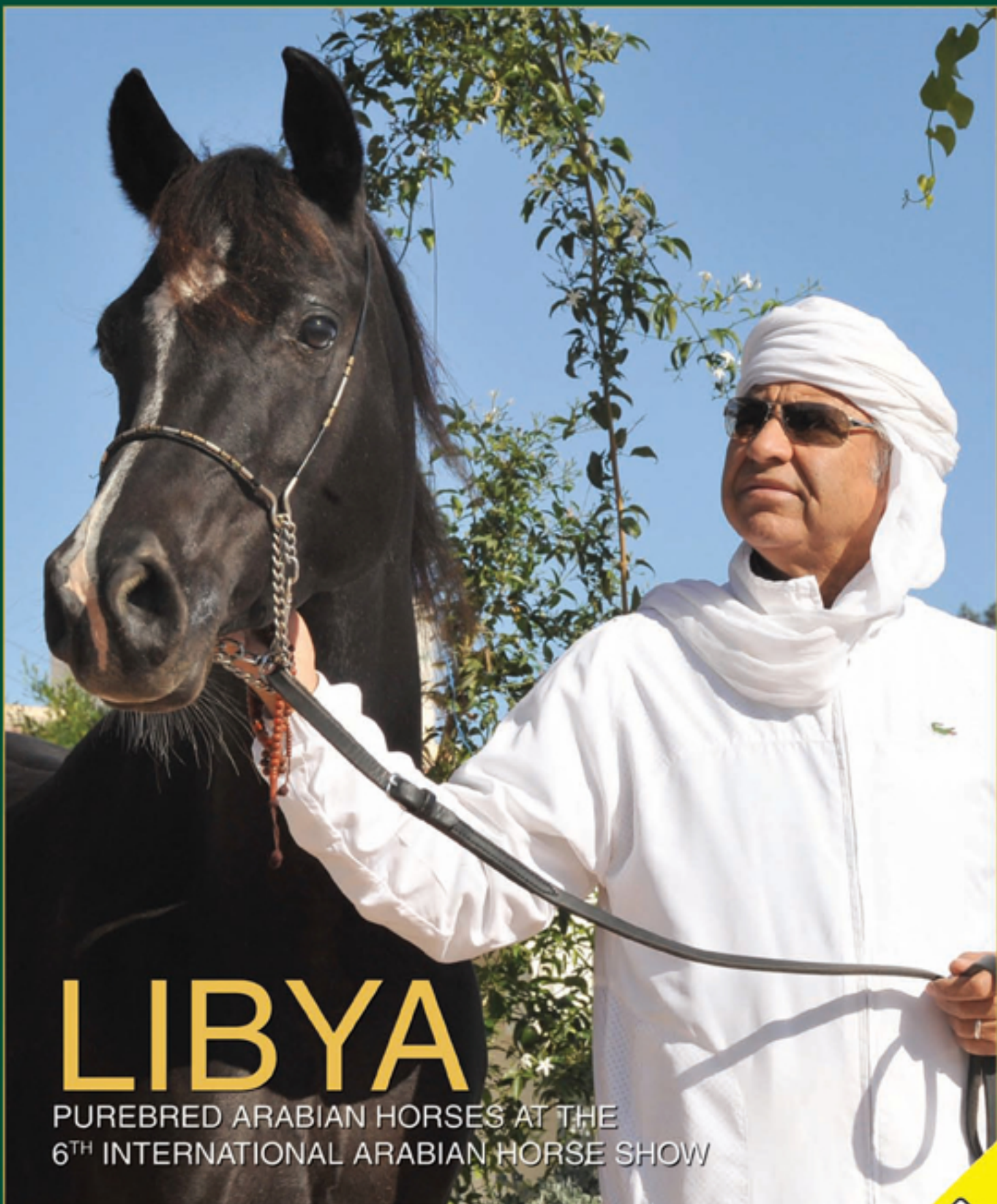


# HORSE TIMES



no. 29  
Summer '09

EGYPT'S OFFICIAL EQUESTRIAN MAGAZINE



## LIBYA

PUREBRED ARABIAN HORSES AT THE  
6<sup>TH</sup> INTERNATIONAL ARABIAN HORSE SHOW

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# VIEW POINT

## FROM THE CHAIRMAN



Dear readers,

The true value of our work is a simple and direct reflection of our choices.

Our choice of subjects and articles in Horse Times is what defines our character. Starting this issue we have taken upon ourselves to present in each upcoming issue a profile about a disabled rider from around the world and bring forth to you how they feel and how "the horse" has influenced them in the course of life.

Libya and the long cherished brotherhood in the love and breeding of Arabian horses holds another successful international event; Horse Times had the chance to interview the President of the Libyan Arabian Horse Breeder's Society Major General Al Khuwailidi Al Humaidi who gives us a background on the Arabian horse in Libya.

Philipp Selva, a lavish Italian celebrity in the furniture design and production field who is also a lavish Arabian horse breeder, talks about his passion for Arabian horses.

Sameh Hattab, a very special individual and a very special rider lets us in on some of his difficult moments in his riding career, along with a profile on Nael Nassar, a young rider with big talent.

A glimpse of history with Hickstead and the late Douglas Bunn with his dreams of what has become a legend.

Horsemanship and how to become a trainer with Dr. Mohamed Elsherbini along with a valuable article about bits through our collaboration with Horse & Hound magazine.

Read on and enjoy...

Sincerely,  
**Khaled Assem**  
Chairman

---

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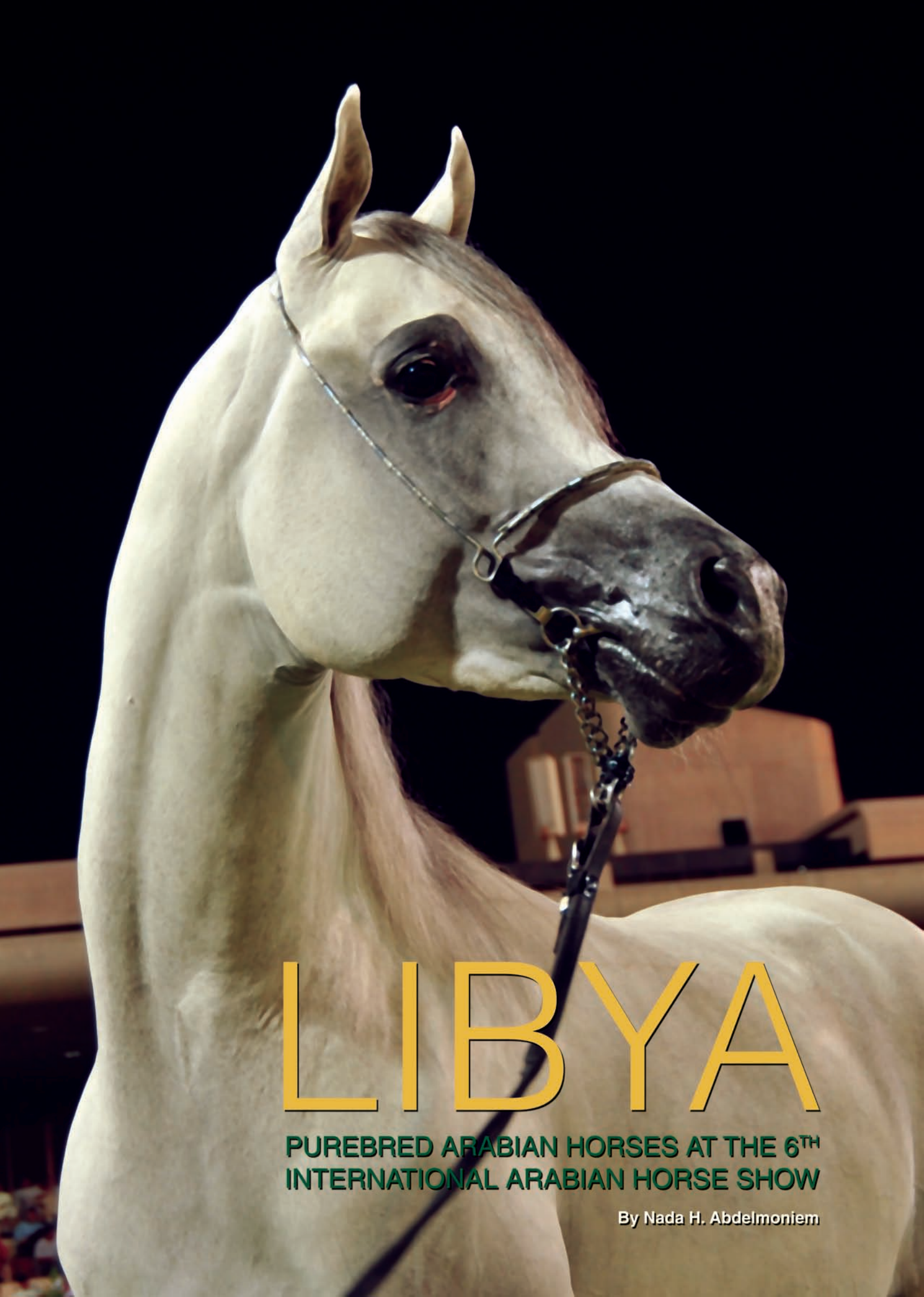
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# LIBYA

PUREBRED ARABIAN HORSES AT THE 6<sup>TH</sup>  
INTERNATIONAL ARABIAN HORSE SHOW

By Nada H. Abdelmoniem



ON AUGUST 14<sup>th</sup> 2009 BREEDERS FROM AROUND THE WORLD WERE IN LIBYA TO TAKE PART IN THE 6TH INTERNATIONAL ARABIAN HORSE SHOW. HOSTED AT THE CORINTHIA HOTEL, BREEDERS AND OWNERS OF PUREBRED ARABIAN HORSE STUDS FROM LIBYA, EGYPT, MOROCCO, GERMANY, FRANCE AND BELGIUM COMPETED IN THE FESTIVAL, WHICH WAS SPONSORED BY THE LIBYAN ARABIAN HORSE BREEDERS SOCIETY AND ORGANISED BY ENG. ANWAR EL MEZOUGHJI DIRECTOR OF WAHA EXPO FOR FAIR AND CONFERENCE ORGANISATION.

More than 24 studs participated in the international event, including 10 from Libya. Judges from Germany, Poland, Morocco, Spain and France assessed the horses according to their various features, awarding points to the horses with the most beautiful head & neck, body & top line, legs, and movement.

The summer season in Libya is famous for horse racing and so naturally horses are part of their heritage and culture. Libyan horses are one of the few natural breeds of the world that were descendants of horses from central Asia. Historically, Libya's interest in horses stems from years going back to 462 BC and Arcesilaus of Cyrene, (of Greek and Libyan origin), the last King to serve under Persian rule; Arcesilaus actually bred horses which were the native horses of Libya. Libyan horses are mentioned by the Greek historians Herodotus and Xenophon in their writings and various cultures throughout history have breed and used the Libyan horse.

The Libyan Arabian Horse Breeders Society was established in Libya to give help and support to all Arabian horse breeders and to protect purebred Arabian horses. The two-day festival in Tripoli, which was held at the School of Equestrian Arts, ended on Saturday August 15<sup>th</sup>.

