE OF THE UAE.

ONE OF THE INTERESTING ASPECTS OF THIS COMPETITION WAS THE HIGHER PROFILE OF WOMEN RIDERS, WITH INDIVIDUALS ON THE JORDANIAN AND BAHRAINI TEAM AND A MAJORITY OF WOMEN RIDERS ON THE SYRIAN TEAM.

Manal Jadan ▼



The Jordanian team had an unfortunate share of bad luck when one of their horses got cut by a rock on the coronary band in the first loop and another pulled for lameness at the first vet check, bringing the number of competitors down to three. Later in the race, another horse was pulled by the rider who felt that the horse would have been at risk to continue.

The Libyans had never participated in an international endurance competition before and had trucked their horses over 3 thousand km to join this one. Having been isolated for so long from the rest of the equestrian world by the air embargo, their learning curve was extremely steep and their horses, of which only three started, were eliminated in the first loop. Hopefully, this will not deter them from further involvement.

One of the interesting aspects of this competition was the higher profile of women riders, with individuals on the Jordanian and Bahraini team and a majority of women riders on the Syrian

team. This is something that is welcome as worldwide women in endurance are equal in numbers or outnumbering the men.

The venue for the race attracted a relatively small crowd of spectators, but then endurance racing isn't exactly a riveting spectator sport. Most of the action occurs out on the trail. Spectators see a horse and rider arrive, move to a cooling area where the horse's pulse is brought down to 60 to 64 beats per minute for the vet check, and then to the vet check area where veterinarians look at whether the horse is dehydrated, whether it is lame, or whether the digestive system is impaired (lack of gut sounds). If all of these are all right, a happy horse and rider go back to the rest area where they relax for a time and then go out to repeat the entire process once again. As one woman spectator was overheard saying, "I've never spent so much time watching horses being bathed."



Nawaf Al Otaibi



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◀ ▼ The UAE Gold medallists



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GOLD FOR DRESSAGE

By Dr. Mohamed Elshirbini

A DREAM CAME TRUE when I saw the Egyptian flag high in the sky while listening to the national anthem, not only once but 3 times in 15 minutes for the 3 gold medals in dressage!



IT'S THE CHAMPIONSHIP DAY AND FIVE ARAB COUNTRIES ARE COMPETING IN DRESSAGE FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE THE GAMES COMMENCED IN 1953

Preparations for the 11th Pan Arab Games, the third held in Egypt, started months ago in spite of the fact that there was a possibility of not having the competition if less than five countries were to participate. Being a member of the board of the Egyptian Equestrian Federation (EEF) and the head of the dressage committee, I received daily phone calls from the enthusiastic riders enquiring whether there would be a competition or not! My usual answer was, "I'll plan and work my schedule as if there will be a competition and if not, all the participants in the training programme (riders and horses) would fully benefit from training".

Due to the fact that the EEF has been running a dressage league on annual basis for the past decade, the process of the continuous training of the riders and horses was established. Trainers such as Soha Elebiary, Emmad Zaghoul, Armel and Amr Fawzy were taking good care of the riders and the horses all year round. The training plan included a primary selection of the best pair (rider and horse) out of the 2006/2007 season in levels (A) and (B). Some of the experienced riders such as Col. Ayman Fahmy and Maj. Yasser Assar were selected but waiting for the right horse! 'Troy', a horse that belongs to the President of the EEF, solved Maj. Assar's problem. 'Amber' another mare that also belongs to the President of the EEF was a supporting horse for the team and ridden by Maj. Hany Rafei.

