

# IN DEPTH WITH MOUDA ZEYADA

By Khaled Assem



AND SUDDENLY YOU REALIZE THAT IT ALL HAPPENED!  
THE KID WHO WAS SO LITTLE WHEN I SAW HIM LAST WITH  
TALENT ALL OVER ; IS REPRESENTING EGYPT IN THE  
OLYMPICS.



*We don't realize the sweat,  
the hours and the failures  
until we see the triumph, the  
success and the destination.*



MOUDA HAS PROVEN THAT TALENT IS NOT ENOUGH, YET HARD WORK, PLANNING AND PERSEVERANCE TALES CAN GO EVEN FURTHER THAN THE OLYMPIC GAMES.



HOW DID YOUR PASSION FOR HORSES START ?

I started riding when I was **five**, very random story. My parents and I were in Smouha club in Alexandria, the big sand arena full of horses caught my eye and I was fascinated by riders communicating with these amazing creatures. I asked my mother if I could ride a horse because I really wanted to and so I did. For them I was just a child having fun but for me it was where I wanted to be *for the rest of my life*.

WHAT DID YOU HAVE IN MIND GROWING UP AS A RIDER?

I was really a hopeful child with some ambition. Always had hopes to ride in the biggest competitions out there like the Olympic Games, World Equestrian Games and World Cups. I worked a lot to do this because I believed I could! I did achieve some of what I dreamt of but I still believe I have a lot ahead of me as it was not so easy with studying in University and having to travel to too many places around the world.

HOW DID YOU PREPARE FOR THE OLYMPIC QUALIFICATION IN RABAT?

I worked the whole year for this moment. My horse left Egypt **one year** before the World Equestrian

Games. I was sure that we will have a team to qualify for the Olympic Games. So I had to make sure I had a horse to work with and prepare ahead of the qualification. We worked together bit by bit until we had some results together in several international shows.

Throughout this time I always tried to make sure that he was **healthy and happy** enough along with maintaining good management until Morocco. I didn't ride him in any class in Morocco before the Nations Cup in Rabat which I discovered later that it was not the best thing to do!

The horse was **very tense** on the first round of the Nations cup. He was a bit too spooky and hyped as I learnt that I should've ridden him at least once before the Nations cup. But thankfully we pulled it out in the second round!

HOW DID IT FEEL TO QUALIFY?

I have always dreamt of the Olympic Qualification and it was something that I was not willing to give up on; I even have the Olympics logo as a screen saver on my phone; I have it on the walls in my stable just keeping my target in front of my eyes. When we qualified it was really special, I had a counted result among the team, my mum was there to share this moment and also because I qualified

with a horse that I had put a lot of effort in.

DO YOU GET ANY MENTAL COACHING TO HANDLE PRESSURE?

Well as a person I don't usually get stressed in competitions; I am actually the opposite. Meaning that the more pressure I feel the more I become focused. Before the team competitions I believed that I could deliver good counting results for the team but when the first round didn't go well I realized that maybe that was because I was too relaxed. In round two the **pressure** kicked in, so I delivered a good round!

SOME PEOPLE ARE ALWAYS THERE DURING THE JOURNEY OF SUCCESS. WHO SHARED YOURS?

Definitely there are and I am really grateful to have them in my life. My mother supports me so much, my sister, Engineer Hesham Hatab, Karim El-Zoghby, my sponsors including the National Bank of Egypt, Rawabet sports, Sakkara Equestrian products, Pirouette and Horse Times magazine of course.

TELL US A BIT ABOUT YOUR PLANS FOR THE COMING MONTHS?

First of all I will try as much as I can to keep my

horse in top form so that I could make it to any competition whenever we are needed to ride as a team to keep that amazing team spirit going. I am planning to find a new horse to back me up and I also have two other horses that are 8 and 9 year olds; whom I am also working on through this coming year to keep me in form.

HOW ARE THESE PLANS WORKING OUT FOR YOU SO FAR?

Nowadays I am riding in the Arab league, trying to qualify to the world cup finals. I was leading the Arab league tour, two shows earlier when we were in Saudi but now I am not really sure where I stand.

But I did a good job in the last show in EL-Ain, my horses jumped really good, placing 5th in the Grand Prix qualifier. I had one down in the Grand Prix but it was a very nice show for me to start with. I am looking forward to the 4\* shows in Abu Dhabi, EL-Shira'aa and Sharjah to finish the Arab league in a good position and qualify to the World Cup Finals then the long awaited Tokyo Olympic Games 2020. 🇸🇦