



EGYPT'S OFFICIAL EQUESTRIAN MAGAZINE



HRH PRINCESS HAYA BINT AL HUSSEIN

SHARES THE FE'S THOUGHTS ON THE OLYMPICS & DEVELOPMENTS IN HORSE SPORT

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VIEW POINT

FROM THE CHAIRMAN



Dear readers,

Another great event has gone by; the “Olympic Games”. The equestrian sport is always developing and changing; one has to take a closer look and analyse how change comes about and what impacts it makes especially in the Middle East.

The Saudi rider Ramzy Al Duhami has done tremendously well! His views on “how & why” deserve more research as it could empower the sport further in the region. Moreover, the Olympic show jumper who is the President of the FEI HRH Princess Haya bint Al Hussein has her own personal view regarding the progress of the equestrian sport, the effects of doping, and the measures of dealing with that. Naturally as an Arab lady with very deep rooted origins and passion for her region, she has recommendations and aspirations for local riders who successfully crossed over to the international scene.

More impressions on the Olympics particularly Dressage, Eventing, and Show jumping by David Pincus and Ina El Kobbia.

Dr. Mohamed Elsherbini enlightens us as usual with his reviews on training along with Monty Roberts series and Equine Osteopathy from England by Sue Akehurst.

A closer look at Diaa Amr Bisheer; an Egyptian talent on the international landscape. Art, Photography, and more equestrian coverage with Polo and a spectacular review on the Arabian Horse Show at Al Zahraa by Dr. Nasr Marie.

Read on and enjoy...

Sincerely,
Khaled Assem
Chairman

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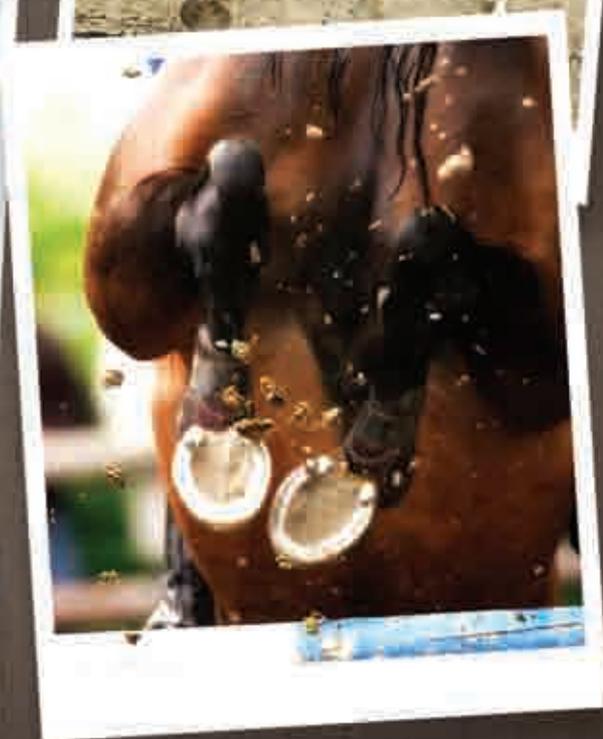
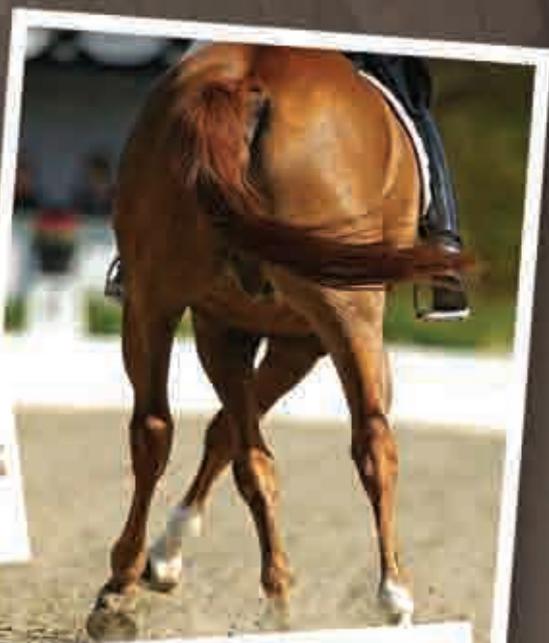
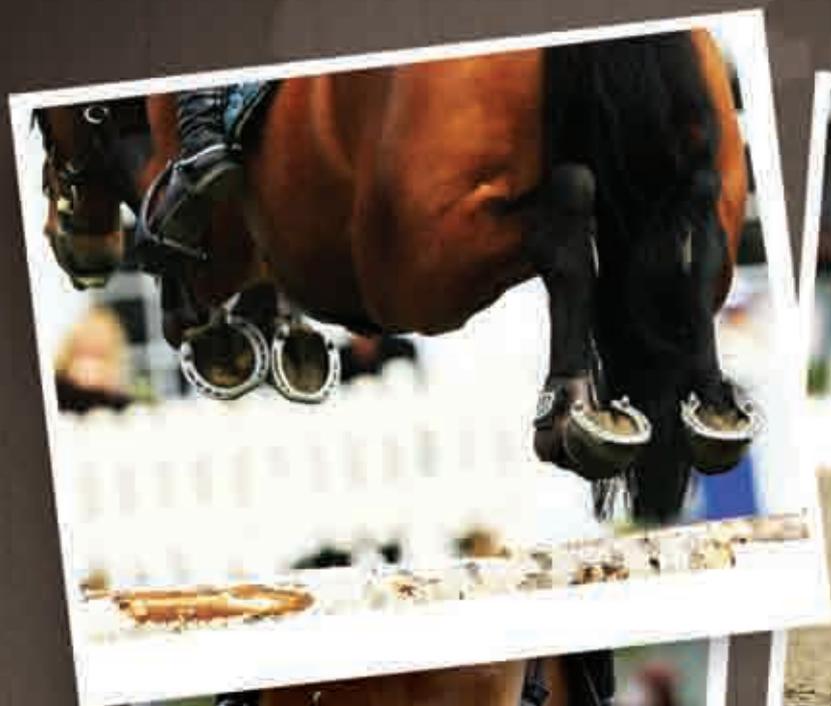
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TOP SPORT HORSES