In September, the first clinic for level (A) and (B) riders was completed over two weeks by an international expert. The second clinic was done in November after selecting the teams (A) and (B) with five pairs in each team just before the competition's fine tuning. Two substitutes



◀ ▲ Ahmed Hamsho



▲ Major Yassir Assar



Individual Results

LEVEL (A):

GOLD:
Maj. Yasser Assar on TROY

SILVER:
Randa Barakat on PANCHO

BRONZE:
Ayman Azab on POWER

4TH PLACE:
Amr Fawzy on PACIFICO

LEVEL (B):

GOLD:
Ingy Elhamy on LOS ANGELES

SILVER:
Aga Zohair on NAPU MUK

BRONZE:
Maha Adel on ALY THE KING

4TH PLACE:
Maj. Hany Rafei on AMBER

MAJOR YASSIR ASSAR

Individual Dressage Gold medallist (Class A)

On dressage: It is a big step that this event has included dressage for the first time! The dressage sport level here is somehow away from the international level, but it is certainly on the right track!

for each level were on stand-by (the 5th pair); Aline Kopaljian in (A) on her German dressage horse 'Sommelier' and Omar Sweelan in (B) with 'Hanco'.

It's the championship day and five Arab countries are competing in dressage for the first time since the games commenced in 1953. The 20 x 60 meter sand arena assembled in Cairo Equestrian Stadium was nicely prepared and the Egyptian crowd was there awaiting medals. Three judges were judging the event; Mr. Peter Bonhof (international FEI judge) whom was also the President along with Mr. Nicolas Verwer (Dutch judge and dressage expert) and Emmad Zaghloul (experienced Egyptian judge).

Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, Libya and Egypt were to prove who deserves the honours to receive the first medals in the Pan Arab Games dressage event. The Lebanese rider Carla Kattouah had a problem which was discovered by her German trainer Pia (trains the Syrian team as well). Carla studied the wrong test! Pia discovered this after the first 2 riders competed and

Carla was the third rider to come out. As the Director of the show, I consulted with the judges and we decided to give her a chance to study the correct test instead of eliminating her. She started as the last competitor in level (A). All the riders were real champions even the substitutes Aline and Omar were there to encourage their team members. The results included 7 medals!

A gold medal also went for the team of Ingy Elhamy and Aga Zohair while Syria's Ahmed Hamsho and Firas Jeneidi received silver. Iraq's Saad Sohail and Aly Fadel received the bronze medal.

Our confidence in dressage to be important for all types of equestrian sports, has led the EEF, with my continuous effort, to support and develop the discipline. The federation is looking forward to more achievements by getting better horses for the team and training them in preparation for international levels. Arab countries now have a new discipline in equestrian sports to work on, and I hope that this will promote dressage in whole region.

KHALED ASSEM

Former member of the Egyptian National Showjumping team:

"This is the first time for dressage to be included in the Pan Arab games and that in itself is a good start, I hope to see more professional levels of performance as has been in show jumping."

AGA ZOHAIR

Individual Bronze medallist (Class B) and team Gold medallist:

On the win: "We trained so hard and I feel we deserved a medal.
On dressage: The federation needs to focus more on supplying trainers and better horses, with that I'm sure we'll do even better."

RANDA BARAKAT

Individual Silver medallist (Class A):

On her win: "This is the best day of my life! I owe this to my wonderful private trainer Armelle Ruesche who motivated me so much. I feel absolutely great!"
On the dressage: "This is an achievement and the federation should concentrate on dressage a bit more. It has been an individual effort on individual expenses and we as riders need support for better horses."

Aga Zohair ►
Firas Jeneidi ▼



▲ Carla Katoa

CARLA KATOA

Dressage rider competing for Lebanon:

On dressage: "Dressage is very important for the equestrian sport because riders seek perfection and precision which could be achieved through dressage as the basic work for any equestrian sport."



© Jacques Toffi

▲ Inji Elhami

INJI ELHAMY

Individual Gold medallist (Class B) and Team Gold medallist:

On her win: "I was waiting for the team to win, but individually?!! No!! The win was so unexpected."

On dressage: "I'm thrilled to see the first dressage event to be held during the Pan Arab Games. I hope the federation realises the need for this sport to further develop."

MAHA ADEL

Individual Bronze medallist (Class B):

On her win: "It's a weird and unexpected feeling having won a medal!!"