## MAJOR GENERAL AL KHUWAYLIDI AL HUMAIDI

*President of the Libyan Arabian Horse Breeders Society:*

**How do you feel about the Arabian horse and what role do you think it plays in the Arab world?**

The Arabian horse is a fascinating creature blessed with beauty and stamina, a creature that has remained unchanged and pure with originality. The Arabian horse is a firmly established



▲ Major General Al Khuwaylidi Al Humaidi

unmixed breed; a breed that is actually crossbred into other lines. We as Arabs have lost our true essence and culture through indulging in artificial riches of life and have moved away from what is part of our true heritage; our pure Arabian horse that exemplifies the true core of Arab knights and cultural values that derive from our Arabian desert.

**When did your passion for Arabian horses start?**

I think we as Arabs are naturally inclined to have a passion for horses and horse riding. As for Arabian horses in specific, I was brought up hearing and learning plenty about them from my father and grandfathers; an interest that is rooted deeply in me. With this rooted legacy, I learned and have passed on my passion to my children. I first started my breeding programme in 1993 by establishing 'Al-Kheir Stables' in Surman, Libya. The base of my programme was a beautiful mare 'Farida', a product of the Royal Hareesa Stud in Bouznika, Morocco.

**Where does the Arabian horse stand in the history and culture of Libya?**

Libya is considered to be one of the oldest civilisations to have housed pure Arabians. It has been archeologically proven that horses have been part of the Libyan culture for years; evidentially shown in ancient drawings in the region of Tadarat Acacus, South of Libya, and in pre-historic rock drawings of horses with Arabian horse features carved by Phoenicians 500 years B.C. And so naturally, a love for this marvellous creature is spread throughout the county.

**Can you please give us an idea about how and when the Libyan Arabian Horse Breeders Society started and what was the aim behind establishing such a society?**

The Libyan Arabian Horse Breeders Society started in 2004 and our aim was, and still is to develop and maintain our local pure Arabian breed

and furthermore raise familiarity to the horse. Moreover, we aim at having this event become more international in the years to come. This event really embodies communication with our history and those with whom we share values and ethics of true horsemanship.

**What can you tell us about the development of the event?**

As I have mentioned above, we intend on maintaining the purity of the local Arabian breed and improving it and that will be through utilising breeding lines from a high-quality genetic pool. Our aspiring plan is to also use and breed Arabians for shows and for racing provided that our plans are following technically correct routes that will lead us to success and further achievement. And in cooperation with international specialised corporations, we also plan on utilising modern breeding techniques such as artificial insemination. We also hope that through hosting several events on annual basis, we will have the ability to broaden the local base as well as attract as many viewers, researchers, and professional breeders.

**International breeders with pure Arabians from around the world – breeders with a lot of mileage - are competing strongly with your local pure breeds; what are the future plans in regards to developing Libyan breeders as to have them strongly compete at individual levels?**

With the increase of Arabian horse breeders, both locally and internationally, the Society has put forward a plan to produce pure Arabians from pure lines. That will certainly assist or make it easier for Libyan breeders to compete at all levels – in addition be able to also produce a good group of horse handlers and trainers that qualify to play a part in national and international events. We also plan on guiding and assisting local breeders in acquiring the knowledge on transporting their horses locally and internationally. With the cooperation of the West, we aspire to appoint good Vets that will help our breeders with the awareness process. With all this put together, Libyan breeders will soon be very much ready for development.



▲ *Khaled Al Humaidi, Vice President of the Libyan Arabian Horse Breeder's Society*

▼ *Major General Al Khuwaylidi Al Humaidi with General Abu Bakr Younis*



**During the show we witnessed a variety of breeds from the Polish Arabians to the Russian and Egyptian Arabians, do you as a breeder and the President of the Society prefer a specific line? For example, a lot of breeders are very avid about the Egyptian line?**

Through 100 years of development, the Egyptian Arabian line is sought to be one of the oldest and purest of lines, however as a breeder and as the President of the Society, I would prefer to breed all lines in order to ensure an excellent yet various produce. Putting into consideration that we breed methodologically and intelligently as to ensure we have kept the purity of each line distinctive from the other.

**Would you like to add anything else to our readers?**

Yes, firstly thank you very much for keeping a strong interest in presenting a beautiful product such as Horse Times for this industry and our region. Secondly, Arabian horses in Libya are not thought of as a source of entertainment, but they represent what is part of our culture and ethics as well as our sense of belonging to this land. Breeding Arabian horses is not just exclusive to the niche, but to whoever is part of the Libyan culture and to whoever shares a love for this creature.

---

**IDRIS HASSAN**  
*PSI Middle East Representative, Germany:*

---





**On the show:** "The quality of horses were impressive and the show was very nice as well. Organisation was very good! The young group hired to organise matters for us were very diligent. The show itself was also very well organised and I hope it develops further as to have presence that is more international."

**Potential for Arabians in Libya:** "The Libyan organisers of the show might need to get support from international experts on basic guidelines on promoting the show further. With more exposure, the show will certainly demonstrate more of a bright future."

**DR. MOHAMED MACHMOUM**  
*Breeder & International Judge,*  
*Morocco:*

**On the show:** "The show was a spectacular leap of development for the Libyan Arabian Horse Breeders Society in regards to organisation, judging and horse quality. Moreover, this year's event witnessed good international participation from Europe, Morocco, Egypt and other countries. On several classes we witnessed the mixture of the Libyan Arabian horse inbred with pure Arabians from Europe and so the horse quality was excellent."

**On judging:** "The selected international judges were picked very well and they did a good job. International regulations and conditions were met and respected therefore their credibility as judges proved to be a success. On the same note, Libyan breeders still require mileage and experience on being familiar with the knowledge of presenting a beautiful Arabian horse, as such there were some missing aspects such as properly preparing the breeders and horse handlers. More plans should be undertaken in order to provide them with the basics of promoting a Class (A) beauty show."

Having said so, in order to develop the quality of the show and in order to have more international participation, Libyan breeders must participate at international events, preparing horse handlers accurately through providing them with training seminars; afterwards comes exposure, experience, and the know-how which will help them largely develop."



▲ Eng. Anwar El Mezoughi Director of WAHA Expo

▼ Sami Jasim Al Buainain, QREC General Manager, Qatar



▼ Major General Al Khuwaylidi Al Humaidi greeting Ahmed Hamza, Director of Al Zahraa (EAO)



*On their breeding programmes, preferred lines and the gene pools of their current Arabians:* “We cannot direct Libyan breeders to breed a certain line or inbreed certain lines, however I think each breeder should individually start his programme based on a solid plan that will allow him to follow the breeding path he desires. The programme should not just be there for the sake of breeding, it should be directed correctly. What is promising is that aspiring Libyan breeders have the desire to learn more and do more with their Arabians and breeding programmes.”

*On their progress rate to reach international levels:* “Nowadays science has certainly made the distance shorter for breeders to have the mileage in breeding programmes. Artificial insemination for horses for example would cut down on the growth rate of quality-produced horses. On the other hand, the current international presence at their shows may unquestionably broaden their horizons. The basics would be to construct a solid

breeding programme, work hard on that, and eventually look forward for results.”

---

**JOHN OOSTERVINK**  
Breeder, Belgium:

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*On the organisation of the show:* “This is the 5<sup>th</sup> time to attend this show and we were happily surprised to see again a big improvement this year compared with previous ones. I would like to mention a few points which have improved a lot: the organising staff acted much more professionally towards the invited guests and visitors, the show itself was much better organised, the number and the quality of horses have improved a lot, the horse handlers were much better prepared and the judges were well-selected and were of international standard.”

*On the development of the show:* “The number of horses are increasing year by year however the number of breeders/contenders should also increase accordingly. Additionally, Libyan horse

breeders have to be very critical in selecting the correct stallions to match their mares and not just breed! Also, they should consult professional individuals to assist them and to advise them on buying new horses. In this industry there are a lot of breeders that are too commercial simply trying to sell; taking less into consideration about quality.”

---

**JAMAL BOUHARRI**  
Breeder, Morocco:

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“This event is very important for our region and it brings all the breeders together at the national level first but also at the international level. We come from Morocco with 9 horses and it is the first time for us to compete here. We had a good opportunity to meet and network with other breeders which would contribute to further good relations in the future. In all, I would say that it is an achievement for Libyans to have organised such an impressive event; well done.” **HT**





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# PHILIPP SELVA

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## MASTER OF FURNITURE LOVER OF ARABIAN HORSES

By Sandra Adams

PHILIPP SELVA, A BUSINESSMAN WITH A PASSION FOR FASHION DESIGN AND AN AVID LOVE FOR THE BEAUTIFUL ARABIAN HORSE. TO HIM AND HIS FAMILY, THE ARABIAN HORSE IS THE ESSENCE OF BEAUTY, HISTORY AND IS A CONNECTION BETWEEN SO MANY ARABIAN HORSE LOVERS THROUGHOUT THE WORLD; IT BRINGS PEOPLE TOGETHER TO SHARE THE SAME PASSION. IN HIS WORDS, "THE ARABIAN HORSE HAS CHANGED MY LIFE AND HAS OPENED A LOT OF DOORS FOR ME AND MY FAMILY."

As President and Chief Executive Officer of Selva Company, Philipp Selva is fast becoming one of the most recognised figures in Europe when it comes to furniture. Merely a baby when his father's dream of making unmistakably original and fabulously beautiful examples of Italian art through furnishings came to fruition, he worked in the family business as he grew. He studied business management at Innsbruck and gained further practical experience at Hukla, Germany's largest manufacturer of upholstered furniture, followed by a short tenure at one of the country's largest furniture houses, eventually assuming leadership of Selva in 1998.









▲ *Mobarak*

Peppi Selva, a Bolzano furniture maker and a leisure time horse breeder, began breeding two Haflinger mares. He then discovered his love for Arabian thoroughbreds and educated himself to become a specialist in understanding the complicated pedigrees and heredity lines of purebred Arabian horses. Selva purchased stallions and mares throughout all of Europe from famous and successful breeding families and founded the 'Gaughof' Arabian stud farm in Wangen/Ritten in the Tyrolean Alps, one of the first breeding operations in Italy where thoroughbred Arabians were bred in the grand style. Steeply climbing paths, blossoming meadows, a man-made lake in the vicinity, abundant sunshine, and in winter an orderly frost – the bracing climate of the mountains is apparently precisely the right one for these horses of the desert who are accustomed to challenging conditions.

Peppi Selva was among the founding members of ANICA (the Italian National Association of Thoroughbred Arabian Horses), a group which brought thoroughbred Arabian horses raised in Italy to a level of international recognition. Numerous national and international competitions were won; one of his mares, 'Rasheda', was selected three times as the most beautiful mare of

Peppi Selva, who was also an A-Level judge of the international breeding association WAHO (World Arabian Horse Organisation), passed away on June 14, 2002. Today, it is his son Philipp with his wife Andrea who carry on his legacy with a breeding programme based upon pure Egyptian bloodlines. They have already been able to record their first successes in shows both in Italy and abroad. The foundation mares are 'Gameelah', imported from Texas and a very noble daughter of 'Ruminaja Ali', and 'TH Bint Rissala', a very typical daughter of 'Ansata Hejazi', in addition to 'Maydana-Madheen', the Junior Champion of the International Egyptian Event 2002 in Italy, the wonderfully beautiful 'Bahrija Bint Bukra', and the extraordinary elegant 'Nahma Bint Ibn Halim Shah'.