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A portrait of HRH Princess Haya Bint Al Hussein, the President of the International Equestrian Federation. She is shown from the chest up, wearing a dark grey blazer over a light-colored top. She has long, wavy brown hair and is smiling warmly at the camera. Her arms are crossed.

METAMORPHOSIS OF
THE EQUESTRIAN SPORT

2008 OLYMPIC GAMES

HORSE TIMES
EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH

HRH PRINCESS HAYA BINT AL HUSSEIN

PRESIDENT OF THE INTERNATIONAL EQUESTRIAN FEDERATION

By Nada H. Abdelmoniem

In light of all the political, economical and technological change, the only aspect that would eradicate attention is the pure pleasantness of sports. In general, to feast the eyes of the young and the old with a win by a favourite athlete of any sport would be a true pleasure; just as the amount of pleasure people enjoyed from watching the 2008 Beijing Olympics that presented a variety of enjoyable, heart-touching, magnificent, and unexpected achievements.

THE EQUESTRIAN EVENTS, FIRST INCLUDED TO THE OLYMPICS IN 1912 AND THE EVOLVEMENT AND PROGRESS THEY HAVE BROUGHT OVER THE DECADES BY AVID RIDERS ARE STILL ATTRACTING A SENSE OF CONTINUITY AS WELL AS CONTROVERSY. FROM AN UNEXPECTED GOLD MEDAL GOING TO CANADIAN ERIC LAMAZE AND CONTROVERSIES REGARDING ALLEGATIONS OF NUMEROUS DOPING CASES, TO THE NICHE OF WHERE THE SPORT STANDS IN THE UPCOMING 2012 LONDON OLYMPICS.

Horse Times Magazine had the honour of conducting an exclusive interview with the President of the International Equestrian Federation HRH Princess Haya bint Al Hussein in order to shed light and perception on where the sport stands and the future of its development.

Your Royal Highness, from the perspective of you being an international rider and the President of the FEI, what is your overview on the 2008 equestrian events being held in Hong Kong (facilities, stabling, organisation and grounds)?

As we anticipated, the equestrian events in Hong Kong were provided at the highest possible level both in terms of infrastructure and personnel. The equestrian events have never enjoyed better facilities at an Olympics, or at any equestrian event, than they did in Hong Kong and the quality of competition was undoubtedly a reflection of the venues in which our athletes performed. The partnership we enjoyed with BOCOG, the Equestrian Company and the Hong Kong Jockey Club was superb as was the tireless work of the officials in the 2 years leading up to the games. Really we couldn't have asked for more.

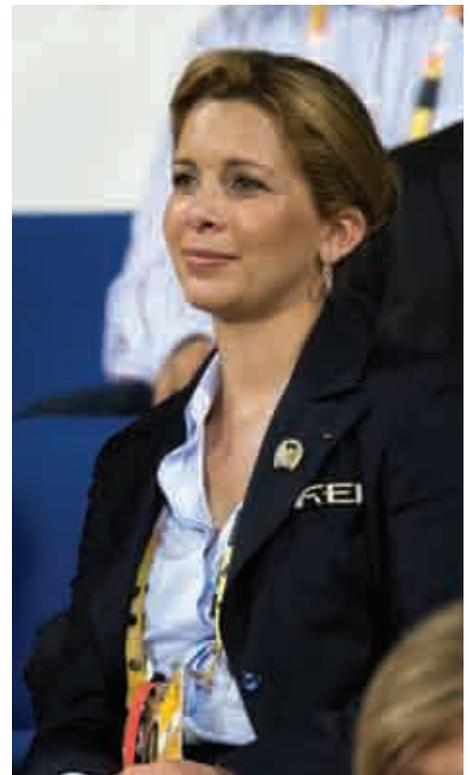
What were your expectations regarding the performance of the top international riders who participated vs. the outcome and the results, as for example Norway coming in 3rd place as a team? And does that illustrate the local planning and

management of the sport in one country vs. the other?

