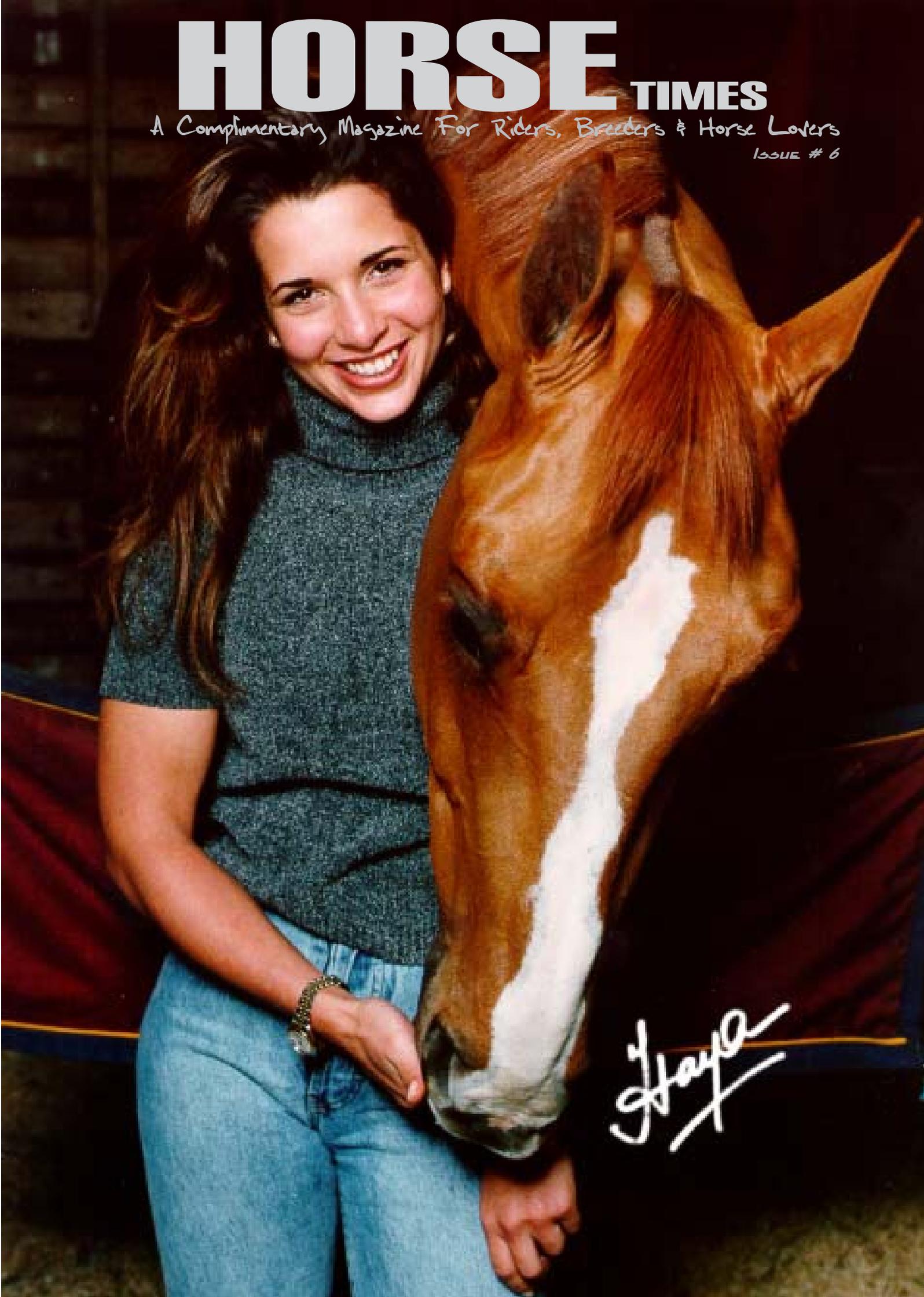


# HORSE TIMES

*A Complimentary Magazine For Riders, Breeders & Horse Lovers*

*ISSUE # 6*



*Hayo*

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Issue # 6, January 2000



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## A LETTER TO THE EDITOR

It was wonderful to come back to the Arab world and compete this summer... It has also been wonderful to witness the Arab Nations making their mark in the international showjumping circuit worldwide... by competing, laying foundations, sponsoring shows, and fielding teams. Humans are strange creatures, I guess over the five years that I have been away training and competing I felt as if time had stood still. I wondered what I was going to find when I returned. A whole new world is the only way that I can describe it...

I was most excited by this publication 'HORSE TIMES', and its implications for our equestrian future. I do believe that Egypt is one of the foundation stones of our sport, and the heritage that Egypt has in equestrian sports and showjumping specifically, is parallel to that of any European country. Flipping through the pages of various previous issues, its mind blowing just how many 'real horsemen' we have in this region. I look forward to learning from them in the future, through their written words, and their experiences. I remember one conversation I had with my late father when we were discussing how much hype and excitement there was about 'bringing the equestrian sport back to the middle east...' 'That it was our tradition and now the west had passed us in the field. He smiled and said, 'Our tradition never left us. It was just asleep, its your job to wake it up...' Meeting all my colleagues this summer again, and flipping through this publication makes me laugh, he was right, it never left us.... It's an honour to be a small contributor to the magazine.

Yours,

Haya Bint Al-Hussein

# THE PAN ARAB TOUR

BY  
HER ROYAL HIGHNESS  
PRINCESS  
HAYA BINT AL-HUSSEIN



## Introduction:

Horses have taken me around the world, every corner of it, but I never knew why really...It was a stallion that made me realize after the Grand Prix in Fakra, what 17 years of hard work, tears and homesickness, friends made and lost, happiness and character building lessons was about. I thought the easiest way for you to understand is to know his story.

In Fakra, Lebanon I started the Grand Prix with a stallion that came into my team in late June. I had worked in

Europe for five years with a healthy team of nine horses, four of which were being fine tuned for the sole purpose of this Olympic Qualification. January 1999 my top horse was injured, by mid-February the second and third in line were injured.

May the fourth went. I was left with a team of young horses that I had put 3 to 4 years of work and patience into and could not sacrifice their progress for two minutes of a grand Prix for the Olympic honor. My sponsors told my trainer they would rent, lease buy or steal a horse but that we had to find one for the one event.

This stallion appeared within two weeks to go to our dead line, I was told to play with him for a few days before Paul would ask me to jump him. The moment I sat in the saddle I hated everything about his ride. Slow off my leg, he was so unresponsive to me trying to influence his stride that I felt like I had no control. He needed time in the

air for this big slow scopey jump. When I got the enormous jump he was comfortable with, he left his shoulder straight, and threw his back end in a way that was truly spectacular... Yet it took all my balance, strength, and flexibility to sit. I spent days with my head buried in my bit box and everyone else's bit collections to try and find one that would just give me a little control. Finally when Paul came to see him jump I had my analysis ready for him: I like to think that I can ride any horse, not just 'girl's horses', I like to think that given time I can turn them round my way and get a result. But this one I just can't, I need a place to start, I need just one thing going for me that I can build on, I can't find it. I can't bit him different, his mouth is soft his neck is like a bull.

I don't know but I just can't do this. Paul and Aidan (my groom) were standing there and they both agreed, was the stallion's history, his breeding, was the financial return my sponsor's needed. His mind and his heart were all I had going for me. 'You have to believe in me, you can make this work.'

I rode him in a national grand prix a week later, he finished 6th. The two small classes I rode before each time with a different bit, each time I came out of the ring saying the same thing, 'its not the size of the fences, they could be poles on the ground I have no control.





' Whatever way I got him to the fence he tried, which made me feel worse, I loved him for it. But I could not communicate with him on any level. My sixth place I had to fight so hard for I felt no happiness, no elation, I felt beaten up and demoralized. Monday morning I pulled the horses out to check them after the show, and I was itching after spending all night reliving in my mind the rounds to try something else...Lame, the vet came, and told me ten days the horse walks, you are looking at two and a half to three months to get him to a show again. I did not need a set back when I hated the ride anyway! So we waited, and waited I tried to spend all the time with him that I could and we did get him week by week fitter, soon he looked like a different horse than the one I had been given to ride in June. The Team decided that after the pressures of the Olympic Qualification year and we were about a month behind schedule to hit the top shows on our calendar for August, it was impossible for me not to go to the Pan Arab Games in Jordan. They all agreed I needed to do four or five small shows that I could just enjoy and get fresh, and I needed to get the stallion, and another horse that had been purchased by the sponsors that finally arrived five days before the horses were due to ship. My horse for the Pan Arabs was a seasoned old campaigner with Team Harmony, a speed horse. That was the team I shipped out

with, two basically new horses one old one. The stallion whom was this side of fit and I would work and it was make or break. It was a lonely place to be, especially when all my Arab colleagues were expecting this quiet approach, coupled with 5 years away meant that I had some miracle up my sleeve!