The great pride of Gaughof is the 1999 Egyptian Supreme National Champion and Egyptian International Champion 'Mobarak' (Adl x Ghazalet Albadeia), one of the few purebred Arabians to leave the land of its origin, Egypt, in order to conquer Europe. His son 'Bashir al Gaug' out of Bahrija Bint 'Bukra' has won the title of Champion Stallion Reserve 2006 at the Egyptian Event Europe at only 1 year of age. In 2008, he was

crowned as Junior Champion Stallion at the Egyptian Event.

**When and how did your passion develop for the Arabian horse?**

Horses have been with me since I was 4 years old. My father started with a Haflinger mare, a local horse breed, typical for our mountain area here in the Southern Alps. In 1978 my father visited the Equitana Equestrian show in Essen, Germany and there he fell in love with the Arabian horse. In the same year, he bought two mares, both as foals; this is how our story as Arabian horse breeders began. In 1981 we imported our stallion 'PAKS 7' from Tersk, Russia and he became one of the most successful stallions in Italy, producing almost 300 offspring. My father was breeding Russian-Polish lines and I shifted to Egyptian bloodlines nearly 10 years ago.

**Why did you shift to breeding the Egyptian Arabian?**

Well, it is quite simple...it is the purest and oldest Arabian bloodline...more or less all other bloodlines are descending from Egyptian horses. As breeders of this specific line, we think is the finest and most beautiful Arabian horse today. Moreover, the Egyptian horse is not too

big, it's ideal for our small mountain paths, very resistant and above all very sensible. All Egyptian Arabians have a very strong character...they are not for everybody!! Only for true horsemen.

**What can you tell us about your horses and your Gaughof Stud?**

We currently have 15 horses at our farm the Gaughof Stud. In 2004 we imported from Cairo 'Mobarak Iknatoon' multi-Champion in Egypt, son from the famous Al Zahraa head sire 'Adl' with his motherside tracing back to Albadeia Stud owned by Dr. Nasr Marei, 'Gazalet Albadeia'. We also have wonderful mares with the finest pedigrees; daughters from 'Ruminaja Ali', 'Ansata Hejazi', and 'Mishal HP'



▲ *Maydana-Madheen*

▼ *Gaughof Farm*



(Ansata Sinan son). Please visit our website [www.gaughofaraber.com](http://www.gaughofaraber.com) where you can see pictures of all our horses.

**Are you involved in breeding as a lover for the breed only, or as a businessman?**

The world of furniture and interiors is my business, horses are my passion. We have sold many horses in our 30 years breeding history; this is a positive aspect but not the aim.

**Do you participate in any national or international Arabian horse events?**

Yes, we do actually. The farm has won many shows. The most recent success is a fantastic 4-year-old stallion, son of 'Mobarak' who has won several titles in Europe, one of which is Champion Stallion at last year's Egyptian Event in Italy.

**Have you ever visited Egypt and have you ever attended Al Zahraa Egyptian Agricultural Organisation annual horse show & championships?**

Yes, we have been to Cairo a few times, for business and of course to see horses. We have also been to Al Zahraa to visit the stud but not for the championships. As mentioned, the lovers of Arabian horses will know 'Mobarak' who has won there several times. **HT**



▲ Karim El Gaug

▼ Bashir El Gaug





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PARALYMPIC RIDER  
.. ANN-CATHRIN  
**LÜBBE**

ANN CATHRIN, BORN 1971, COMES FROM OTTESTAD, CLOSE TO HAMAR - NORWAY. SHE MOVED TO DENMARK IN 2000 BUT HAS STILL BEEN PART OF THE NATIONAL TEAM OF NORWAY SINCE 1997 AND ON THE DRESSAGE SENIOR TEAM SINCE 2009

By Lubna Dairanieh



*Ann-Cathrin Lübke & Zanko at Beijing  
2008 Paralympics*

## ANN'S BEST RESULTS:

CDI\*\*\*Drammen GP 2004: 4th in the final.  
CDI\*\*\*Drammen GP 2005: 2nd in the final.  
CDI\*\*\*Drammen GP 2006: 2nd in the final.  
CDI\*\*\*Drammen GP 2007: 3rd in the final.  
CDI\*\*\* Artic Games 2006: 2nd in the final.  
NM dressage 2003: 6th.  
NM dressage 2006: 6th.  
NM dressage 2007: Bronze.  
NM dressage FH 2008: Gold.  
Paralympics 2000: Individual Silver, Team Bronze.  
Nordic 2001 FH: Individual Gold.  
EC Portugal 2002 FH: Individual Bronze.  
WC Belgia 2003 FH: 2 Individual Silver, Team Bronze.  
Paralympics Athens 2004 FH: 2 individual gold.  
EM Ungarn 2005 FH: 2 Individual Gold, Team Bronze.  
Nordic 2006 FH: Individual Bronze, Team Gold.  
Mannheim international event 2004-2007 8 individual victories.  
Sundeved March 2007 L event: 3rd in Bundegaard Byg Cup Int 1 kür 70,2%.  
WC England 2007 FH: 2 Individual Gold, Team Bronze .  
Paralympics Hong Kong, 2 Individual Silver medals and Team Bronze.  
Nordic Championship 2009: 2 Individual Gold.

### **Please tell us about your background; when did you start riding and how did your love for horses start?**

I started to ride at the age of 6 just to show my sister that I can ride as well as she does! At first, I rode race horses in the forests at home. Afterwards, I found an interest in show jumping and practised that a little before I got my disability. By the age of 19, jumping became demanding and I could only practice dressage. I love to see how I can make a big animal perform and to see how far it can go to trust me.

### **What can you tell us about your disability?**

Just one morning at the age of 11 I woke



**“IT IS THE HAPPINESS OF BEING AROUND HORSES THAT DRIVES ME TO WANT TO SUCCEED. IT IS NEVER THE THOUGHT OF MEDALS THAT DRIVE ME; IT IS THE DAYS BETWEEN WINNING THOSE MEDALS AND PRACTICING FOR SUCCESS AND ACHIEVEMENTS”**

up feeling pain in my left leg and a swollen ankle. After undergoing several tests, I was diagnosed with Juvenile Rheumatoid Arthritis. From age 11 till 19 I was in and out from hospital undergoing several operations. In between I continued with my riding until 1999 when I got a right knee replacement. As a result I am very stiff in both legs and in my shoulders.

### **Can you explain to us how you are a rider for the able-bodied and disabled bodies?**

Due to my disability I tend to spend much time training at the fitness centre which of course keeps my body in good shape. Thankfully being in good shape helps me to achieve the things I want, therefore I am able to ride as an able-bodied rider. I seldom look at my disability as a problem or an issue that would cause me problems. To me it is more like a huge challenge. When I succeed in competitions with able-bodied riders, I get a very different feeling; a fulfilling one.

### **As a disabled rider, how do you familiarise yourself with horses?**

Horse have always had a big place in my heart and in my life and so I sincerely feel that I have established very good communication with them. I do not see myself as a disabled rider; when I am on my fantastic horse, I feel free! It gives me so much pleasure, maybe more than pleasure. Maybe something I cannot really put in words.

### **You have a very long list of achievements, what drives you to success?**

It is the happiness of being around horses that drives me to want to achieve. It is never the medals which drive me; it is the days between winning those medals and practicing for success and achievements. It is the pleasure of being in the stables everyday, the pleasure of brushing my horse and the importance of keeping my horse happy. I think this could be the main reason behind my success. After competing and winning, I tend to look forward for the next competition and never look at the current results. When I am asked, "Ann, do you think you will win?" I always say answer with, "I will ride first, and then will think of results!"

### **You ride as an individual, and as a team member, how do you manage that?**

I think it is good to be in a team. I really enjoy being part of the Dressage Senior Team and the Norwegian National Team for disabled riders. I try to be selective with the most important competitions as to not drain my horse too much. I think I am very good at planning my schedule and time; time is imperative for me! I am very punctual and I manage to do many things per day. I also train other riders and so I travel a lot between Norway and Denmark. In order to do everything I want and everything I like, I have to be very systematic.



▲ Ann-Cathrin riding Zanko

**“TAKE A  
BREATH AND  
FEEL IT IN  
YOUR BODY;  
FEEL THE  
PLEASURE  
YOUR HORSE  
GIVES YOU”**

**What are your future aspirations? What do you wish to achieve after having achieved several Olympic medals?**

As long as I love my sport and keep my horse happy, I will continue to ride and train until I grow very old. My biggest dream is to participate at the Olympics for able-bodied riders, but then I will need a new horse and a sponsor! (Smiling!)

**Besides Ann as a rider, what can you tell us about Ann being a typical everyday person?**

Well, there is not much room in my life besides riding. I am a horse employee and I am also the employer. That's my job; horses. I start early and finish late. I love training at the fitness centre, I love reading a good book, love watching a good film, love to be with my friends, and of course I spend much time with my boyfriend.

**What can you tell us about your family?**

I have 3 brothers and 1 sister; they all live in Norway and I try to visit them often. I also visit my mum when I can. I do not have any children, but I have 2 lovely cats!

**Who has had the greatest impact on you?**

That has to be Zanko my fantastic horse. He never lets me down. He is a friend and a companion for life; he is one in a million and he has given me so much.

