

YOUNG GOALS

AMINA ISMAIL SHAKER

By Sarah Taylor

WE BELIEVE THAT FINDING AND NURTURING YOUNG TALENT IS VITAL TO THE GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE EQUESTRIAN SPORT. SO IN SEARCH OF YOUNG TALENT, HT INTERVIEWED THE 15 YEAR OLD RIDER AMINA SHAKER TO LEARN HOW SHE CAME TO THIS SPORT, HOW SHE VIEWS HER TALENT, HER COMMITMENT, AND HER ASPIRATION FOR THE FUTURE.



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Amina Ismail & Palma

When did you start riding?

I started riding at 10. For the first year I rode a pony called Cenderlina. She was very calm and kind and I really enjoyed riding her. She helped me develop my balance and helped me through the basics of my riding, but she was quite old and wasn't fit for jumping larger fences. I then started riding Oreo, who was much larger in size than Cenderlina, so it was a step up for me. I was very nervous and fell many times because Oreo was very active, energetic, and much stronger compared to Cenderlina and she was able to jump bigger fences. For the past two years I have been riding my mare, Palma. She is much more powerful than what I was used to, so it took me a long time to get used to her and to gain control before entering competitions. After a couple of months of riding Palma, I started competing in our national Show Jumping competitions, and small courses in various clubs. Ever since I started competing, I gained confidence and set several different goals that I wanted to accomplish to improve next time.

Did you choose riding because your father is a rider?

The idea of riding was first introduced

to me by my father, Ismail Shaker; however, I chose to carry on with riding because I really enjoyed it and felt connected to horses. I really enjoyed it because you are surrounded by a completely different atmosphere and environment, compared to most other sports. Riding teaches patience, trust and confidence as well as the sense of responsibility.

What do you hope to achieve in the future?

I hope to keep improving and developing and compete in higher levels; as for a long term goal, one day I would like to ride professionally and represent Egypt in different countries around the world.

What does the horse represent to you?

My mare is something special to me that I really care about.

Do you feel that you have enough harmony with your mare?

I do; I try as much as possible to spend time with my mare. In the beginning it was very difficult to get used to her because she was more advanced than the horses I used to

ride but eventually we connected and we both got used to each other and created our own bond and harmony.

Do you do all the chores like in Europe, grooming - cleaning - tacking up?

It's very difficult to make time for these things, since I live quite far from where I ride. In Egypt it is much more different than in other areas. Riders depend more on grooms for maintaining their horses' health, along with completing most, if not all, of the chores. However, during holidays and in the summer I try to be more involved.

Do you read to learn about the sport?

When I first got my mare, I used to read a lot on ways to connect with her and ways to improve; I also read training tips to help me develop more.

Who is your role model?

My dad because he has always been there for me, he is the one who introduced me to the sport and always motivated me to carry on riding. When I watch him riding I get motivated to work on myself and one day to be like him. 🐾