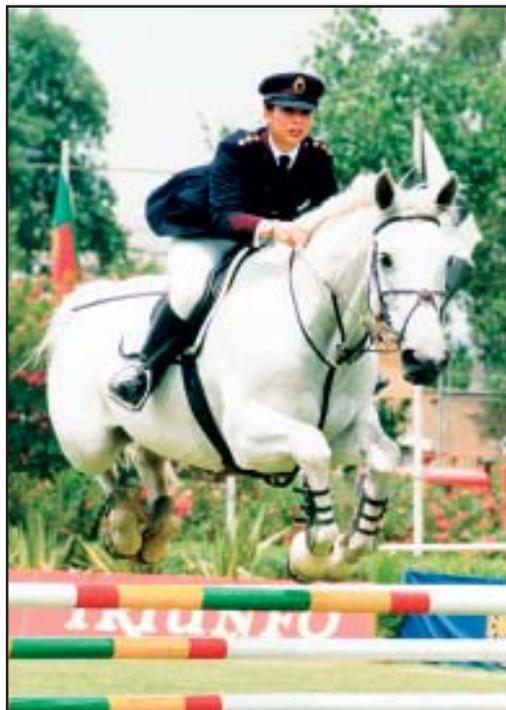
I trained the first two days before the games, and Lasangos felt like he always felt. I worked the horse everyday, felt a little step forward at the end of the hour, only to take two steps backwards the next day. Day before we left for Syria, I put up a course... and two hours later I broke down in tears when I could not figure out how to add a stride on one simple tiny distance. We went to Latakia and I said the horse has two shows if he does not work there, then I sit on him the last time in Fakra. We did jump the first class clear in Latakia. He dragged me into to two fences in the jump off, we finished forth but I was furious. I went check them in the morning and he had an eye the size of a tennis ball. He must have hit it in the stables overnight, whatever it had swollen shut he would not start again that show. By then I resigned myself, put him on a fitness program of beach exercise. I thought if I sell him, I sell him fit. I don't need to jump him again I know the outcome anyway. Fakra was his swan song.... No one said it but we all knew it. We arrived there and the weather made a big difference to the horse. The fitness work had paid off and I took a gamble in a bridle, I was sticking with it whatever.

I jumped him for the first time in the opening class. The horse went from power

to power, all of a sudden all the grueling days, the tears the fights, the cajoling all came together into this partnership I have never known the likes of before.

When I compete though I never forget where I am or what is on the cards. Three days I rode the stallion in the ring, I forgot where I was, did not hear anything but the thunder of his hooves hitting the sand, and could not feel anything but awe and wonder at this power. It was like lightening off the ground and we just seemed to soar. I was sitting out side the stable yard after the Grand Prix, the show ground was buzzing. Everyone wanted to buy him, or breed from him, everyone said he was easy, you just have to sit and he jumps. We all looked at each other and smiled... We knew!

I turned to tell someone what it felt like, but how could I say it? What I wanted to say was that when I jumped those fences all that kept going through my mind was wonder, at this magnificent animal, at his power at his majesty. I wondered God for creating these magnificent creatures. I thanked God for giving me the honor



HRH PRINCESS HAYA BINT AL HUSSEIN RIDING CERA

of riding him, of letting me for those few minutes feel totally as one with him. I thought my instructions literally and he responded to the slightest tilt of my body, I felt him prepare for a turn as I turned my head over the fence without even giving him the aids. I forgot everything but that feeling that our two hearts for two minutes beat as one and we spoke the same language.

It was such a simple profound joy I wanted to share it, I couldn't

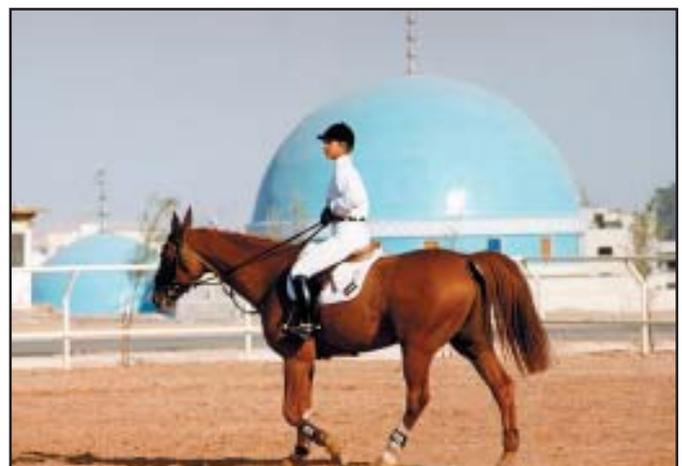
really turn to anyone except my groom and just say, ' I am happy to be alive.' He was nearly in tears ' me too, I felt everything that you did when I watched it, '

I cannot justify that feeling in words I cannot give it or share it but I can say that I think everyone must feel their own version of it when they work with horses. When everyone I met said to me.... You have to help, you have to share what you have learned, you have to debate, argue change this and that.' I kept asking myself, 'Why? I am not indebted to anyone, beholden to anyone, or need to go through all this bureaucratic aggravation. What reason on earth do I have for putting myself through all this hassle?'

However sitting outside that stables and letting go of three weeks of that constant companion called 'doubt' I knew why, if I could give this joy to just one other person from my region it would all be worth it. I spent the following weeks thinking, how?! This article is the outcome. I know enough to tell you that, I don't know much at all in the end. My ideas are as good as the next person you are going to ask.

And above all what I realized when I poured my heart out on paper is that you cannot divorce the past from the present, one part of our sport from the next. It will work one way, and one way only.... If you can accept that one simple point from me I am happy that I need do no more. We all have to work together, all our branches, all our disciplines, all our federations, in all our countries. I mean deeds, not eulogies on Arab Brotherhood, I am afraid we are at that stage already....

The article gives my perspective of the past in the administrative, jumps from what I saw in the three shows to a vision I have for the future. Its all a skeleton of ideas, it all asks for your input, its supposed to provoke your reaction, when we can all throw enough good intent in the air we will get the answers. I can't give them but I think I know enough to push in certain directions. Start with team work, it's the essence of mans involvement with horses, it what they ask of us. Let that be the foundation.



PRINCESS HAYA BINT AL HUSSEIN WITH SHIFAA'



**Administrative:**

The Middle East falls into FEI Group VII, as recently as the FEI General Assembly in Berlin 1992, the Group was fondly known as the 'trash can' of the International body...it was compromised of the largest amount of National Federations with the least activities. During the Group sessions in 1992 it was agreed that the group should be divided in three ways, into geographically adjacent landmasses. Three subgroups were created. Sub Groups A and B were North and South Africa respectively and Sub-Group C was Arabia, Cyprus, India, Turkey, Iran and Pakistan.

It is important to add at this juncture that the lack of activity in this area was still due to one very specific problem, and it was not laziness or lack of enthusiasm. It was practically solely due to African Horse Disease. The ideologies and politics of this fly that that remained adherent to the borders of specific nations and not others that were climatically identical remained an enigma to me and many that I discussed it with. However confusing this concern was its practicalities were clear. We had a handful of countries that were labeled clean all geographically separated by a nation that

w a s 'infected'. The only way to transport horses legally

through an infected area was by plane. How to create a circuit when you had to book a plane, for 4 horses? Some had it, some did not, those who had it really had it more on paper. And it took all I possessed both in charm, cajoling, and eventually threats of quite an extreme nature to persuade those who believed that to fill out the forms, and process the necessary paper work stating that they were 'clean'.... Meant writing to old colonial powers to become 'accepted'. More minor, but prevalent was politics, shows would be planned then competitors who were more often than not friends between themselves would be prevented from competing. Stress levels ran high in run-ups to international

when 8 countries agreed to turn up and 6 cancelled last minute.

