





BERNARDO ALVES  
BRAZILIAN  
WITH BURNING AMBITION

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By Nada H. Abdelmoniem

COUNTRY: BRAZIL  
DATE OF BIRTH: NOVEMBER 20 1974  
STAR SIGN: SCORPIO

WHEN IT COMES TO COMPETITION BRAZILIAN SHOW JUMPING CHAMPION BERNARDO ALVES IS THE PERFECT IMAGE OF THREE: "CALM, CALCULATED AND CONTENT". AND THESE QUALITIES ARE ALWAYS ON DISPLAY IN THE ARENA WHERE IT APPEARS THAT RIDING COMES SO EASY FOR HIM, WHERE STRENGTH, HARMONY AND GRACE SEEM TO COMBINE EFFORTLESSLY TO PRODUCE SUCCESS. SEEING THIS, IT MAKES YOU WONDER, HOW DOES HE DO IT? HOW DOES HE COMBINE THE RIGHT HORSE, RIGHT CONTEST AND RIGHT TRAINING? WHAT'S THE SECRET? THE ANSWERS HERE FROM THE BRAZILIAN WITH BURNING AMBITION CAN ONLY MAKE YOU GUESS THAT BERNARDO HAS GENUINELY SORTED OUT HIS PRIORITIES WHERE LOVE OF HIS SPORT, HIS HORSES AND HIS FAMILY KEEPS HIS CAREER PATH FOCUSED AND IN TUNE WITH HIS LIFE.



#### **It all started...**

When I was eight years old. My parents always liked horses and ever since I was very young, we all rode together at our farm. So, most of the weekends, on our way to the farm, we would stop at the riding club and watch everyone riding. It was fascinating to me to see the horses jump.

#### **The trainers...**

My first trainer was a Brazilian rider Vitor Teixeira. When I moved to Europe, I rode for quite some time at the stables of Nelson Pessoa; he trained me and was followed by his son Rodrigo. A few years ago, I moved to Ludger Beerbaum's stables and I was also trained by him for a while.

#### **Influential trainers.....**

It's hard to pick just one, but all of them had a lot of influence on my riding career. They're my idols.

#### **Current horses and Brigitt the amazing horse...**

Brigitt is the best horse that I have ever ridden in my entire career. She has great respect for fences and has got a huge heart. She's also a very fast mare; truly, she is amazing. Kingly du Reverdy is my speed class horse. Despite that not being his greatest feature, he is full of surprises at big classes. He's a true warrior inside the ring.

#### **Training programme...**

Firstly, I decide which shows I am going to participate in and then I

▲ Bernardo & Brigitt, winners of the GCT in Monaco, 2010

decide what the ideal training is for each horse at each show. When I train, I neither like raising the fences high nor using trick distances. I want my training courses to be easy and I try to work at the horse's pace. Accordingly, at competitions, I can have good control of the horse in short and long distances.

#### **Managing time...**

During the week (from Monday to Wednesday) I ride six to seven horses a day and I train some riders. To end the day, with the help of my wife, we do stable management.

#### **Favourite events...**

Aachen. To ride in Aachen is a dream come true for any rider in the world, at least to me. It's magical. Clearing a round there, it doesn't matter if it's during a small class or the Grand Prix, it's incredible. It's like riding in a sanctuary. I can't describe the feeling...

#### **The Global Champions Tour...**

I've been riding at the GCT since

the very beginning. It's the best equestrian's circuit to be involved in regularly with its points and the highest prize money in the sport. It is where all the best riders are. I have already won two legs: Hamburg and Monaco.

#### **Rankings...**

I am currently ranked at 52 in the Rolex Rankings and I was in the top eight already. In my opinion, in order to reach the top ten, I think one would need at least two to three Grand Prix horses, a good speed horse, and the will to go to shows EVERY weekend.

#### **Picking horses...**

I look for scope, good technique in the front legs, and "solid" behaviour in a horse.

#### **Sponsors...**

I've been riding for Mr. Jorge Johannpeter, owner of Haras Joter for the last 18 years! He's the one that provides me with the entire infrastructure that has made it possible for me to live and work in

Europe. He's a horse owner that knows and understands all aspects of this sport. For him, the health and the well-being of the horse comes first, not the prize money. I'm also sponsored by a feeding supplement company, EQUI 4S, that helps me a lot to preserve my horse's health.

#### **Brazil and the 2012 Olympics...**

We're still in the middle of the Olympic trials. Since I've been getting consistent results, some of which were winning two medals (Team silver and Individual bronze) with Bridgit at the Pan American Games in 2011, I think I have a good chance to compete in London! My goal is not to overuse Brigit and select shows very carefully. When it is time for the Games, she will be fresh and, of course, at her best condition.

#### **Family...**

I've been married to Carolina for ten years and we have a wonderful three year old daughter, Julia. We all love horses; Carolina rode for ten years and Julia is completely in love with those creatures. 