On dressage: "We don't have the greatest horses but we trained very hard for this event."

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TENT PEGGING

By Atef Al Attar

The term refers to a specific mounted game with ground targets; it refers to the entire class of mounted cavalry games involving edged weapons on horseback. The competitive sport evolved out of cavalry training exercises designed to develop cavaliers' prowess with the sword and lance from horseback.



▲ *The Egyptian tent pegging team*

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the twilight of cavalry in the twentieth century.

The term tent pegging is also related to the idea that cavaliers mounting a surprise pre-dawn raid on an enemy camp could use the game's skills to cut or uproot tent pegs, hence collapsing the tents on their sleeping occupants and spreading chaos and terror in the camp. Because the specific game of tent pegging is the most popular equestrian skill-at-arms game (a term derived from edged weapons on horseback), the entire class of sports became known as tent pegging during

Today, tent pegging is practiced around the world, but is especially popular in Middle Eastern countries, Afghanistan, Australia, India, Pakistan, South Africa, and the United Kingdom. The Olympic Council of Asia included tent pegging as an official sport in 1982. While members of cavalry regiments and mounted police forces still dominate tent pegging, the sport is increasingly embraced by civilian riders. The Egyptian team participated in the Tent Pegging World Games in 2001 in India where they came in third place. Consequently, the Egyptian Equestrian Federation decided to hold tent pegging national events every two weeks throughout the season.





JACQUES TOFFI

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A glowing white uniform is not worn by this Sea Captain, but a beige vest with plenty of big pockets. His salt and pepper hair is always covered up with a French hat, and his lovely smile with a thick beard. Holding a cigar in one hand, and on the other a camera, he would put his camera down to take his hat off and greet you. He is not just a gentleman; he is a perfectionist with lens. He is a European, a Syrian and an Arab who loves the history of Arab countries which constantly influence him throughout his job.

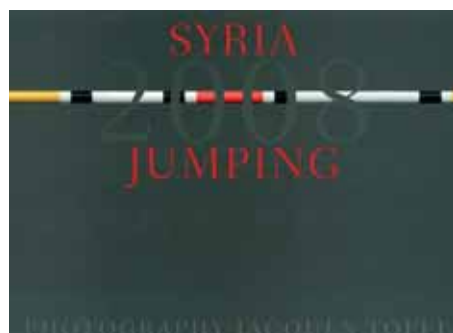
Jacques Toffi was born in Lattakia, Syria to Greek parents in 1952. He started off with entering a German school in Beirut, Lebanon and graduated with a bachelor's degree to move to Hamburg, Germany in 1970. Eight years later he graduated as a Sea Captain not knowing he would walk a path that would lead to international photography.

His elder brother Georges was a very good painter who taught Jacques how to paint. With a hand for painting, and another one for photography which started in 1968 in Lattakia, he developed a passion for

horses through his wife Khatharina whom he met in Hamburg. A horse loving wife and two children, Jean and Michele, Jacques put aside the Sea Captain career and took on professional photography in 1984.

Jacques photographs many horse disciplines such as show jumping, dressage, eventing, polo, galloping, and driving. Additionally, he covers many exhibitions in Hamburg, Frankfurt, Monte Carlo, Paris, Dortmund, Amsterdam, and in other cities. His pictures taken during national and international events; the World Equestrian Games, the European Championships and the Olympic Games are published in Germany and in international publications such as magazines, newspapers, books and calendars worldwide.

With a passion for Syria...it being his home country, Jacques published his first 'Syria Jumping' calendar. He always attends Syrian equestrian events as well as other Arab events like the Pan Arab Equestrian Games that took place in Cairo, Egypt in November 2007.



Jacques: "I Hope to improve my work in order to give back my country the best quality, and I hope I can be helpful in developing this sport in our countries. I wish to see more professionalism, especially in organising and promoting our events. A big wish of mine is to ask all horse people to kindly be fair to their horses as they have been the best friends of humans throughout history."