The third factor was communication delays in post box pickup, and federations being run on a part-time basis was also a little to do with politics, it was a kind of; optional we are open to business if there is a thing we are interested in doing. But chase a n o t h e r federation to follow up on an u n p l e a s a n t issue, avoiding communication seemed a far more tactful way of turning one down, rather than taking on the issue. For those of us who were trying to ride and support our federations it was tough, in retrospect I can almost understand the policy of selective communication seeing as in those days most of the Arab federations were run by leading quite political figures and not even horses managed to bridge those

gaps at those t i m e s . It was Prince Faisal of Saudi Arabia who b e c a m e

**More minor, but prevalent was politics**

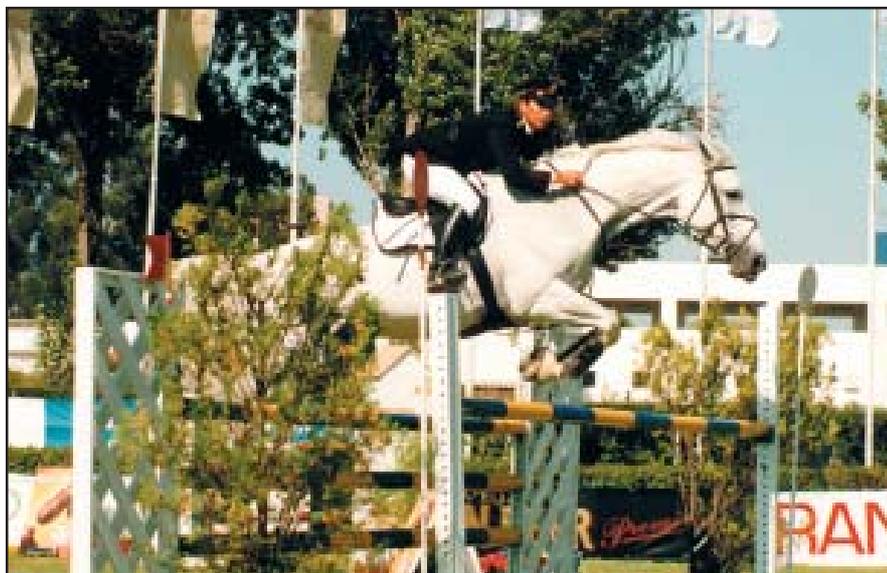
Group VII leader at that time, who created the sub groups on the advise of his predecessor and the first Arab member of the bureau Saad Khalifa who remained the father of the group in nearly every way, his long history in the sport helped the group steer through not only the political hiccups from within ever promoting the fact that for the sake of the horse we should rise above our problems. But also steering all the members through the intricacies of a stamping ground he knew better than even most of the European delegates, FEI politics. And whether you care to believe it or not I was amazed at the time to come to realize that no matter how complicated the Arab Israeli issue was...

FEI politics seemed to beat that by miles! So for those two men the subgroup idea flew and flew fast. It worked well in elevating the issues that I mentioned in one specific way, the smaller land masses to work with made a solution to the African Horse disease

'conceivable'. A number of countries did gain the status in a very short period of time. The smaller number of countries created a kind of familiarity that superceded national international frictions in many cases,

and overcame even the postman. In their meetings they were also bound by a common tongue, which made the shy members of the group quite verbal indeed, and the initial Bureau worry that the additional five non Arab members of the subgroup would be ostracized was overcome with genuine Arab hospitality and all the necessary flare!

In the year of its conception there was one event that took place in the Arab nations at a level they were comfortable at, CSA Latakia, Syria. There were a number of other events in well-established equestrian nations that were invitational events catering mostly for international riders from Europe. (Egypt, Morocco, Libya.) After the GA in Berlin, the Sub Group organized as its first event a fruitful veterinary meeting in Cyprus to discuss the issue of the movement of horses across borders, In 1993 there were two general assemblies organized that involved the Pan Arab federation members and the FEI representatives in the region. ... In 1993 the number of international events went from the 4 above-mentioned to seven additional International Horse Shows!



The FEI General Assembly in Tampa, Florida was one of the saddest times in my equestrian career. Firstly Cyprus was moved from Group VII to Group II (with Europe and Israel). Undoubtedly a great transfer for the Cypriots, but for me they had been an unbelievably dynamic nation working with very little and making from it so very much.

They crowned this transfer in style when they qualified one rider Antonis Michael Petris for the world cup finals 1995. His father Michael Petris, is one of the vets in the subgroup who had been the greatest moving force in the eradication program of the disease. Then, to make matters worse, having seen how well the subgroup idea had worked the further subdivision of the subgroups was lobbied. Morocco, Algeria, Egypt, Tunisia, and Libya, next Jordan Syria and Lebanon. And the last subdivision was the gulf all grouped together.



However the motion was passed and at loss for what to do next I turned to Saad Khalifa. What we had achieved was only done so because the stronger countries had carried the weaker ones for advise and what he said that day was to change my life and give me some of the happiest times I ever had since then, "Why don't you just ride, not in the Middle East as you have been, but go to Europe. You have an Olympic dream, what is stopping you?"

That was my last day in equestrian politics, there was a gradual decline in events, and until this Pan Arab Year we were back to 3 international shows in the region.

A number of other positive things did happen though. Prince Faisal commissioned the most beautiful series of books that celebrates the history of the region and its involvement with horses. Its called 'Al Furusia' it shows photos and texts that date as far back as the Hittites... He sent his books and an exhibit around the world and educated many whom looked upon the region as basically ignorant. The movement to sanitize the area continued, and there are now only

## Urgently needed ! !

This whole article could actually be summarized into one very simple sentence.... Sorry to put you all through this painful reading but (!) all the Arab world really needs is shows! The rest of this is all subjective supportive debate to this fact. No more and no less at all. Not random shows but a circuit that suits all the Arab countries which in fact is something that no matter how much we all enjoy arguing and debating has to be in the end dictated by the climate. Quite simply the question is to start firstly a permanent outdoor circuit because there are actually very few good indoors in the area, on top of which the rhythm that a rider needs to ride indoors is actually very different from your outdoor rhythm, and while we still are undecided which course builders are our favorites it is actually much more difficult to cause riders serious problems outdoors in a larger space. My idea is so as to avoid running before you can walk and build on the things we have.

So if there is simply an outdoor circuit that

one country to create a serious championship, but regionally we would.

From my point of view it would create a very important asset, it would also allow people in our region to go in the show ring and for the primary objective to be that the horse jumps nicely and not for them to win, going full speed at suicidal rates...learning how to produce a horse and manage it is the objective of horsemanship, and if we can teach that in a very subtle, indirect way, create that psychological mindset, that would be one of the biggest steps forward that this region could take. To take this heroic, idiotic frightening approach away from riders ethics and teach them that allowing the horse to best express himself in the way he performs is the ultimate is the biggest battle. I can't see any other way of telling kids that their approach just is not cool... except for taking the pressure off them and putting the spotlight on the horse. Also you create a very important market, buying and selling horses is a lot different when you have a label, to the package. Even if one or two good horses were produced in the region and got out to Europe word travels really fast, believe me. The gold diggers would be here in no time, and when you can say "This is the Arab 5 year old champion" it's about 5 zero's different to your price!

The spring is obviously a low time for crowds but the idea is that for a breeding event and one that focuses on the sport horse you are catering for the enthusiasts anyway, why push hard to get the crowds?

If you could aim to get two or three years into the event the major European dealers and breeders and all of the Arabs it a real big step forward, spring is also the European dead season and it would be ideal. Europe is in front of the equestrian world because it offers such a huge amount of equestrian events, and actually to be realistic, in all of our lifetimes that is not going to change. But on another note the Europeans are also in front because they have the market. Americans, Mexicans, Arabs, everyone goes there to buy horses...

The sellers hold the cards if you are not beholden to the dealer you are buying from himself, you are beholden to the agent, or the 'friend ' who for 10% or a favor somewhere down the road who will give you some totally irrelevant advice that makes you decide yay or nay. We can do that too. No I am not kidding you in two years we will not be a Holland or a Germany producing sport horses in the thousands. I see countless good horses in Europe every day in my workplace, but I noticed that no Arab has ever asked me "How many bad horses do you see?" If they did they would be surprised to know I see as many bad horses per capita as I have here in the Arab world for sure.

What the premeditated production of the sport horse would do is simply this, breed a kind of respect that so far is non-existent here, and the most important to me as an Arab is it would primarily breed self respect and conviction in ones own knowledge.



a select few nations that have not gained the status, disease free. Many of the really enthusiastic riders who saw no future in their own region moved to Europe, to train and ride and through solid, reasonable investments started to eat away at the 'Arabs can only buy success ' reputation. The Saudi's based a team that competed in the Atlanta Olympic Games, and they were shadowed by this reputation when they against all odds did so well there. They beat the reputation by moving around from Germany to France, now Belgium and notching up results in their wake. The Emirates based in France, again invested well in horses, Oman, Jordan.. What I mean by invested well, is that for reasonable prices they traveled around and found good to excellent horses that is not easy at all. I was talking to one of the most famous dealers recently about the progress and he said "you know, money can buy those horses, but your people know them, that's just horsemanship, you don't find that often." And its true, 'our people are showing the world that horsemanship is not a distant memory of the past, it was a sleeping monster, and now its moving.

could start out by running a sunshine circuit in the gulf countries, as far north as Egypt, for 8 weeks. And run months in the cooler climates of Jordan, Syria, and Lebanon... One could even consider long term looking at a special spring run of shows for say 'star spotters' looking for exceptional young horses that could be a three or four week exhibitional title type competition. An idea that I have always been amazed by is the German young horse championships. It basically runs a qualification system that marks horses all through the summer season of style and way of jumping.