**If you have a message to give out to the world, what would that message be?**

Always remember why you are riding. Never forget or discard the happiness and passion you have for the horses. Take a breath and feel it in your body; feel the pleasure your horse gives you. Moreover, most importantly “keep your horse happy”. Think about what your horse does for you.**HT**



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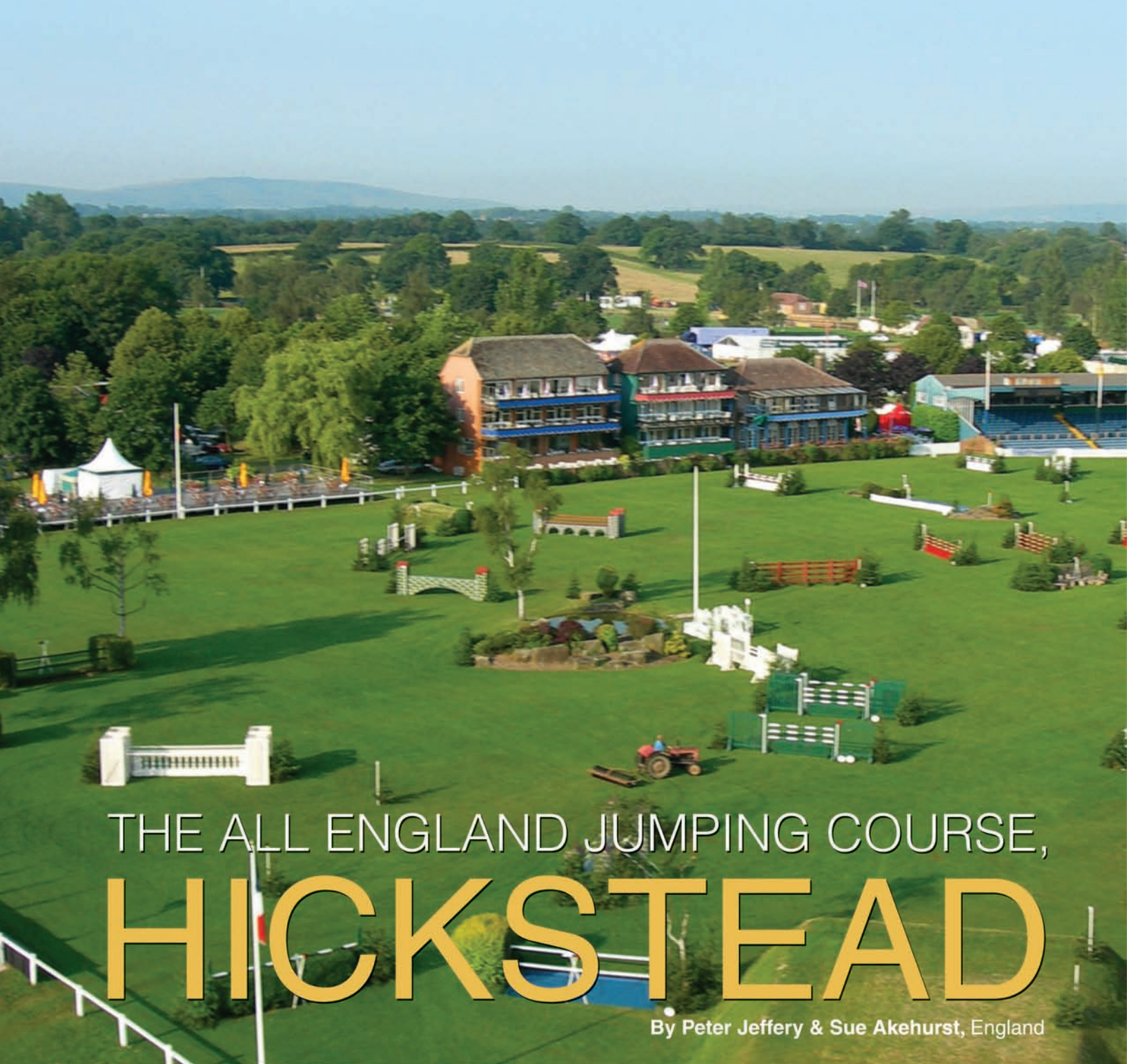
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# THE ALL ENGLAND JUMPING COURSE, HICKSTEAD

By Peter Jeffery & Sue Akehurst, England

DOUGLAS BUNN WAS ONE OF THE FEW PEOPLE WHO COULD HONESTLY SAY  
THEY HAD A DREAM – AND MADE IT COME TRUE!

THE ALL ENGLAND JUMPING COURSE AT HICKSTEAD, SUSSEX, MADE HIS NAME  
KNOWN THROUGHOUT THE EQUESTRIAN WORLD, WHILE THE SHOWGROUND  
ITSELF, CARVED FROM VIRGIN ENGLISH COUNTRYSIDE, BECAME THE  
UNOFFICIAL HOME OF THE SPORT IN GREAT BRITAIN AND SET THE  
INTERNATIONAL STANDARD FOR OUTDOOR EQUESTRIAN SITES. AND WHEN HE  
DIED IN JUNE THIS YEAR, JUST 12 MONTHS SHORT OF HICKSTEAD'S 50TH  
BIRTHDAY, THE TRIBUTES WERE WORLDWIDE.



It is a story that began nearly 80 years ago when a young, wide-eyed Douglas Bunn viewed a flickering piece of black and white film at his local cinema, watching horses negotiate a huge bank in a German arena. He was already riding, supported and encouraged by his father, but that flickering image and that bank found a place in his memory that was to surface many years later.

Although Mr. Bunn senior ensured that his son had ponies to ride, he was instrumental in bringing together Douglas and one of the leading owners of the day, Bill Gardner. That was in 1938, and Douglas had just a year of competition in ponies at the top level before World War II stopped everything.

Fortunately, Mr. Bunn and Mr. Gardner's love of horses and show jumping survived the war, and Douglas's professional life in law and ultimately as a Barrister progressed alongside his role as one of the country's leading show jumpers. It was not unusual for him to go into court with his white riding breeches beneath striped trousers and gown and later to leave his wig behind and go off to compete at a show or to his home in Sussex to exercise horses until it was dark.

Show jumping in Britain at the time was very much in its infancy. There was very little in the way of course design or even many variations in the jumps themselves, which were mostly uprights, sometimes still with flimsy lathes on the top pole that fell and incurred penalties almost with the movement of air as a horse passed over.

Douglas had made the national team and that meant jumping in Europe, where there was a lot more sophistication in course and jump design but even alongside great names such as Pat Smythe, Ted Edgar and Ted Williams they made little impression on the dominant European riders.

His commercial interests in the blossoming leisure industry had already forced Douglas to give up his life at the Bar and he knew that something had to be done to "educate" British horses and riders in the techniques of jumping big, solid fences.

There had to be a new, permanent show ground and it had to be in Sussex so that Douglas could run it! His long search ended when he found Hickstead Place, which was ideally situated between London and Brighton, and close to the then still-developing Gatwick airport. Importantly, it also had a river running through the grounds allowing irrigation of the arenas.

Having found the site he went about building it, doing a great deal of the work himself, aided by local forestry worker Ernie Fish. At the back of his mind the whole time was that piece of newsreel film. And while designing and building the fences - one post and rail obstacle is based on a roadside fence he saw while driving in Surrey - it nagged at him.

He made what he described as his first and only mistake when he opened the ground in May 1960, on the same day as Princess Margaret's marriage to Anthony Armstrong-Jones and with the second day clashing with the soccer cup final at Wembley. So there were counter attractions.

He also faced another problem - when entries closed a fortnight before the opening, there was only one! But defeat is not in his personal agenda, and hours on the telephone, cajoling, bullying and persuading riders resulted in a reasonable field.

▼ Longines King George V Gold Cup Trophy for the International Grand Prix



▼ Douglas Bunn at home





▲ Geoff Billington pushing off half way down the Derby Bank; the correct way to tackle this obstacle

By the end of that year, The All England Jumping Course – what other name was he likely to call it – was established and if not a roaring success, it was accepted.

Douglas, however, wanted a Derby and he wanted a Derby Bank and he wanted a class that was “the supreme test of horse and rider.” And if Douglas wanted it, Douglas would have it.

To test his memory, he went to Hamburg to measure their bank. To read all he said about it over the years, how he measured it in a snow storm and forgot there was six inches of snow, so his bank was bigger than any other, is history. But the twinkle in his eye when he told the story made you wonder. Did he really forget the depth of snow!

The British Jumping Derby – now the DFS Derby – launched in 1961, and that and The Bank have been the Hickstead bedrock on which his reputation and this show ground were formed.

None of it has been easy. For the last 49 years of his life – he was 81 when

he died - it was a constant drain on his finances. While other sports received official help in one form or another, Douglas soldiered on more or less alone, although he did over the years have superb sponsors, many of whom became personal friends.

And television; although the new medium had discovered show jumping, it was Douglas who really developed it hand in hand with the BBC. He realised then that it was taking the sport into thousands of homes, but a year before he died and watching from the balcony of his personal box, he admitted that he had never dreamed it would one day put his showground in front of a worldwide audience of millions.

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*There are two major shows each season. The four-day British Jumping Derby Meeting features the world-famous Derby class, which annually attracts a television audience of around one million. The five-day Royal International Horse Show, sponsored by Longines and rated five star, includes the 10-nation*

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*Meydan FEI Nations Cup of Great Britain and the Longines King George V Gold Cup, an international Grand Prix which carries the richest prize fund in the UK of £162,500 with £50,000 to the winner. The winner also gets a gold trophy worth in excess of £250,000.*

*The British Jumping Derby, currently sponsored by furniture giant DFS, is world famous. Although the winner goes home with the Boomerang Trophy and a £40,000 share of the £120,000 prize fund, the real achievement is winning! The 1,195m course features 16 of the most demanding obstacles in the world and since the competition began in 1961, out of more than 1,700 rounds only 49 have been faultless, the last, this year from William Funnell was the first since 2004. The crowd's favourite obstacle is always the 10ft 6ins Derby Bank, but the one the riders respect most is the three elements of the Devil's Dyke, all with light rustic poles, the second element with a water ditch beneath and the third taken from rising ground. British riders have won 29 times, Ireland 13, Germany 4 and Brazil 3.*

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# HENRY DALLAL

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## PHOTOGRAPHER



▲ *Mane in the Hay*

Passionate about travel and adventure around the world, photographer Henry Dallal has been armed with a camera since the age of nine when his father gave him a Box Brownie. Besides mountains and landscapes, the world of horses has captured his imagination. 'Horse Warriors': India's 61<sup>st</sup> Cavalry is Henry's second self-published book and was awarded with a bronze medal for best coffee table book in 2009 in the USA. It follows 'Pageantry and Performance, The Household Cavalry

In a Celebration of Pictures', which also received many accolades. He has contributed to several other books including 'Horses', 'Horse Gunners', 'Flowers In The Park', 'Endurance' commissioned by HM Sheikh Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, King of Bahrain, and 'Magic of Monaco' commissioned by HSH Prince Albert II. Henry is currently working on books on 'The King's Troop', 'Royal Horse Artillery', 'The Lord Mayor's Show' and on 'The Royal Cavalry' for HM Sultan Qaboos of Oman.