BEHIND THE SCENES



Gen. Samy Negm El Din



Eng. A. Ragab & Eng. H. Hattab



E. Henndrix & Abbouda



Left: Prince Faisal, Abdalah Al Sharbatly and Adnan Baitooni. Top: Carla Katoa

© Jacques Torff



Local Supporters



Alice Debany and the UAE team



Saeed Aboura



Gen. Tarek Khalifa



Olympic Bronze medallist Khaled El Eid



Egyptian rider Ahmed Hussein



Dr. M. Elsherbini addressing Carla



Moussa, Sakakkini, El Sobky, Amer, Hamdy and Mamdoh



HRH Prince Abdullah



Dr. Omar, Dr. Hashem with Fahd El Eid



Rob Jansen & Pia



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Nuxol & Lansink

Khaled Assem & Ina El Kobbia



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Nada (HT) interviewing HRH Prince Faisal



Al Duhami & mates browsing through Horse Times



© Jacques Toffi

Ibrahim Besharat & N. Nuxol



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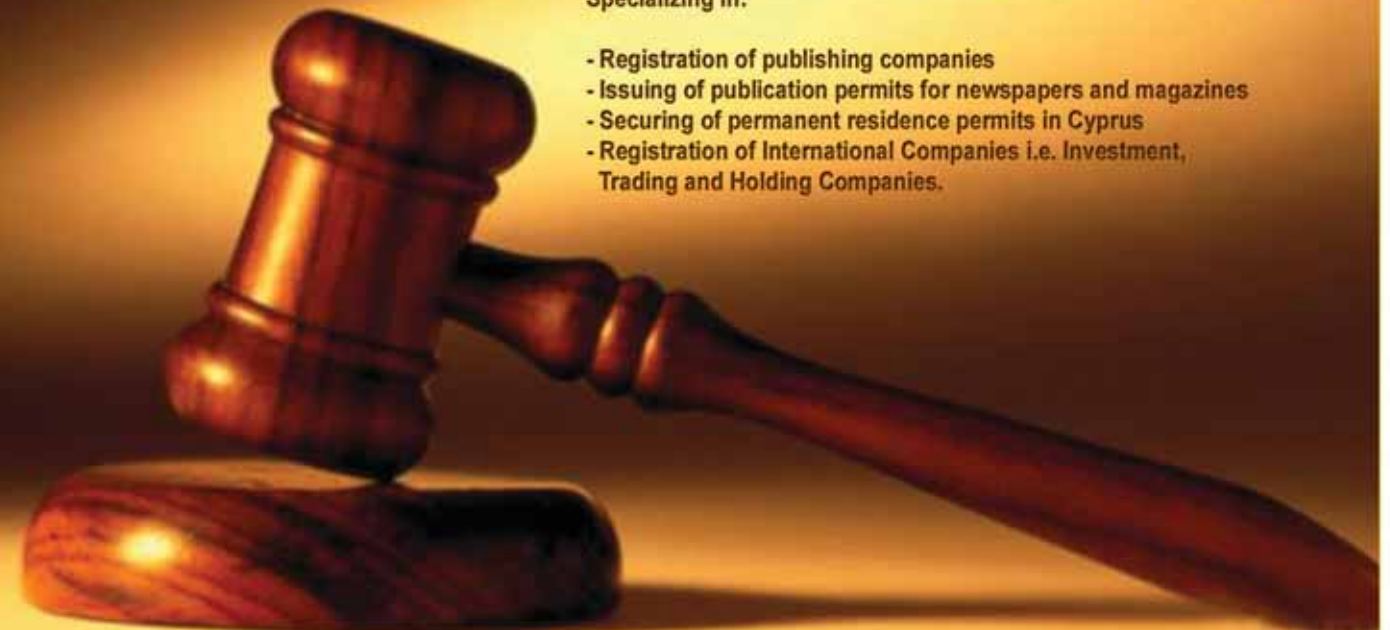
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