Of course the only people who are interested in watching these competitions are real horse enthusiasts and breeders.. So they always take place at totally unreasonable hours of the morning, all season, and the horses are separated by their respective age groups. Then in the end of the season comes the show piece the championships itself. Out of this you get a three, four five and six-year-old German champion. I am offering this idea as a regional competition for a simple reason, we do not have enough age groups in



VIEW OF THE

## FACILITIES

### Jordan:

The facility in Jordan is brand new. Actually, from the point of view of the Games that was half the problem, there were magnificent stables 4x4 m, in a well ventilated cement block, in a large horse shoe shape. All separated by a service area for each set of ten stables, with tack rooms and feed rooms. Electricity sockets every second box.

Wash boxes included. Showers and bathrooms for the grooms and riders, and an administrative area. The recent birth of the facility (completion date 11 days before the start of the games. I was that usage quickly illuminated the drawbacks and weaknesses. Unmistakably unacceptable was the ground. The first team in pointed it out, but as the Amman municipality worked around the clock for 4 days and ripped the ground up and replaced it 6 times because every other person had a new idea.... We did end up with an acceptable surface that was unfortunately far from great. The problem being that the sand we have abundantly is just too fine, it lacks some sort of a cohesive agent, that if watered would somehow hold it. What we have slides when the horses take off and rolls away as they land. It was hard to walk in, and if I had not been under so much pressure at the time, I would have laughed with my sister's at the picture of all these Arab riders wandering around the ring with Jordanian stewards and engineers keen to listen and try and understand this weird breed of people who called themselves riders... who were all slipping sliding and stomping around the rings, jumping in the air and trying to demonstrate how horses take off and land. I was actually surprised that the municipality, and the major took this all so seriously, not only that but that they turned up and watched the event, cheered for all their ground experts!

The location was picturesque, in the heart of the city of Amman. The plans were on the books for 15 years now, but it is due to the Federation and its President Princess Alia who finally secured it from the various other 'serious' sports who kept eating little bits away over the years.

STADIUM

I am a fan of consistency though, and the good part was the events ran together all the time, and there was cheering all the time. Actually I did not really notice it the second day! The main thing that I would change is the drainage in the stables, I actually saw the same system in Syria, so I am guessing it comes out of some book like 'ten best ways to build a stables'. But there are these open grid drains that are about 20 cm wide that run directly outside each stable door the full way around the yard.



VIEW OF THE STADIUM - LATAKIA 1999

If you follow it its tunneled underground to the sewage down the hill into the main lines. The idea is that any liquids passed by the horses run out of the stables into the drains, out to the main system. Reality dictates though that contractor's should get rid of the book! Any liquids passed by the horses stay in the wet shavings and are removed by the grooms, as they usually are. But what does go into the drains and blocks them creating this frightening still, stagnant, stinking water are the shavings! Easy to fix though, and they did not ever get to the stinking stage but they would have... Block the drains up, as in cover them completely with cement, and have a closed muck heap, at the rear end of the stable yard where the refuse can be collected and does make excellent agricultural fertilizer, in fact in Europe they even go so far as selling it.

If I had three wishes from a genie in a magic lantern I would have said, build me a car park that facilitates the Olympic pool and the Equestrian center on the right hand side of the facility if you stand with your back to the stables. Directly in front of the stadium build me an indoor arena that's 35mx70m including seating for 6,000 people, so we could run our own indoor shows and create a Middle Eastern World Cup League. Extend the seating all around the stadium, as a higher more enclosed entity, that would help block sound and create much more atmosphere and character to the ring itself. And leave room on the long side behind the royal box for underneath administrative offices. And a play area for those children that come with their parents to the shows and love to do things that make your heart stop like, 'lets touch that horsey when you are passing them at full gallop... or scream because you hit a fence, or scream because you did not but they are bored. I don't always blame them, horse shows are boring, but hopefully if they can have fun there they will drag their parents along more often! And this was a generous genie.

### Syria:

I took great pleasure in watching the mouths of my German trainer and my groom drop open in awe when they saw the stadium in Syria. It is certainly impressive, and it is an asset to our sport. It is a football stadium that they use for the event, I was told when pushed they seat 45,000 people. Six years ago when Major Basil Al Asad was riding there I remember the stadium being pretty much full, there were a good thirty thousand people at a conservative guess. This year we managed 10,000 for the main event. Besides Aachen and Dublin that is probably one of the most awe inspiring rings I have ever ridden in my career the way that the stadium and public tower over you as you perform makes you feel really very insignificant. It is not a place to take a spooky green horse at all. The nice thing is that they do have a multipurpose athletics track around the football pitch at minimum viewing distance, the crowd is close as they can be to the sport itself,



VIEW OF THE LATAKIA COAST



and horses and riders do not get lost while performing in that ring. The course builder an Italian \*\*\*\*\* managed to be build related distances and nice courses in the ring without getting lost by its size. He also used the whole ring in a way that was a nice consideration of space without having courses that felt like marathons to ride.

In all three countries I would criticize the use of fence material, which was basically plain standards with advertising boards and flowers in all three shows. No real special picturesque or cultural fences.

The warm up was a little on the hard side and in both Jordan and Syria there were these watering systems that were actually very dangerous. They look like these little flying saucers that sit randomly in the ground and you don't know they are in your way unless you are about to be or are on top of one. Either way it unpleasant for the horse, if you see it in time, you don't need to send for the horse dentist for a while as you practically rip the horses molars out to avoid them, or else you step on one wrong and get an injury. I think that we should just remember to cover them over.

The stable is a good kilometer from the ring in Syria, and since I competed there last they built a very modern new stable area, which is altogether cooler, better aired, and an organized structure to look at. With a large wash area, and good 3x4m boxes. They created their own sliding door system, with local materials that was very functional, safe for the horses, and would be cheap to duplicate. It didn't look at all cheap, or function cheaply until you really study the materials and look at the design. It would market well in Europe if they patented it!

The show ran four weeks later than its usual calendar date due to the Pan Arab Games. I was worried about the humidity that I remember well from years past, but those four weeks made a big difference. The climate was good to ride, and with a little extra care and notice to the fluid intake of the horses I saw no marked difference in their performance at all.

#### Lebanon:

I never in my whole life saw use and cohabitation of nature and landscape combined with human design as I did until I saw this facility. The rock formation in the hills around Fakra is practically comparable to stagnates and stalagmites that grow in caves from the ceiling down as systoles. Except these rocks grew from the ground up in huge closely coupled formations. It was beautiful and very rugged landscape, if someone where to take me up there with no buildings in sight, I would have thought

that man could never carve or build in these mountains. So raw and so stunning. However the Lebanese did, they created an area of chalets a hotel, and the riding facility and I understand that they are completing golf courses and other resort facilities. In complete contradiction with the landscape in a way that was truly charming their facility is neat, tidy, compact and very very civilized. There is everywhere you look from the outskirts of the bring that are made up from the cut away piles rock totally symmetrically laid, but totally in character with the scenery. To the ring the nestles into the mountain side, to the tiers that on one level have the warm up ring and the next two levels have pine and cement stables there is total undevoted attention to detail. So much so that I could hardly manage to study it all, and could not hope to do justice to it in words. The facility matches any and every international specification and would honor any rider to ride there. The climate is fantastically fresh, verging on cold they told me 4 weeks after the show the area would close and horses moved down to Beirut because the snow would claim it. Indeed the fog threatened rain, and I was not the only one who frowned from the saddle and glanced at the sky, but we got none.

Judges and stewards walked around pulling out highly obscure rules that really were not relevant to anything at all, but just gave them something to say. While at the same time they ignored basic safety like having 20 people who really had nothing special to do but interfere in the warm arena and alternately either nearly got kicked or run over by riders, and amazingly still were not more careful.

There was also this attitude that really was un stomachable were administrators ran around with their FEI rulebooks and whipped them out as soon as you greeted them. Every sentence began with, "According to article.... YOU CANNOT..." I am used to it, but I found it the hardest thing to come back to after Europe, my trainer made me laugh though when he looked at me in our last show and sighed, "I just cannot figure it out, **THERE IS NO SPORT HERE.**

**THERE IS NO SPORT!** There are less than 16 horses in the big class, why do they keep throwing out rules, these shows can't even be classified as International. Are you guys trying to make a sport or kill it?" He is right, so right its not funny. So many people are just caught up in their own self-importance walking

around, surgically attached to the FEI Rules and Regulations, it was scary. They change the category of the show itself, in order to find another rule that suits them better at the time. I think it's clever actually, in Europe they would probably be less imaginative and say something uncouth like its cheating. There was such a thin line though it was hard to separate all the time. I think that there is one really important sentence in that book, it says "translate the above mentioned rules in a sporting manner."

The thing is we have got to build the sport before we

throw the rules around, I am sorry that is the only way I can say it. Again, not I or any other expert can help the region unless that is faced. If we can't see where we are then we can't take any step forward.

If you were a professional trying to do your job, it was grueling, hard, and very unpleasant.