Henry has been honoured with commissions to photograph Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and HH Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum and HRH Princess Haya bint Al Hussein of Dubai. His work has been exhibited in Blenheim Palace; Kensington Palace; Naples Museum of Art, Florida; Royal Geographical Society; Smithsonian Institution; and Windsor Castle. The International Museum of the Horse in Lexington, Kentucky is staging a major exhibition of his photography in 2009. **HT**

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# PERISCOPE ON NAEL NASSAR

Country: Egypt

Date of Birth: January 21<sup>st</sup> 1991

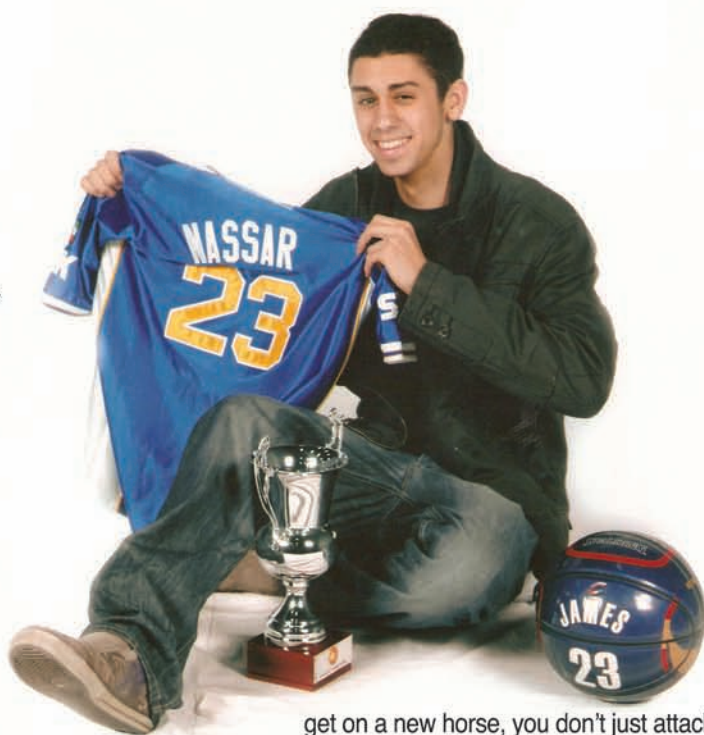
By Nada H. Abdelmoniem





*First place winner of Al Wafaa show jumping event CAT A competitions, Syria 2009*

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**"THEY SAY NOBODY'S  
PERFECT BUT I LIKE TO THINK  
THAT THEY ARE. WITHOUT  
THEM, I AM NO ONE. THEY ARE  
WITHOUT A DOUBT THE  
SOURCE OF MY SUCCESS"**

#### **Trainers:**

In Kuwait Linda and I are our own trainers, and my parents are our managers. Sometimes when I travel, one of my German coaches comes to train me at international shows. If not, when I need advice, I seek it from Linda and other riders or coaches. Diaa Beshir and Samir Abdelfattah have been a great help the past few years; I owe a great deal of my success to them. In the summer I train with Markus Beerbaum, Jorg Naeve or Lars Meyer Zu Bexten, depending on their availability. I have been seeing Markus in the summers since I was quite young so I've known him the longest. Jorg coached me when I lived in Germany when I was 12. Lars only began training me last year. However, he is usually the one who comes to the Middle East, although Jorg has come a couple of times.

#### **Achievements & horses:**

Ughh I hate answering this question Nada! Well, most recently and importantly, I won the Mini Grand Prix at CSI\*\*\* Syria and Bahrain 2009. My horses? "I'm lovin' them like McDonalds". Many people call my horses bicycles, but I think having smallhorses just makes it more fun and challenging. Getting through a 1.45m course with a horse almost small enough

#### ▼ *Linda Algeborg*



#### **Nael Nassar:**

An 18-year-old young man with plenty of potential; certainly, charming and very eloquent along with being a very charismatic rider that we will surely hear a lot about in the future.

#### **Nael's Education:**

School has always been important to me. Although I've missed a lot of days for riding shows, I force myself to stay on top of my school work. I just graduated from the American School of Kuwait and now I'm off to Stanford University in California; can't wait!

#### **The beginning of a career:**

I first sat on a horse when I was 5. Actually, I think I was forced on a horse when I was 5! No toddler in his rightful mind would choose to sit on those giant school horses. I didn't start show jumping until I was around 7 I think. My parents always wanted me to try new things and so riding was one of them, along with piano lessons, tennis, baseball and a bunch of other random activities. They signed me up at a riding school here in Kuwait where my first coach was Noaf Al Essa, and it just started from there. It began as a once or twice a week thing where I would just sit on a horse and be leaded round and round the arena until I got bored or dizzy. And then, like a good T.V show, it grew onto me more and more, until I got my first horse when I was around 11.

#### **Nael familiarising himself with a new horse:**

Hahaha that's a tough one It's like sitting for the SAT exam all over again! I'd say it always starts with the flatwork. When you

get on a new horse, you don't just attack the fences right away. You begin with feeling the canter under you, so that you have a slight idea of what you will be dealing with when fences come into play. Some horses are very handy and comfortable in the stride, others are elephants. Some have the blood of a thoroughbred; others are as cold as an ox. If you're able to get a good feeling of the horse as a whole and have roughly good control on the flat, your job already becomes that much easier. When jumping, while you continue to familiarise yourself with the horse's temperament, you start to concentrate on the feeling of the jump itself. You want to feel the horse's mouth, acceptance of pressure from the leg, tidiness, scope, light - footedness, concentration, and joy. The most successful horses are those who you feel enjoy jumping. Most importantly however, a good rider must be able to point out the horse's flaws and habits. A good rider can adapt to them on the spot, and fix them as much as possible later at home.

#### **Training:**

I ride practically every day. The days when I'm busy with schoolwork, sports or events, Linda works the horses or takes them out. My groom Linda has been a life-saver. To be honest, she's the best any rider could ask for. I am so grateful to have her. I now have 5 mares and I never have time to ride them all, especially during the school year. So I ride 3 everyday, and she rides the other 2. I jump the horses that need it once a week. The ones I felt really comfortable with throughout the previous week just go straight to the show. In Kuwait, the competitions are usually just one day; I compete with all 5 mares.

to be deemed a pony is very rewarding. 'Tulipan', 'Amazon' and 'Leandra' were all bought as ignorant, one-meter-jumping 5 year olds. They are now 9. It's a great feeling to be able to call your mares entirely your own. 'Ophelia' has been with our family for 8 years now. She's currently 13. I give all the credit to my brother Sharaf for bringing her up. And 'Poly' is our recent 10 year old addition. I am very thankful.

#### **Future aspirations:**

It would be a dream to be able to ride the Olympics one day. My first goal was 2012 in London but that might be too unrealistic considering the fact that I'm off to university soon. But yes, any Olympics would be amazing...I'm definitely going to need an upgrade from the rides I have now.

#### **Family support:**

I owe everything to my parents. I wouldn't even be in this sport if it weren't for them and I wouldn't even be near as successful as I am now. They have always been there for me and have always supported me in every aspect possible. They say nobody's perfect but I like to think that they are. Without them, I am no one. They are without a doubt the source of my success.

#### **Everyday Nael:**

I've been really lucky with the people I've met throughout my childhood. When I lived in Germany my friends were great and we still keep in touch after 4 years. Right now my friends here are irreplaceable. Some from Pakistan, Palestine, the U.S., Egypt, Lebanon, Saudi, Kuwait, Panama, India, Columbia, Italy, Germany and many more...we really have the whole bunch! Some have come to the stables to watch me compete and they even attempted riding my horses. I play volleyball and basketball in school, which are the reasons as to why I'm absent at some international competitions. I'm a huge basketball fan. It goes so far that I would pick playing basketball over riding a horse! I love them sports, which is the reason I love those 2 so much. My favourite athlete is Lebron James, but I'm sure only a handful of people in the riding world know who that is. Forget it; nobody in the riding world knows who that is! I love comedy; naturally, you can catch me watching "Two & a Half Men" at 3 a.m. For fun I just hang out with friends – from going to parties to catching a movie to just chilling at home. Besides that, I watch T.V, play video games, play sports...I'm really just a regular kid at the end of the day! **HT**





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# SAMEH HATTAB

DOING THE RIGHT THING & LIVING WITH IT

By Khaled Assem







▲ Seif Al Sham, Syria 2008

**SAMEH HATTAB IS ONE OF THE VERY SELECTED GENTLEMAN IN THE EQUESTRIAN FIELD THAT ONE COULD CALL "A TRUE HORSEMAN" WITH ALL THE NOBILITY, HONOUR, AND CHIVALRY UNDERSIDE THIS TITLE. MOREOVER, HE IS A GREAT JOCKEY WITH PLENTY OF MILEAGE UNDERNEATH HIS WINGS.**

For the 2009 Mediterranean Equestrian Games, Sameh was selected to be one of the 4 team members representing Egypt except was not chosen to compete. The fact is, I wanted to unravel Sameh's true emotions on being very prepared and brisk for the games versus not being chosen to compete as I myself went through a similar experience. Whether that decision was technically justifiable, politically correct or even horse dependant as in Karim Habashi's case, (Karim's horse was lame), the truth is, we need to learn from our decisions. Regretfully for Sameh, he paid a price that he will always remember.

Sameh is a medical doctor and for some time he was out of the sport but managed

to compete on and off in several Arab League championships. He recently bought a new horse and was selected to be part of the Egyptian delegation. He says, "Butterscotch' is a very good horse and when I was training for the games, I was very satisfied with his performance". One would imagine that it could be difficult to coordinate between being a full time doctor, and continuing practicing a passion. "It's very difficult for me to ride or train everyday. I am a full time doctor and of course, that is very consuming. Sometimes I have to ride very early in the morning or very late at night, but I generally manage to practice 4 days a week".

Not just a rider and a doctor, but also a husband and a father! "As a husband...well! I also try my best to be a good husband and make time for home and as a father, my son is just 1 month old so I cant really tell you much now" he says!

Looking back at being part of the team off for the Games, Sameh felt he was a solid team member yet was not chosen to represent his country. He states, "Frankly, I felt that I really worked hard this season and given that my horse was in very good shape, I think I showed some excellent

results. My trainer, Henela Weinberg, was very happy after I put her advice into effect and I felt my horse was ready to win. I believed it. In all, I would think the decision of my not being chosen was the best choice at the time and the best for the country. Even though it was terribly disappointing, I would have had to respect that decision whether I liked it or not. The Egyptian team came in 4th place at the Games; this is a considerably good result, and my team members performed very well, however I still felt that I could have also shown good results."

As the son of the President of the Egyptian Federation, would one be motivated or discouraged? He says, "Truly? I do not think of it this way. My mind does not go on analysing that my father is the President of the EEF or a representation of a ruling body in the country. I think of him as my father, a person worthy of respect. It does not have the motivating or the discouraging effect on me. I do not usually do something or "not" do something due to my being the son of the President because people will always keep on talking. I try to stick to doing what is right whether they like it or not." **HT**



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## INTERVIEW WITH DR. EMAD EL BANANNY

UNDERSECRETARY OF THE MINISTRY OF SPORTS & THE PRESIDENT OF CENTRAL  
ADMINISTRATION FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF SPORTS PROGRAMMES IN THE  
NATIONAL SPORTS COUNCIL OF EGYPT

By Khaled Assem

**What can you tell us about the strategies of the National Sports Council of Egypt (NSCE) when it comes to developing sports in Egypt?**

Several years back Egypt had programmes that were held on a small scale named 'Sports for All'. Recently after the constitution of an International and Arab Federation for 'Sports for All', an Egyptian Federation was also constituted; by that we mean

that we would employ our efforts in activating the role of organisations of the International Community and Non-Governmental Organisations. When we took the direction of activating such roles, our aim was to concentrate on how to develop sports as a whole before having it reach Championship Sectors or levels; such sectors are usually an area of expertise of the Olympic Committee that plays the role of preparing talented

individuals to being able to participate on the international level.

**What is the function of the Ministry of Sports when it comes to activating this role and developing a programme for sports, lets say, in Cairo?**

This task was initially run by the Ministry of Youth & Sports and the High Council for Youth & Sports, but now it is the responsibility of the NSCE

which is a part of the Ministry. Many public schools do not have a playground let alone a programme for sports, and so our role is to construct such grounds and introduce such programmes in as many schools as possible. A child is usually born with an instinct for sports, and so growing up to find facilities available would be of added value; as much as education is important, sports should be as well. Introducing sport as part of the syllabus was part of the major step to implementing the NSCE project.

