

And the Dream Continues....

“Victory is sweet! It’s even tastier when it’s an outcome Of teamwork!”

By YASMIN EL HABASHY

Andre Sakkakini joined the Egyptian showjumping team for the first time, to represent his country, in Jordan at the Pan Arab Games, that took place from ... to..... “It was an amazing experience to ride with the team, rather than competing alone,” Sakkakini stated with delight, “It was a different feeling!”

Since he has moved to Europe to go professional, Sakkakini has accomplished the unimaginable, and made it through thick and thin to become the international well-known rider that he is today. Driven by his passion to horses and the sport, he has fulfilled most of the requirements of his dreams, but by joining his fellow riders of the Egyptian team, he has tasted victory in a special way.

“I believe the success of our team was mainly due to our strong moral support for each other,” Sakkakini insists, “our nerves were incomparable to those of our competitors, even though some had better and more qualified horses than us.”

As for preparing for the games, Sakkakini continued his routine of shows in Europe, and just worked the mare “Dutchesse” less than usual for the three weeks prior to the event. “She did well!” he satisfyingly mentioned, as they both earned that silver medal.

But reality bites. Soon after his return to Germany, Sakkakini’s sponsor decided to sell “Dutchesse” and his other competitive horse “Eastern Night” that he competed with in Rome for the World Equestrian Games, leaving Sakkakini in a disappointing shock. “It’s a sport of money and business,” he explains, and as for the time being, Sakkakini is busy preparing his own

horses for future competing on the Grand Prix level. Nevertheless, the rumours are going around that Sakkakini is moving back to Egypt, and that he is opening up his own riding school, where at he will give clinics for our riders. As much as many of us would dream of that day, Sakkakini is not ready for that big change just yet.

However, he did mention that starting up coaching in Egypt depends a great deal on what the country has to offer. He believes that we have excellent young riders with talent and that it’s a total waste not to teach them correctly. Technically wise Sakkakini could without

Sakkakini explains how the Saudi Arabian team approached the sport correctly to build up a good base for themselves, “They got good horses, got good trainers, and travelled around competing in order to get the necessary experience.”

“We need to change our system if we want to improve!” Sakkakini pointed out. He explained how the country is in need of desperate alteration and variation so that we don’t get stuck right where we are at the moment, which is..... where?!

Our country is full of talented riders, and we could easily have the opportunity to compete on high levels. Nothing beats success- and hey, results speak for themselves.

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a doubt add much to the sport in Egypt. As for the system, Sakkakini seems to think that it could be much more efficient and successful than it is at present. The accomplishment of reaching the Pan Arab Games should only be the start of enhancement for both the system and the level of riders. Sakkakini stresses on the fact that talent unfortunately isn’t enough for professional quality. It is extremely important to correct the level of riders technically wise in order to improve, which can only happen if the system returns to its old pathology.