I humbly suggest that the Arab countries invest in marketing companies like BCM or SEPA, to organize one or two or three years worth of events, riders have to train but organizing committees too. Its actually in the organizers interest to invite an unbiased third party to do that job for a while so that they can learn, and they unpopular job of saying to complaining delegation heads that they should just , "Shut up and enjoy the show..." as well as just professionalize the whole event and more importantly prioritize changes, so that its not such a big daunting mess, but we have achievable, progressive goals.



## SUMMARY

All three facilities matched international specifications.

None of the three facilities organized their events up to international specifications. All three had their charming Arab hospitality, and if any rider had asked for dove's milk the organizing committees would have bent over backwards to provide it.

None of the facilities had one or more serious or even half-serious professionals running their show. It's not a personal criticism at all, just an observation.

All three had hours of technical meetings that involved discussions over the most irrelevant issues, classes did not start on time, start lists appeared or did not at all only moments before the classes.



# Evergreen

**A knight in shining armour. A movie star.  
A natural charmer with a smile to die for.  
Sima Fares was privileged to meet the man who  
introduced the equestrian sport into the Egyptian acting  
scene.**

**Ahmed Mazhar remembers how his passion for horses began.**

As a child, Ahmed Mazhar began riding donkeys in his farm, whenever he got the chance to travel to the countryside. He loved riding and taking care of horses himself. Of his most pleasurable times, Mazhar recalls taking the horses for a swim in the river to cool off the hot summer days. His slender build and physical fitness helped him excel in riding, and at the early age of 20 he joined the Military college as a student, to be able to ride under constant supervision. He began riding religiously and developed an interest in show jumping. With a heart as brave as a lion's, nothing could stop Mazhar from riding any horse, no matter how dangerous or stubborn it was. Riding in the army Mazhar recalls one of his many braveheart stories. At that time, for official ceremonies and funeral parades only black horses could be ridden. They were largely built powerful horses with a lot of energy; but since they were seldomly used except in training for the occasion, they became impossible to control. On that day, 4 of those horses were harnessed to a carriage, waiting for a volunteer to drive them to their destination. After several failed attempts to stop the ever charging horses, the mission was called off. But that's when Mazhar took it upon himself as a challenge that he had to win. He sat in the carriage, took hold of the reins, and off charged the 4 horses with full speed. Mazhar did lose control and found it impossible to stop the horses from taking the lead. The spectators were expecting to watch another failing attempt, when Mazhar began directing the horses towards a wall - a dead end that is. They had no choice other than stopping, thought Mazhar to himself, because horses are smart animals and would not hurt themselves. And that is exactly what happened. After several rounds of cantering around and stopping against the wall, Mazhar gradually began bringing them to a halt away from the wall and the ride ended in a peaceful finale where all 4 horses obediently stopped in the middle of the arena. The spectators and officers present cheered hysterically for Mazhar, as he stepped down the carriage full of self-satisfaction and joyful pride.



Whilst Mazhar was still in the army, the director of the Arabic movie, "Zohoor El Islam," or "The Beginning Of Islam," asked for a good looking rider to act in his film. He auditioned for the role and was immediately given the part - the start of a brilliant career. Most of Mazhar's movies involved horses and revealed his equestrian talents. Eventually his acting career took over most of his time, but Mazhar's love for horses remained the same. He always owned horses, which he rode for pleasure on a

regular basis. However, Mazhar still remained active and made appearances in many international and local shows. He was asked to judge constantly in competitions, as well as help design show jumping courses.

Talking about his equestrian career, Mazhar recalls Salli Alla El Nabi as his favourite mare ever. He was the one who broke and trained her, then rode her for some time before Mohamed Selim Zaki began competing with her. Mazhar was head of the Egyptian Olympic Equestrian team from 1952 to 1960. He was also Commander of the Army Barracks for a certain time.

About his favourite way to train horses, Mazhar prefers the free gentle way to the controlled method. A horse that has been treated harshly in its early years will always reluctantly submit to discipline, as it will have visions of the ill treatment in its memory forever. Whereas, a horse handled gently with care at a young age, will be willing to perform at its fullest to satisfy its rider.

**Ahmed Mazhar is the definitive graceful horseman, the perfect star and so he shall remain: evergreen in the hearts of the Egyptian people.**



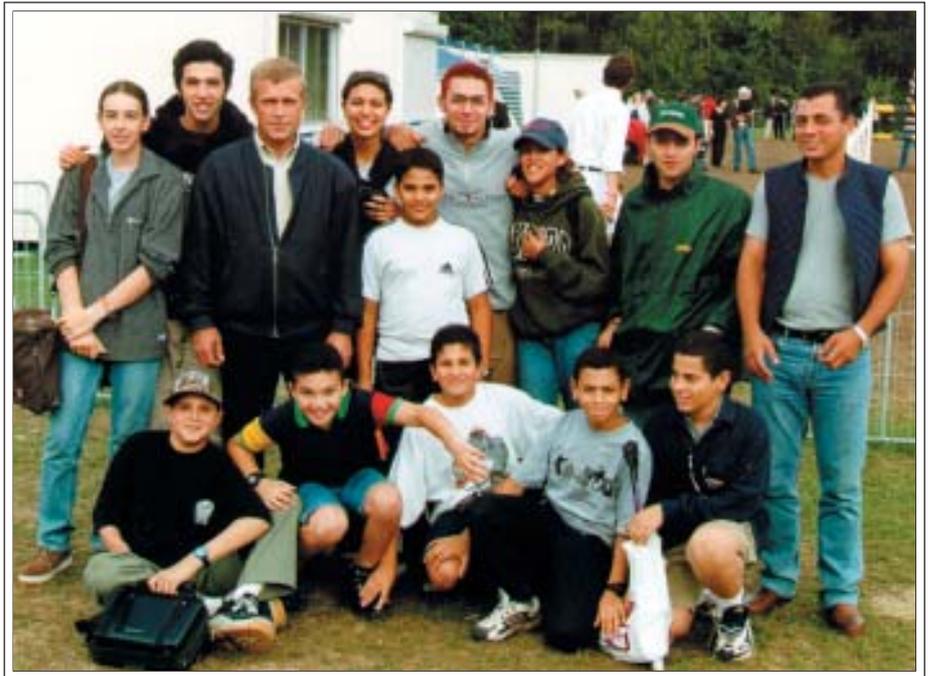
# THE REAL EXPERIENCE

My name is Mennat Mokhtar, I am 18 years old. Last summer I went to Holland on a riding trip organised by my trainer Khaled Assem. It lasted two weeks and involved an intensive riding program as well as some other activities. This trip proved itself very beneficial concerning both riding and personal pleasure.

On August 1<sup>st</sup>, we arrived at the hotel of a small town at noon. After all the accommodation arrangements were through, we drove up to the stables, anticipating the arrival of the horses. During the following two days each of us tried out the assigned horses and after everyone was settled, the training began. We had a dressage trainer, a jumping trainer and a stable management teacher. We trained on regular basis; and according to a schedule, put by our jumping instructor Arno Neessen. We rode dressage and jumping everyday, and sometimes twice a day, throughout the two weeks. Beside the normal riding lessons, we went out hacking (forest rides) and took a stable management lesson. By the end of the two weeks I learned how to tack, shower and groom the horse, clean the stable and the tack and much more. Because there were no grooms, every time we rode, we practiced everything we learned all over again. At the end of every week, we had a competition either inside or outside the riding centre. After this intensive training session, I acquired a better understanding of horsemanship and many techniques which I now know are the essential basics to become a good rider.

Arno once told me: "It is not a matter of jumping high, but of being in total control of the horse, yet harmoniously."

For me, this trip was my first riding experience abroad. Besides riding, I very much enjoyed the company of the group, especially the six little "munchkins" (or so we used to call the kids on the trip), who were all very helpful, co-operative and funny. The whole group soon became friends which made us enjoy the trip even more.



My name is Mohamed Essawy, I am 10 years old. Horseback riding is my favorite sport, I train almost 5 times a week. Last summer, my trainer Mohamed Khalifa suggested to me a Riding camp in Holland. Of-course I agreed and was very excited to join. I thought it would be just a fun trip to Holland with some horseback riding !! But there I discovered that it was a real course in everything related to horseback riding. We learned how to groom our horses, how to feed them and how to saddle them up. We had learned all this before, but the equestrian life abroad is very different. The horse is totally dependant on the rider and not on the groom. So we used to spend most of our days riding and caring for the horses. Riding different horses in a different place was a big experience. The biggest experience was attending international shows and meeting international riders 'we met Rodrigo Pessoa'.

This clinic made a real team out of us. In October when my trainer told me that Arno Neessen is coming to our center "Stallion" we all attended on daily basis, although we had exams. We went to school, studied hard and still attended the clinic. What really mattered was the reunion.

## This Is Just The Beginnig BY HADIEL EZZAT

October was a month full of activities, hard work and training for most riders. El Obour tournament was held at a different club every Friday during that month.