**What can you tell us about the challenges that the NSCE faces?**

What was very challenging was how to implement such a project since Egypt has numerous schools with lots of children; do not forget we are 80 million in a developing country! Furthermore, a huge number of those schools are not constructed with playgrounds or any sorts of facilities and even more, lacks qualified trainers and instructors. It is quite a sensitive topic because this is the responsibility of the Ministry of Sports to construct fully prepared schools. Nevertheless, to lessen the challenge, we decided to work on this project on a small scale and start with only three Egyptian governorates; Alexandria, Asyout and Giza. With the cooperation of the Ministry of Education, we set up a plan and went on with this project through firstly, composing a Civil Union for Sports within the schools themselves, and secondly, through ensuring that any newly constructed schools will include all sorts of sport facilities, the least of which are multi-purpose playgrounds. Thirdly, to construct schools specialised in enhancing the abilities of potential athletes. By this I literally mean something that is nearly similar to a boarding school where students fully study in the morning and at other times, dedicate their lives to developing their athletic talents. Such schools will be fully equipped when it comes to facilities from grounds, swimming pools to all sorts of sport services. There was only one such school in Cairo, and now we are in the process of establishing two more in Minya and in El Sharkia. As you may know, several of our national football team players graduated from the school in Cairo: Mido, Shikabala and Ahmed Hossam. On the same note, the graduates of this school do not



usually represent just one sport like judo or boxing, but they usually represent the school as a whole. Each school would be specialised in a specific sport; for example the school in Ismailia would graduate football and water polo players. In 2006, we established three schools like I have mentioned earlier, currently, we have more than 15 schools in 15 governorates and our three year plan is to expand our efforts to all Egyptian governorates.

**You do follow a special scheme to implement what you have mentioned above; is the NSCE partnering any other Ministry?**

Yes; it was imperative for us to work with the Ministry of Education in specific because through it, sports would be adjoined to the school syllabus as a key component of education. In addition to our cooperation with the Ministry of Education, we also work along with the Directorate of Education, the Directorate of Sports in each governorate, and finally the Sports Unions and Federations within the schools. After the constitution of the Federation for School Sports in Egypt, the Pan Arab School Games took place in Algeria in August 2008, and Egypt as a country came in 1st place; Egypt participated in basketball, handball, football, volleyball, table Tennis, badminton, swimming, and athletics. We came out with a total of 74 medals, Syria with 39 medals and then Tunisia with 27 medals.

**These achievements are not really publicised; is there a specific reason?**

I have to admit that we have a flaw when it comes to full communication with the

media. You for example, are an equestrian rider who is interested to learn about all sports news, but the majority of Egyptians are keen to learn about only one sport unfortunately which is football! All major sports magazine headlines are about who scored the latest goal, who got injured, etc. And so football takes away all the attention. However, we are working hard as well on cooperating fully with the media to cover news in general. To assist in this, the Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak has set a date for the 'Egyptian Sports Day', which is March 3rd, where he usually honours top Athletes, and top pioneers in sport movements. The media would usually cover this.

**To implement ideas such as working hard on having the media publicise what you have mentioned, does the NSCE have a special department for funding such matters, or does it cooperate with sponsorship companies?**

When we compare the budget of the NSCE spent on public school activities, plus the budget for constructing fully equipped schools in all the governorates, with the budget provided by the government, it would be shocking to state a number. To answer your question, no, we are not really working with sponsorship companies. However for example when any department of any Ministry invests a huge sum in sports, they decide to cut down on medical expenses, or crime, or production. When we have individuals who play sports and therefore are fit, they will produce more, they will be efficient and going for a general medical check up will be limited to two or three annual visits. **HT**

# MONTY ROBERTS

THE MAN WHO WHISPERS  
TO HORSES

By Sue Akehurst, England

(PART 2)



*This horse has no bridle or bit, just the Dually™ halter as he calmly accepts his first rider*

**MANY PEOPLE WANT TO GET A PROBLEM SOLVED BY TAKING ONE GIANT STEP RATHER THAN MANY SMALL ONES. YOUR TECHNIQUES, CERTAINLY AT THIS KIND OF DEMONSTRATION, HAVE BEEN CRITICISED AS BEING 'QUICK FIXES' OR 'FLOODING' THE ANIMAL. IS THIS THE BEST WAY?**



▲ Giving of feet increases the vulnerability, so is a way to gain a starter horses' trust

Number 1, they do not understand what flooding is if they say this. I do nothing in the way of flooding. All the scientists I have worked with say "flooding? You don't do any flooding". Flooding is to cause the same problem to happen again, over and over, so they get used to it. I don't do that at all. So flooding is out. Every time I go into that round pen on every demonstration evening I say "I am not here tonight training, these horses will not be ready for the Olympic team tomorrow. What I am trying to do is give you a road map of where I would like you to go, in order to successfully get through your life with this horse, the relationship with this horse." I said it to my owners this afternoon, "I am not training tonight, I am here to give the folks education and a road map." Now if I am going to give a road map I have to go through the problem. Sure, I would love to break the problem up into about 6 different pieces and take a week to do it. But I am not here for a week! So I do the best I can to cover the gambit of the particular remedial problem, or the starting if you will, so that there is a road map and the road map goes from A to Z as far as that particular problem is concerned. Is it too fast? Yes, it's too fast. I do a 3 hour demonstration, I would love to do the 3 hours with one horse, but the audience would all be gone! They would also justifiably say "I came here to learn something and I have this problem and this problem and this problem and he didn't do any of that he just did the one thing!" So I do the

best I can, to break up the evening and to give the people the best, and most broadly based education that I can.

Next though, I only have the horses they bring me to deal with! So if you have a horse that bucks and no one brings me a horse that bucks, I can't do a horse that bucks! So, for example this afternoon I had a prospective horse shown to me that was a remedial farrier horse. It was supposedly 'Extremely' difficult to pick up the legs. We were picking up his legs in five minutes! It wasn't a problem at all. So I am glad we didn't choose it for the demonstration. But we won't have a remedial farrier horse tonight. Somebody here today will say 'well he didn't do a remedial farrier horse, I wish he did'. But I didn't have one, the one I had was too easy! What I have got tonight is a rearer, a buckner and what I have on my sheet is a 'serial spooker' and then I have a starter and one that takes two and a half to three hours to load!

### **So we are in for a long night?!**

Yes we are! (He laughs!) Loading is still the number one remedial problem on earth so I do try to have a non-loader at every demonstration. Nobody, nobody has done more loaders for the public than I have. 2,400 now. Not one failure, not one injury, knock on wood, you never know it can happen. But so far, not one injury due to loading, not one failure due to loading. So they are getting a lot, and these are criticisms coming from an extremely small number of

people with specific complaints, and that is fine, that is fine. But do a cross section and see what happens and you will find that 95% loved everything and 2% loved nothing and a few thought something was good and something wasn't so good.

**Regarding 'flooding' can you explain more about what it is and how it isn't a part of what you do. In your opinion is there ever a place for 'flooding' an animal?**

Flooding was developed by the German's after the Second World War. They found psychologically traumatised people who had been through the war. Then they experimented on them with this thing of flooding them with their experiences. For example, rape victims, they raped them over and over again, and they found that they then didn't mind being raped! They then went off to be prostitutes! I don't do anything like that! Another example, people that went into bomb shelters became claustrophobic, so they experimented by locking them in closets and they kept them in there for a month, pushed the food under the door, pushed the pan out and left them in there. I don't do anything like that in my training. Now it is true that when it is a spooky horse, I bring him something that he finds spooky. But I don't invade him with it, it is incremental, and I get him to gradually learn to accept it. So I can't, under these circumstances, accept any criticism about flooding. It just doesn't exist for me. And I suggest to you that it is a horrible practice that no one should embrace.

**“THERE ARE A LOT OF CRITICISMS THAT I RECEIVE. A LOT OF THEM, MOST OF THEM, FROM PEOPLE WHO ARE DISINGENUOUS, THEY DON'T JUST CRITICISE FROM A LOGICAL STAND POINT, BUT THEY ARE "LOOKING" FOR THINGS TO CRITICISE.”**

**Can you really shape behaviour when you have these horses in these demonstrations for such a short period?**

You know, as a matter of fact, I would like to tell you 'no', I would love to say no, because I say I don't train and that you have to go home and DO these practices over and over again before they are considered successful, and I would love to make it that clean and just say 'No!' But, in fact, too many people call and say "you know, from the time I got that horse home, he was a different horse. You really changed him". I get this, with 20-30% of the horses. I had a horse the other night at a demonstration at Greenlands, in Carlisle. The horse came in the lorry and they say it crashed and bashed and banged and kicked the whole time coming. It was loaded by several guys who just forced it on to the lorry. I put it through my loading process and the horse went sweet. He really went sweet and he loaded and loaded and

loaded and then we got a call back saying "he stood like a lamb the whole way home. He was sweating desperately, it was dripping off him when he got to the demonstration, but when he went home he was completely cool and he handled the whole thing". So the answer is 'Yes' I can shape behaviour in thirty minutes. Is it 100% of the time? No, not at all. Is it 20% of the time? Maybe, something like that, but I really get a behavioural shaping modification.

**Do horses learn by observation, can they mimic each other and are they influenced from peer pressure?**

They do not learn from observation, they just don't. Scientists have been through the whole thing about crib biting and weaving and all these things. They don't learn one from the other, they just don't. But peer pressure, that's another thing because they do live in the herd under peer pressure. That would modify their social structure where they might be a bully in one group of horses and a coward in another group of horses. So yes that is the difference. They are definitely affected by pressure but they do not learn by observation.

**Are there any other criticisms that you receive that you would like to address or comment on?**

Oh, there are a lot of criticisms that I

receive. A lot of them, most of them, from people who are disingenuous, they don't just criticise from a logical stand point, but they are "looking" for things to criticise.

There is one scientist who says "a manikin rider on a horse is cruel, it's destructive and it doesn't work, it makes them worse". I submit to you that that man has never ridden a bucking horse in his life. I submit to you that he has never used a manikin rider. Because I have! Hundreds and hundreds of horses all over the world whose lives have been saved from this technique. We just had one up at Gleneagles, that was definitely going to go to the butcher. I had a manikin rider on him then we had a rider up and he was walking around perfectly fine and the owner was floored by it all. So that kind of criticism is just awful and they are just taking shots with that and calling themselves scientists when they do it. I have an English Scientist who is working with me who is World-renowned and he is just blown away by how effective my work is from a scientific stand point.

**There are many ways of training animals, one which has been likened to your work is 'Clicker Training'. How is clicker training different to your training and do you feel 'Clicker' training is a positive way of training animals?**

'Clicker training' is a training method used on many animals. It is based on behavioural psychology that relies on marking desirable behaviour and rewarding it. The desirable behaviour is usually marked by using a 'clicker' which is a mechanical device that makes a short, distinct "click" sound which tells the animal exactly when they're doing the right thing. The trainer needs to click at the moment the behaviour occurs. After "clicking" the trainer gives the animal something it likes, usually a piece of food. The process being that the animal will associate the sound of the click with something it likes. Since it wishes to repeat that, and get more food for example, it will repeat the action it was doing when it heard the click.