For some riders it was more intensive, as they attended a training clinic during the last week of October, just before the finals. The clinic conducted by the professional rider and trainer Mr. Arno Neessen, who was invited to Egypt by Khaled Assem, took place in 3 different places. Gezira club, Police head quarters and Stallion Equestrian Center.

In the (Stallion Equestrian Center) clinic, it was a combination of Stallion, Ferosia and Abdel Kader Academy riders, a total of 20 horses hosted by Stallion Equestrian Center.

Mohamed Khalifa, owner and General Manager of Stallion did all the necessary arrangements to have a successful clinic. He managed to host all visiting 20 horse at his stables, built and painted extra fences and lit the sand arena since the clinic started at 6:00pm.

The riders showed a very nice team spirit, although they were from different clubs, yet their trip to Holland has developed their friendship. Most of the riders' parents were there almost everyday watching their children's performance, as well as to enjoy the nice company of the group.

Although riding does take a bit of time, especially during school days, yet it motivates and inspires them when it comes to studying. The clinic days flew like wind, and ended by a nice birthday celebration for two of the riders.

The intensive one week clinic of jumping and flat work proved fruitful during the finals at El Obour tournament. Mr. Neessen attended the show with his trainees, gave them his instructions as well as his feedback after the competition.

Well this is just the beginning; it was the first clinic, but not the last one. Waiting for more clinics.



**MISSION IMPOSSIBLE: To get 10 teenage riders (with more than Spice Girls on their minds) to build a pyramid, pose and smile. Sima Fares succeeded. MISSION IMPOSSIBLE: To get 10 teenage riders (with more than Spice Girls on their minds) to build a pyramid, pose and smile. Sima Fares succeeded.**



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**Age:** 15 years old  
**Riding Club:** Sporting  
**Trainer:** Samir Abdel Fattah  
**Horse:** Renville, a 5.5 yr. old Dutch gelding - Matador, a 9 yr. old Dutch gelding -Cartago, a 6 yr. old German mare - Casanova, 6.5 yr. old Dutch gelding - Cappucino, an 11 yr. old Dutch mare  
**Training schedule:** Rides 3 times a week

**Competes in:** Under 14 years, under 18 years and Newcomers  
**Best Achievement:**  
**Role Model:** Thierry Pommel  
**Horoscope:** Capricorn  
**Wants to be:** Businessman  
**Favorite food:** Chinese  
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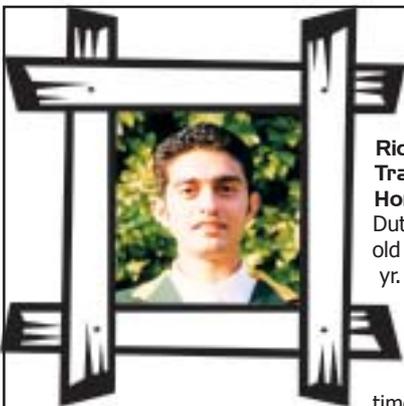
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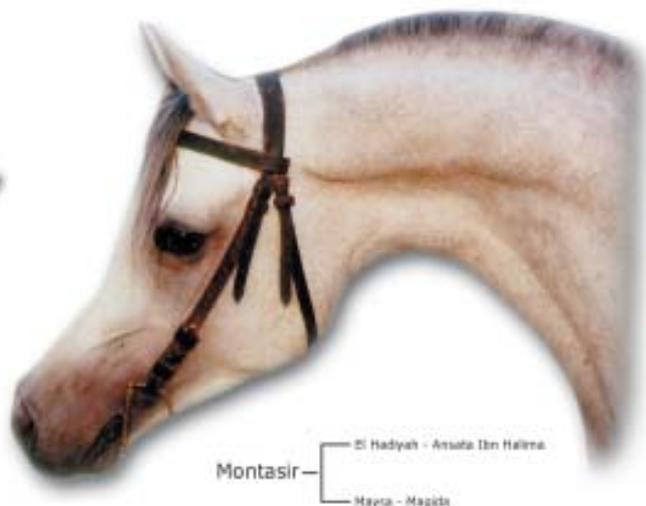
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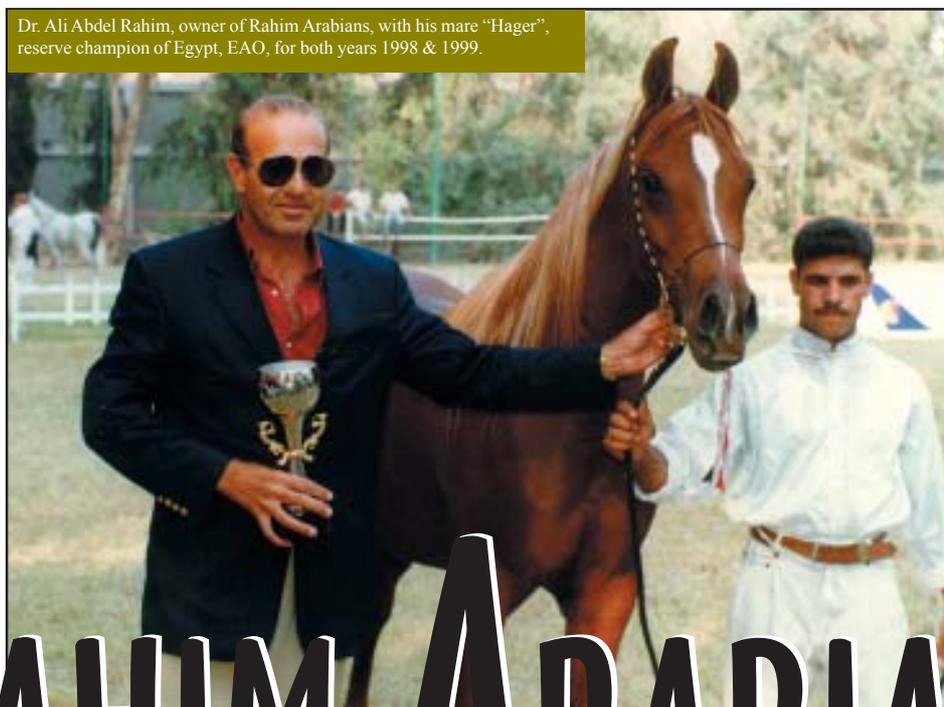
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# Egyptian Arabians

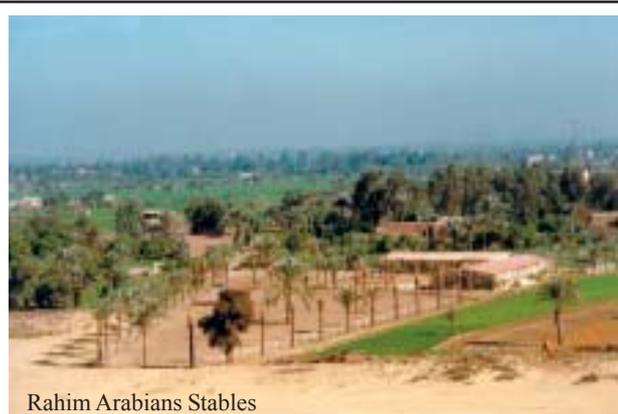


Montasir — El Hadyah - Ansata Ibn Halima  
Haysa - Magida

Dr. Ali Abdel Rahim, owner of Rahim Arabians, with his mare "Hager", reserve champion of Egypt, EAO, for both years 1998 & 1999.



# RAHIM ARABIANS



Rahim Arabians Stables

Founded: 1974  
Owner : Dr. Aly Abdel Rahim  
Location: Bordering the Western Desert, next to the Temple Of The Sun, And Abou Seer Pyramids, Giza - Egypt.  
Mailing Address : 1 Sphinx Square - Mohandessin 12411, Giza - Egypt  
Tel. : ++2 (02) 388 3602 / 03  
Fax : ++2 (02) 388 4350  
E-Mail : palma@egyptonline.com.eg  
Number of Horses : 10 Brood Mares, Total 30 Top Quality Striaght Egyptian Horses, with outstanding performance at the Halter Shows and Race Tracks in Egypt.

## Bint Maamouna

Champion Mare - March 98



Bint El-Nil

Champion Filly - Feb 99, Champion Fillies and Mares - EAO Oct 99



Nile Allure

Champion Most Classical Head & Reserve Champion Mare - March 98

The Egyptian Arabian Horse is a priceless heritage that has been handed down to us by our ancestors, and it is our duty to keep that legacy intact. Our goal and aim is to pass on the ecstasy and pride one achieves in breeding that noble animal in its natural surroundings and conditions on to the next generation.

Quality surrounds the Egyptian Arabian Horse, in fact quality has but one definition and that is the Egyptian Arabian. Grace, beauty, elegance and pride are all manifested in it and it was for these qualities and more that this noble animal was from time immemorial cherished.

We are ardent admirers and devotees of that breath taking animal, and Rahim Arabians are honoured and proud to belong to that world wide family that is passionately dedicated in preserving them.

Rahim Arabians are situated in one of the unique sites of the world. Situated between the 'Sakkara Step Pyramid' and the 'Great Pyramids of Giza', Rahim Arabians borders the ancient Solar Temple of 'Abu Ghorab' and its pyramid. Hence, providing that noble animal a haven in its natural peaceful surroundings influenced by the positive energies of this peerless site.

It is at Rahim Arabians that you can see examples of these breath taking beauties as they prance proudly, with flaring nostrils and proud tilt to their necks looking towards the desert that runs in their veins. It is with great pride that Rahim Arabians offspring have brought fame to their new owners such as the legendary stallion 'El Ameer', champion of Egypt for 1993 & 1994, and the colt 'Negm El Din' Reserve Champion of Egypt International Competition at the EAO, Oct. 1999.

# 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

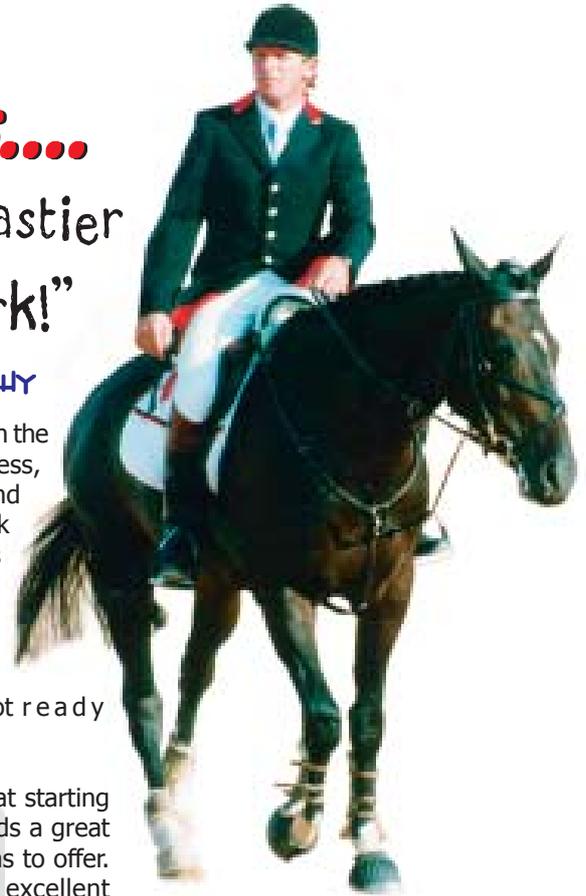
Sakkakini explains how the Saudi Arabian team approached the sport correctly to build up a good base for themselves, “They got good horses, got good trainers, and travelled around competing in order to get the necessary experience.”

“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.

**“Nothing beats success- and hey, results speak for themselves”**

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.





# VETERINARY CORNER .....

By DR. ASHRAF EL KALLA -- Ph. D Of EQUINE HyGINE AND EPIDEMIOLOGY

## LAMINITIS (II)

### Symptoms ;

Most commonly affects the front feet, but in sever cases all four maybe involved.

(1) Animal may lie down OR standing and in too much pain to lift a single foot. For this reason the animal does not move even when pushed or pulled.

(2) Early no lamness but short stilled trot.

(3) Later gait stilled at a walk.

(4) Standing of horse pulled the hind limb forward under the body to take much of the body weight off the front feet.

(5) The front feet pushed far forward of their normal position.

(6) Anxiety and muscular trembling may be observed from the sever pain of laminitis, rise of respiratory rate and body temperature.

(7) Muddy mucous membranes.

(8) Tenders of sole area of the hoof.

(9) Rotation of collinbone in sever cases with 12hs. That means the laminitis must be treated immediately.

(10) The hoof may slough.

(11) Death may be seen.

### Treatment ;

IMMEDIATELY

(1) Laxative.

(2) Antihistaminics.

(3) Antibiotics

(4) Antinflammatory.

(5) Intravenous fluids.

(6) Soak the hoof in cool mud.



Who ? How ? Where ?

A lot of question marks Vs. A lot of ideas .....



# Classified Ads ..

## HORSES FOR SALE

### "COLORADO"

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# Long live our Egyptian Arabian !

By YASMIN EL HABASHY

On the 22<sup>nd</sup> - 23<sup>rd</sup> of October 1999, the Egyptian Agricultural Organization (E.A.O), El Zahraa stud, held its sixth National championship for the Egyptian Arabian Horse.

'It was a great success,' says El Zahraa Director General, Dr. Khalil Soliman, proudly. All in all approximately 60 prizes were distributed besides the champions and the reserved champion prizes.

In this yearly show, two different competitions are held. First the local Egyptian Arabian, and secondly, the exported, or internationally, one. For both types, the same procedures take place in terms of judging methods and scale of points.

There are 5 different classes that compete in this event; the one year olds (class 1), the 2 year olds (class 2), the 3 year olds (class 3), the 4-7 year olds (class 4), and the 7-and up year olds which are classified as class five.

In every class a 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and a 3<sup>rd</sup> prize is distributed, while sometimes if the class has more than 8 horses, a 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> prize are included. These prizes do not include the champions and the reserved champions from each class.

While talking to Dr. Khalil Soliman, he gave a brief explanation as an international judge what to look for in the Arabian horse, and how there are five categories each marked from 10 to 20 leaving the total out of 100.

First the horse is judged upon its overall

Dr. Khalil Soliman proudly said, 'in abroad shows like 'Salon de Cheval' last year, most of the winners had Egyptian blood in them.'

positive and beauty which is referred to as the type, then the expected dish faced

head and long arched neck. The body topline expresses the whole upper body of the horse with respect to muscles and how evened out the horse is.

As for the legs, which is the most difficult area to judge if the person is unexperienced in field, alignment is the key point.

Last but not least the movement of the horse takes the final 10 to 20 points upon character as well.

The cleanliness of the place, and the punctuality and quality of food should be at the utmost importance to a breeder who wants to be successful.

'To our honor this year we were lucky to have the judges Mrs. C Chazel from France, Mrs. Joan Ratchiff from England, and Major Pat Maxwell from England. HRH Princess Alia Bint Al-Hussein from Jordan could unfortunately not make it this year,' Dr. Khalil said.

As for the organizers of this event, El Zahraa Director General Dr. Khalil Soliman, he has been in the business at El Zahraa for 41 years. He is a member of ECAHO and WAHO organizations, as well .... and an international judge. He organizes 2 auctions every year at El Zahraa stud and on the overall he's responsible for the 400 Arabians at the stud as well as monitoring 185 private farms which brings the total number of Arabians to 3500 horses in Egypt.

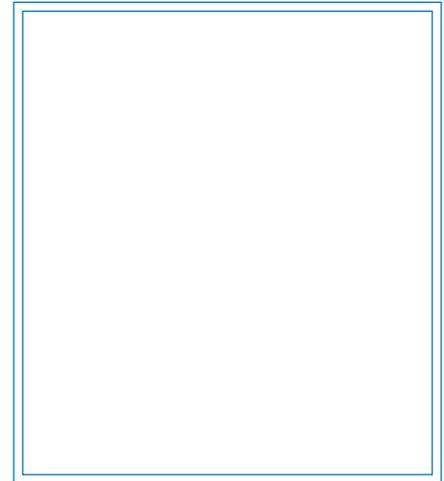
In this last show only one Libyan farm participated as opposed to our 45-50 Egyptian farms, but even though most countries were invited, none of them could make it due to transportation difficulties.

In general these shows for the past six years have had an amazing impact on the market of our Egyptian Arabians, both locally and internationally. Dr. Khalil Soliman proudly said, 'in abroad shows like 'Salon de Cheval' last year, most of the winners had Egyptian blood in them.' He explained how in Egypt we concentrated on the whole of the horse, while in other countries the facial beauty of the Arabians is more important. Of course he also mentioned how hard it can be as a business since it's a sport of

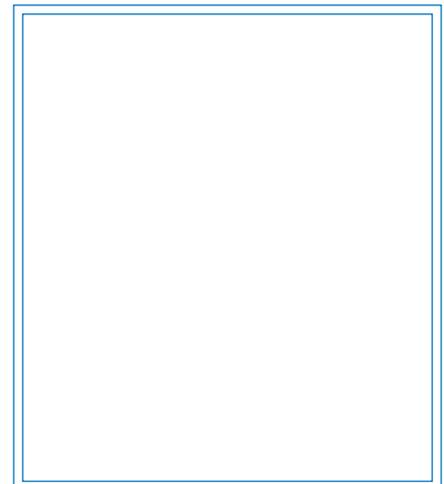
money. People with money buy best blood and in 2-3 years they try to wipe out competitors

that have been in business for 30-40 year. Before we closed the conversation, Dr. Soliman made a point in that the health of the horse is the most important. The cleanliness of the place, and the punctuality and quality of food should be at the utmost importance to a breeder who wants to be successful.