I have had clicker trainers come to my

▼ *A remedial horse with a severe bucking habit, learns that manikin riders can't be moved!*







© Neil Fortescue

▲ When the giving of feet is accomplished with no pain, trust is increased dramatically



© Neil Fortescue

▲ The horse is allowed to first feel and move with his very first saddle without a rider

▼ Just 20 minutes after beginning to start this horse, a rider gently & calmly mounts



© Neil Fortescue

farm at my invitation. But lets call it 'marker' training. I believe in 'marker' training and I do marker training. I've shown these clicker trainers how I could get the horse to do the thing they were after, faster and more effectively with my marker than with their marker. Because I do not believe that food is a good reward for horses for training. I don't think it is nearly as effective as other markers are. But marker training is wonderful. I don't have anything against clicker trainers; I do have something against feeding from the hand! Because Clicker trained horses bite! They just do! I know plenty clicker trainers say "No, mine don't" but they do! When I see them, the horse tries to undress them right away! "Well, he's not really biting me, he's just taking my shirt off!" Well, ok, call it what you want, it causes biting to feed a horse from the hand. Period. So, I showed the clicker trainers ways that they could mark, even with food, without feeding from the hand. With an apple, or carrot on a stick and let the horse take it off type thing. Most of them went away convinced that they loved their clicker training but that they were going to modify it. See, most clicker trainers will tell you we are the only ones that work with no violence at all. "Our work is completely positive reinforcement". Those are the things they'll say. But I don't believe in totally positive reinforcement, I think negative reinforcement is a very good thing. It has a negative name! But negative reinforcement does not mean that you have to be mean to the horse or negative to the horse. It means that you remove something, instead of adding something to. The removal of, for instance - the rein, when you ask the horse to turn and you put tension on the side of the mouth; when you release, that is a reward through negative reinforcement. It's not positive reinforcement, you didn't add anything, you took it away. So that's negative reinforcement. Negative reinforcement has a bad name, but it's a good act. But you must balance positive and negative reinforcement. You can't go all to the expense of another because I don't think you will have a balanced horse when you do. **HT**

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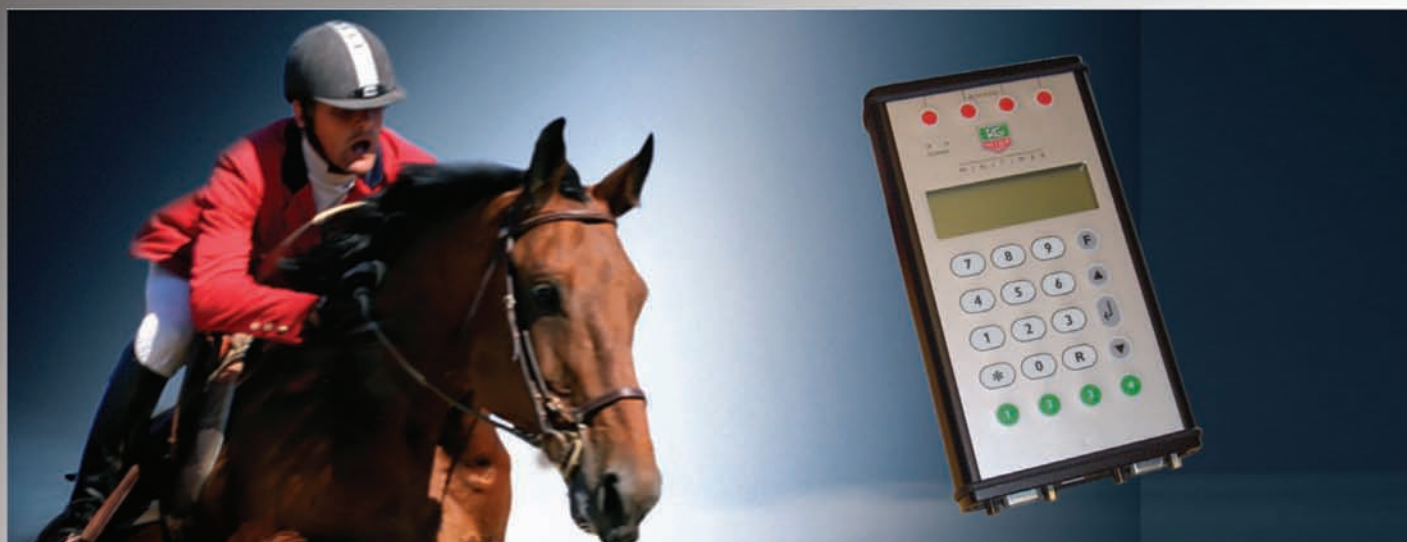
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# A BIT OF A PREDICAMENT

FINDING A BIT TO SUIT YOUR HORSE CAN BE PROBLEMATIC AND IS OFTEN AN EXPENSIVE CASE OF TRIAL AND ERROR. WE ASKED THREE EXPERTS FOR THEIR ADVICE ON HOW TO SOLVE SOME COMMON BITTING ISSUES.

NOTHING BEATS CORRECT TRAINING AND MANAGEMENT, BUT SOMETIMES COMMUNICATION BETWEEN HORSE AND RIDER CAN BREAK DOWN SIMPLY BECAUSE THE HORSE IS NOT HAPPY IN HIS MOUTH. WE ASKED BITTING EXPERTS FROM MYLER, ABBEY AND INDEPENDENT ONLINE SADDLER THE SADDLERY SHOP TO HELP SOLVE THREE HORSE & HOUND READERS' COMMON BITTING PROBLEMS.



▲ Solutions to help prevent horses who are heavy in the hand include the PEEWEE bit (top) - a thin, mullen mouth bit that also exerts some poll and external jaw pressure - and the flat lozenge eggbutt snaffle (middle & bottom) which also has a slender mouthpiece & comes in larger sizes to fit Beamish



▲ Rosie Marston rotates the bits she uses on show jumper Bob

## RESISTING THE CONTACT

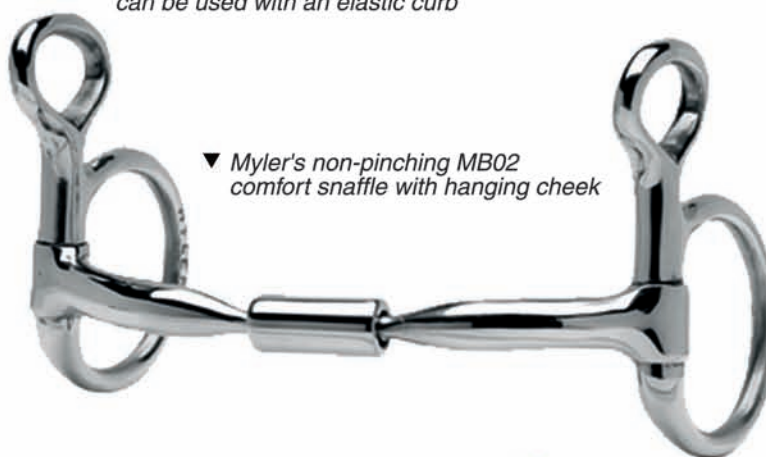
ROSIE MARSTON, 21, from Kent, has owned her 15.3hh, 10-year-old, part-thoroughbred gelding Bob for four years. They compete in British Show Jumping Association (BSJA) classes up to 1.25m. Bob has his teeth and back checked regularly and takes a 5¼in bit. ROSIE says: "Bob is forward-going without being strong, particularly when show jumping, but the moment I take a check, he sticks his head in the air and resists the contact. This means that he cannot see where he is going and often takes a pole behind. If I don't check him, he often has a pole anyway because he is too quick and flat. "I tend to rotate the bits I use as he will settle down in something for the first few outings, but

quickly reverts to his old habits. “I usually use a loose-ring French link snaffle or a hackamore. In the snaffle, I have little control and he fights me when he gets quick. His head carriage is steadier in the hackamore, but he then leans on my hands, getting too low in front and has even started making snorting noises. “I have also tried a Dutch gag, pelham, butterfly flip corrector bit, Cheltenham gag, hanging cheek snaffle and a combination bit, but he has rebelled against them all.”

BELSTANE’S Myler expert Suzanna Monteith suggests that Bob may have been trying to evade the tongue pressure on all the bits Rosie has tried, except the hackamore, where different problems arose because his airway was restricted. “The hackamore is not designed to be ridden with a constant or firm contact,” she explains. “We suggest a Short Shank Myler Combination with the Low Port Comfort Snaffle Mouthpiece, which works quite differently to a combination bit she’ll have tried. It initially shares the rider’s rein pressure evenly between the nose — cavesson position, no restriction of airway — poll and back of the jaw. “Only if she continues to increase rein pressure does the mouthpiece come into effect, after which the pressure is shared between five points — the nose, poll, jaw, tongue and bars. This makes it gentle and the restriction of the tongue and swallowing is minimised. “The pressure high up on the back of the jaw encourages the horse to flex from his withers — rather than from the second or third vertebrae by the poll — which will create a better outline and facilitate collection and impulsion.” According to Abbey Saddlery’s biting expert Hilary Vernon, the problem here is that Bob does not like jointed bits, particularly those with leverage. “To encourage him to go to the end of the rein and to look at the fence, I would try a Short Shank Dalehead with a Hartwell mouthpiece,” says Hilary. “The Dalehead cheek has three rein options to vary your signal and a jaw strap at the back. “As Bob is not strong and we simply want to get some pressure out of his mouth and on to his jaw to balance the pressures of the bit, I recommend you use a soft leather curb. This should send him to the end of the rein and give you control, but not be harsh. “The Hartwell mouthpiece is forward-curved and small-ported to encourage him to maintain his frame and allow you to ask, but then give with your hands.”



▲ The Hartwell pelham has a wide sweeping port & can be used with an elastic curb



▼ Myler's non-pinching MB02 comfort snaffle with hanging cheek



▼ The Myer low-ported mullen would be suitable for showing classes



▼ The Sprenger WH Ultra's wheeled lozenge allows for tongue movement



▼ The Sprenger Turnado is a snaffle bit with an angled joint

## TONGUE OVER THE BIT

EMMA OSBORNE, 20, from Glasgow, has owned her mare Annie, a 10-year-old 15hh thoroughbred, for four years. They compete in ridden showing classes and unaffiliated dressage up to novice. Annie suffers from hooks on her back teeth, but has them checked regularly. EMMA says: "Annie seems unhappy in her mouth and frequently gets her tongue over any bit I try. It happens mainly when we go into canter, as she runs, gets overexcited and resists the contact. "I tried a flash noseband on to keep her mouth shut, but this made her rear on the approach to a jump. I also struggle to find 4½in bits for her, so I have resorted to using a 5in. I need a showing legal bit for use with double reins and a snaffle for dressage. "I am currently riding Annie in a French link hanging cheek snaffle, although she still opens her mouth and is unaccepting. For showing, I use a nutcracker jointed pelham without a curb attachment, which, again, she doesn't seem happy in. I have tried a double bridle, but it was too big for her and she got her tongue over the bit when she got excited."

LUCY NICHOLAS from The Saddlery Shop suggests that, like many thoroughbreds, Annie's vice could stem from her large-tongue, small-mouth conformation. "Thoroughbreds often have a narrow jaw and thin skin, which makes them even more sensitive," she says. "The priority is to get Annie to keep her tongue under the bit, which will require a thin mouthpiece coupled with something that will allow space for the tongue. "For showing, a pelham would be the preference, and a Hartwell pelham with its wide, sweeping port should make her feel more comfortable. If she dislikes the action of a curb chain, try using an elastic curb that will give when pressure is applied. "Dressage-wise, the Sprenger WH Ultra is often successful on horses who dislike tongue pressure — the small wheel in the middle of the lozenge allows the horse to move its tongue when swallowing, for example. "The Sprenger Turnado, a snaffle bit with an angled joint, allows the bit to lie more sympathetically in the horse's mouth



▲ Emma Osborne's mare Annie tends to get her tongue over the bit



▼ The Myler short-shank combination comes with a low-port snaffle

▼ Abbey's short-shank Dalehead cheek has 3 rein options to vary your signal



with more space for the tongue. Both Sprenger bits are made from Aurigan, a patented material that most horses prefer and accept better than stainless steel." Importantly, Emma was absolutely correct to have rejected the flash noseband, says Myler's Suzanna Monteith. "By putting her tongue over the bit, Annie is freeing it so she can swallow. The flash noseband merely forces her mouth shut, compelling her to suffer the discomfort of the bit and the panic she will feel if she can't swallow," explains Suzanna. "We suggest introducing a port to give Annie some tongue room and a direct action [non-collapsing] mouthpiece to remove any pinch. "The Myler Low Ported Mullen (MB06) is available in 4½in on a pelham cheek for Emma's showing classes, and also on a D-ring snaffle with slots for working at home. The slots allow the bridle to be fixed on to the ring, as with a hanging cheek, which holds the bit off the tongue when not being engaged by the rider, thereby offering a clearer reward. "It is also possible to fit a jaw strap or chain on to the Myler slotted cheek snaffles, which will hold the bit off the tongue, and give the horse some warning that the reins have been activated before pressure comes on to the tongue. "Inexplicably, ported snaffles are not permitted under dressage rules, so we would recommend that Emma works Annie quietly until she is confident in her new bit before changing back into a less sympathetic one. We would then suggest Myler's non-pinching version of a French link, the MB02 Comfort Snaffle on a hanging cheek."

## LEANING ON THE BIT

GEORGINA INGMAN, 22, from Buckinghamshire, recently bought Beamish, a 10-year-old, 18.2hh Irish draught-cross gelding who takes a 6¼in-6½in bit. Beamish has been hunting for the past six years, but Georgina would now like to do some dressage and show jumping with him.

GEORGINA says: "Beamish is a big horse and unfortunately uses his weight to lean on me, which makes him very heavy in the hand — all his strength goes down rather than forward. He has quite a short back for a large horse so is relatively collected, but I struggle to find bits big enough for him. "He was hunted in a Waterford Dutch gag, but I want something milder to ride him in everyday



▲ Georgina Ingman needs a bit that will stop 10-year-old Beamish leaning on her hand

as this bit makes him inconsistent in his outline. I have ridden him in a fixed-ring eggbutt snaffle with a wide mouthpiece, but he was completely unresponsive to it. "I am currently using a loose-ring French link snaffle for schooling and he does seem to settle into a better contact than with the gag, but he still leans heavily. "I need a bit that will encourage him to maintain a consistent outline and become lighter in my hand."

HILARY VERNON from Abbey Saddlery believes that, unfortunately, you have inherited Beamish's leaning tendencies. "Going down the stronger bit route with him will only teach him to get stronger," says Hilary. "I would try a flat lozenge eggbutt snaffle for dressage as this bit is slender and, although comfortable, will discourage him from leaning into the mouthpiece. The eggbutt cheek will make your signals slicker and quicker and they come in large sizes. "For jumping, I would try a Medium Port Uxeter. This bit has rein options on the cheekpiece so you can vary your degree of signal and has a chain on the back which, if set properly, will take some of the pressure out of his not-so-sensitive mouth and neatly distribute it on to his jaw. "Unlike a lot of leverage bits, this one has a balanced action with a good release and therefore rewards him when he responds." With only a limited number of bits allowed under dressage rules, finding the right bit can be difficult, stresses The Saddlery Shop's Lucy Nicholas. "In cases like Beamish's, it is often more productive to first find a bit the horse really works well in for use everyday," she says. "This will advance his schooling more quickly and

allow him to develop the correct muscles and mental attitude to work. Once established, he should then accept a closely related dressage legal bit for competitions. "A strong bit used with tact is far kinder than a mild bit used with force. Kangaroo bits make a very nice hanging cheek Waterford, with a thinner, less "bobbly" mouthpiece that would probably suit him well. It would give some poll pressure, but not as much as the Continental he was in for hunting. "If you found this bit worked well, a hanging cheek French link — ideally from Kangaroo to keep a similar feel — would offer an alternative for a test." **H&H**

### INFORMATION

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ATTRACTIVE WEB PRESENCE



# THE RIDER'S MENTAL FITNESS (PART 1)

By Dr. Mohamed Elsherbini

IN EQUESTRIAN SPORTS WHERE THE HORSE DOES MOST OF THE PHYSICAL WORK, IT IS MENTAL ATTITUDE THAT DEFINES A RIDER'S LIMITS. ALL RIDERS – FROM NOVICE TO ELITE – CAN GREATLY IMPROVE THEIR PERFORMANCE BY ALTERING THEIR MIND ATTITUDE.

## MENTAL PREPARATION:

THERE IS OFTEN GREAT RESISTANCE TOWARDS TRAINING THE MIND IN THE RIDING WORLD. MANY RIDERS ARE RELUCTANT TO USE MENTAL PREPARATION TECHNIQUES BECAUSE THERE IS A BELIEF THAT EVERYONE HAS INHERENT MENTAL STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES THAT CANNOT BE CHANGED. THIS IS OBVIOUSLY UNTRUE, SIMPLY THINKING POSITIVELY OR BREATHING MORE EFFICIENTLY CAN HAVE AN IMMEDIATE EFFECT ON THE RIDER'S PERFORMANCE. INCREASINGLY, COACHES ARE BUILDING TIME INTO TRAINING SCHEDULES FOR MENTAL PREPARATION, AND EVEN, HIRING SPORTS PSYCHOLOGISTS TO WORK WITH THEIR RIDERS.

## SUCCESSFUL SPORTS PERSONS:

GENERAL FINDINGS SHOW THAT SUCCESSFUL PEOPLE HAVE HIGHER SELF-CONFIDENCE, REPORT FEWER DOUBTS, ARE MORE POSITIVE AND EXPERIENCE IMAGERY MORE LIKELY TO PORTRAY SUCCESSFUL PERFORMANCE, ARE BETTER ABLE TO CONTROL AND UTILISE ANXIETY, AND HAVE HIGH LEVELS OF CONCENTRATION. THEY ARE ALSO MORE PERSISTENT AND PREPARE MORE THOROUGHLY.

## COMPONENTS OF MENTAL FITNESS:

1- **Commitment:** it is when the effort and energy are directed to turn goals into reality. It covers such things as ambition, the desire or dream to achieve, persistence to train long and hard, willingness to make sacrifices, and the ability to plan, correct, and take advice.

2- **Confidence:** it is the belief that someone has the abilities or resources to meet the demands of situations he is likely to face. It is also the belief that someone can acquire the necessary competencies to reach his target. It is not something we are born with; it is learned and developed through life.

3- **Control:** it is taking charge of the mental process to create an internal environment that is conducive to performing well. Self-control entails the ability to maintain composure, contain anxiety, stay positive, accept criticism,

4- **Concentration:** it is the ability to direct someone's attention to the relevant cues and maintain his attention for the appropriate amount of time. The two key aspects of concentration are direction and maintenance of attention.

## MENTAL FITNESS

↑  
COMMITMENT + CONFIDENCE  
CONTROL + CONCENTRATION  
↑



▲ Steps to Mental Training (Fig. 1)

1- **Awareness:** creating awareness of mental fitness and its role in performance is the starting point to any mental training programme. This can be done with guided reading or seminars and interviews with elite performers.

2- **Assess:** assessing both the sport and the performer at the outset is important to identify the mental fitness components necessary to consistent performance in this sport. **Behaviour** is a good indicator, whether in training or in competitions, to a person's state of mind (Fig. 2). **Affect** means attention to feelings and moods. Taking time to ask your student is important to assess areas that need attention. Fear, anxiety, anger and depression have an impact on performance. **Sensations** of the body may be indicative to mental stress or anxiety as heart rate, breathing, sweating and urinary function. **Imagery** used to the athlete's advantage is a key part of control. An athlete may be imagining previous failure at the coming future while another positive one may be good at imagining success in competitions. **Cognitions** such as thoughts, ideas, opinions and beliefs have a profound effect on all the components of mental fitness. This effect could be classified and simplified by communication between coach and rider. A coach may think that negative comments are motivating the rider to do greater effort, whereas this can have the opposite effect.

Strong Commitment	Poor Commitment
Show enthusiasm	Lack of enthusiasm
Practice diligently	Poor attendance or training
Perform to potential consistency	Giving up when falling behind
Take action	Complaining frequently
Strong Confidence	Poor Confidence
Positive posture	Bored or negative appearance
Take responsibility	Playing defensively or tentatively
Talk about ability not limitations	Talking about limitations
Strong Control	Poor Control
Relaxed, unafraid	Anxious, fearful
Composed under pressure	Losing composure
Consistent performer	Inconsistent after better training
Strong concentration	Poor concentration
Focused on the task	Showing signs of frustration
Unaffected by distraction	Easily distracted

▲ Typical behaviours and their possible significance (Fig. 2)

3- **Planning:** with the information from the assessment, a broad and timed mental training plan can be drawn up, for example:

*Strategies to develop commitment:*

- General goals.
- Performance profiles.
- Force field analysis.
- Goal-setting.

*Strategies to build confidence:*

- Examining beliefs.
- Positive self-talk.
- Thought stopping.
- Reframing.
- Affirmations.

*Strategies to maintain control:*

- Thought control techniques.
- Emotional control (calming techniques, stimulation training).
- Imagery control (relaxation, imagining success).

*Strategies to improve concentration:*

- Specific goal setting.
- Routines (Pre-competition & competition plans).
- Trigger words.
- Reminders.
- Stimulation training.
- Distraction training.
- Trigger words.
- Reminders.
- Stimulation training.

Distraction training.

4- **Implement:** the ultimate success of any programme is that it leads to improved performance when competing. Mental training is similar to other aspects of training (physical, technical, and tactical). A new strategy of mental training should be introduced slowly and practiced over at training sessions where the environment is not too pressurised. For example, when working on a skill one can work also on practising concentration techniques. Pressure in training can gradually build up and finally the mental strategy can be used in competitive situations.

5- **Re-evaluate:** the essence of continued improvement is to constantly re-evaluate and draw up new plans or build up on the original plan if it is rewarding. The coach should talk with the athlete after competition and ask a number of relevant questions based on BASIC: (behaviour, affect, sensations, imagery and cognitions).

If mental fitness is important to the horse, it is certainly vital to the rider, putting in mind that his mental state will surely affect the horse's mental condition during training and competition. **HT**

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