Long live our Egyptian Arabian !



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# HORSE RACING AT GEZIRA SPORTING CLUB . . . . .

The new season for horse racing in Cairo, started Mid October.

A visit to the Gezira Club and a glance at the Horse Track and the renovated stands, will surely be appreciated and welcomed by all race-goers.

The chairman and the members of the board of directors of the Gezira Club together with the racing sector, the racing committee and their delegated member Mr. Mourad El-Shahed have succeeded in ameliorating considerably the turf Track and the services related to running the horses at the club.

There will be a horse racing meeting on the 27th and 28th of November 1999 and future meetings will be alter the holy month of Ramadan which is due at the beginning of the second week of December.

The entry fee is 10 L.E, and the most popular form of betting are the trifecta and the triple. The dividends paid are usually high and on more than one occasion they exceeded the 7000 L.E mark for a ten pounds ticket.

There are racing forms that could be obtained at the entry. A day at racing is amusing, entertaining and usually thrilling and exiting.

We therefore invite you to witness for yourself Horse Racing at the Gezira Sporting Club.

Chairman of the Racing Committee,





His Majesty King Abdallah Ibn Al-Hussein, HRH Queen Rania and HRH Princess Alia Bint Al-Hussein



Andre' Sakakini and Gen. Saad Khalifa



The Egyptian Silver Medalists Team



HRH Princess Haya and Eng. Khaled Assem



HRH Princess Alia and Eng. Khaled Assem



Hadi Gabr and his Love Tale...



Terry, Petra & Sakakini "What A Team !"



Mr. Jan Bouman after a pool party following the Grand Prix



Mr. Bisharat and Mr. Hammad 'Mr.Assem' followed Mr. Bouman'



Seham Esayli from Lebanon & Agyad Qabanni from Syria



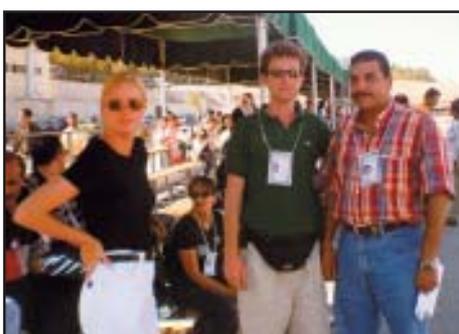
Karim Fares from Lebanon with Egypt's Hadi Gabr



Adham Hammad and a "Compromise".....



Assem, Moussa, Hammad, Gabr, Sakakini and Camanen



Petra, German Vet. Dr. Gertzan S. Zeeun & Dr. Ashraf El Kalla



Khaled Al Eid, Individual Gold Medalist...



Omar Shawky and Mohamed Essawy in Holland



Carine Maged Shawky



Yehia El Tony and Ekhnatoon



Luc Geoffery and Sami Negm El Din



Riders of Arno Neessen's Summer Clinic in Holland with John Whitaker & Geoff Billington, Pulsar Grand Prix Of Valkenswaard "Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> Of August 1999'



A Gathering in Shams Club, Friday 26<sup>th</sup> of November 1999



A Gathering at the Police Head Quarters 'Basatin' during the 120/130/140 Show, Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> of December 1999

Snapshots is a regular that everybody waits for, we try every time to come up with something new, at least we hope we are, so please feedback is very important to have an interesting snapshots page and a varitey that everybody can share in, awaiting your feedback.

# DRESSAGE, Object and general principles

By EMAD EL-DIN ZAHLLOUL

Our late professor general Yossef Ghorab taught us that the art of riding is

*"To let your horse perform what you ask him for, with pleasure"*

1. The object of dressage is the harmonious development of the physique and ability of the horse. As a result it makes the horse calm, supple, loose and flexible but also confident attentive and keen thus achieving perfect understanding with the rider.

2. These qualities are revealed by:

2.1 The freedom and regularity of the paces.

2.2 The harmony, lightness and ease of the movements.

2.3 The lightness of the forehand and the engagement of the hind quarters, originating in a lively impulsion.

2.4 The acceptance of the bridle, with submissiveness throughout and without any tenseness or resistance.

3. The horse thus gives the impression of doing of his own accord what is required of him. Confident and attentive he submits generously to the control of his rider, remaining absolutely straight in any movement on a straight line and bending accordingly when moving on curved lines.

4. His walk is regular, free and unconstrained. His trot is free, supple, regular, sustained and active. His canter is united, light and cadenced. His quarters are never inactive or sluggish. He responds to the slightest indication of the rider and thereby gives life and spirit to all the rest of his body.

5. By virtue of a lively impulsion and the suppleness of his joints, free from the paralysing effects of resistance, the horse obeys willingly and without hesitation and responds to the various aids calmly and with precision, displaying a natural and harmonious balance both physically and mentally.



6. In all his work, even at the halt, the horse must be "on the bit". A horse is said to be "on the bit" when the neck is more or less raised and arched according to the stage of training and the extension or collection of the pace, and he accepts the bridle with a light and soft contact and submissiveness throughout.

The head should remain in a steady position, as a rule slightly in front of the vertical, with a supple poll as the highest point of the neck, and no resistance should be offered to the rider.

7. Cadence is the result of the proper harmony that a horse shows when it moves with well marked regularity, impulsion and balance. The rhythm that a horse maintains in all his paces is an integral part of cadence. Cadence

must be maintained in all the different exercises and in the variations of each pace.



## Sharkia Festival for Arabian Horses

The Governorate of Sharkia has hosted and organized on September 11<sup>th</sup>, 1999 the eighth festival for Arabian horses on its grounds. The festival has become more and more popular, not only for Egyptians but for foreign visitors as well.

The program included many interesting musical and dancing shows giving a flavor of the Egyptian Folkloric life. The festival was open to both professionals and amateurs. It included a showjumping event to

win a President Mubarak cup, that was won by Captain Amr Ahmed Magdy (Equestrian Army Club). Followed by what they call 'the popular horseman parade', an Arabian halter show, a Dressage event and a polo match between Gezira club and the Police Force with the Police winning the trophy.

The Sharkia festival turned out to be a real success and an interesting day not only for horse lovers, but for the big crowd that attended the show.

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ASK FOR THE NEW



# A Message From A Rider's Wife

## We're Also Involved

By MAHA MAALOOF



It is true we do not ride horses nor do we jump fences, yet our hearts jump and pound higher and faster than a horse's gallop when our husbands or even one of our friends is competing. We probably got so involved, emotionally, that we feel that we're the ones performing.

Probably most of the wives of Riders, just like me, knew nothing about horses except the little we saw on television or the unfortunate horses seen on the streets, ill-treated and mal-fed. But the real world of Equestrian is not that... It is such a beautiful animal, and the sport itself is an elite and sophisticated one that in-plants good qualities in the people surrounding it.

It so happens that 90% of our friends are Riders, so the conversations usually contain the following terminology; *It is a barage...4 faults... stirrups, reins, bits, this is a high Oxer... The course design is pretty tough... he got laminitous etc...* and the conversations would go on endlessly, and I bet neither I, nor my poor fellow wives understood a word of what was said. But with time we made the effort of understanding more about the sport and its terminology, by reading, asking, attending competitions. Simply by getting more involved.

I wouldn't blame people who think that wives have absolutely no role in that sport, I would tend to agree with them from the (What appears to be ) point of view, but I so much disagree with them when it comes to the hidden role we do.

Let me explain.

We give full support and encouragement to the sport, we try to sympathize when things go wrong in competitions or at training times. We accept the fact that after a very long working day, there still is 2 to 3 extra hours at the club to train, care and feed the horse. Accepting the extra expenses that this sport requires, feeling that is not spent only to enjoy a hobby as such but it's really worthwhile.

Attending competitions on regular basis, not only for mental support, but I guess we cannot deny that we also grew to enjoy the tournaments. And again I would say we Simply got more and more involved.



I could list more examples, but maybe if I do, you might think that I am portraying riders' wives as being martyrs, that is definitely not the point, because all this is done with heart and contentedness.

Let me not forget the little ones, as it even gets nicer when they come along. Unlike other children who are primarily introduced to their first animal friend being the cat or the dog, the rider's kids -goes without saying- first animal friend is the horse or the pony. They start riding with their parents as soon as they are few months old. No matter what

size or height the horse is, you can hardly see the little one up there, but with time proportion starts to adjust itself. Baby Riders or maybe I should call them Future Riders, or even better The new generation for the Equestrian World, grow to love horses as their little baby brain grows and develops.

This precious friendship between the horse and the child wouldn't have existed if the wife was not Simply involved. I've always joked about my husband's love for his horse by saying that, in order of priority his horse comes first and then me. A wife who'd accept this joke with an open heart, I believe has gotten herself involved too.

*To sum-up my personal experience, I could easily say that Horse Back Riding has gotten first my husband, then I and now our little one is also Very Involved.*