I think the great thing about the Games was the wonderful stories that lay behind so many of the medallists. To take Heinrich Romeike, who won the individual and team gold in Eventing, it was so reassuring to me that in the 21st century, horse sport can still uphold the true ideals of amateur sport. Here was a man who is a practicing dentist, with only one horse and one that he owns himself. His was an extraordinarily refreshing achievement that showed that not only can amateurs and professionals still compete side by side in equestrian but that they can win the highest accolade in sport whether they are amateur or professional.

The Individual Jumping gold for Eric Lamaze of Canada was also an exceptional story of redemption through sport. He has been through some very difficult times in his life and has missed the 2 previous editions of the Olympic Games because of disputes over use of drugs. He cried on the podium when receiving his medal and said those tears were those of happiness and sadness. I nearly cried with him. This medal has brought him back to the international circuit in a very significant way and he is now 2nd on the Rolex Rankings (2nd best in the world).

Team silver for Ian Millar of Canada, who at the age of 61, was the oldest medallist of the entire Olympic Games. He has a record number of 9 Olympic participations and is already thinking of London 2012!



You asked about my thoughts on the Jumping team bronze awarded to Norway. At the time this was really a great moment for Norway and if the case that is still pending mars that performance, then that would be sad for the country and sad for all of us.

Concerning Arab riders, what is your overview on the level of their performances given that you are an Arab rider yourself whom has competed formerly at the Olympics? Furthermore, what would your thoughts be regarding LIVE TV commentators stating the following?

“Karim Elzoghby won the silver medal during the Pan Arab games which were held in Cairo, in 2007 but anyway, there is not much competition there”.

“The Saudi's have great horses and spend millions of dollars on getting better horses, but at the end of the day, money will not buy them a win”.

I was so proud of the riders from all of the emerging nations but of course the performances of the riders from the Arab world have a special place in my heart and I am really pleased that I managed to watch all of them compete and had the chance to talk to many of them in the



▲ HRH Princess Haya, who is an IOC Member, taking part in the Torch Relay at the Beijing Olympic Games

stands before and after their competitions.

I understand your concern about the remarks from the commentators and I share them but in the end it is the performances that will have spoken for themselves and I am certain that these remarks will have been made before the riders started and before they saw how well they rode! If the commentators didn't say anything afterwards then I can only assume that the quality of the performances took their breath away.

Do you think that some measures can be taken to further upgrade the possibility of Arab riders performing and achieving better?

I think the key is to provide athletes not only with the opportunity to compete but

with the opportunity to compete at international levels and by doing so they will be up against the leading athletes and horses in the world. It is through these experiences that our riders will gain not only from the competitions and rounds themselves but also from the opportunity to watch riders at that level. Certainly that was how I gained a huge amount of experience. Every time I went to an international show it was like attending a Master Class and you could gain so much by just watching in the warm up areas, talking to the riders, watching their rounds, you can't gain those experiences anywhere else. As President I see my role very much as opening up the opportunities to international competition for athletes from emerging countries and

I hope that through this work I will be able to help Arab athletes.

Regarding doping results, what is the stand of the FEI on that aside from the withdrawal of medals, especially with the negative impact this carries for the sport?

As a Governing Body, it is our role to provide an equal playing field for all. In terms of the process we only have one mission and that is to do what is right. There is no agenda, no under-currents, just an ultra transparent organisation. That is all. In order to achieve our goals though I think we need to work with the current athletes and with the generations who will follow them to be very clear about what it is we are working to achieve. We





▲ *The President with Olympic Course Designer Leopoldo Placios (L) and Captain John Roche (R), Director of the FEI's Jumping Department*

▼ *HRH Princess Haya riding Come On, Frankfurt 1998*



need them to come with us on that journey and in the end we must ensure that athletes understand that they are the people responsible for the animals that they ride and that the welfare of the horse is the most important aspect of the sport.

On the topic of what has been heard about the 2012 London Olympics not including equestrian sports, what do you have in mind in terms of handling that issue? How can international magazines, like Horse Times, help you achieve this cause?

The 2012 Games will include equestrian sports but its up to the FEI family to show not only the IOC but our own stakeholders how committed we are to addressing the

issues. The important point is that we are learning from the issues that surrounded Hong Kong and the key difference between now and the old FEI was that they didn't learn the lessons. Now we have an excellent volunteer body and open minded athletes, supported by a creative and flexible team in Lausanne who are all driving forward with one goal, which is to deliver the highest level of sport for both our athletes and our audiences in a context which sees the welfare of the horse as paramount. **HT**

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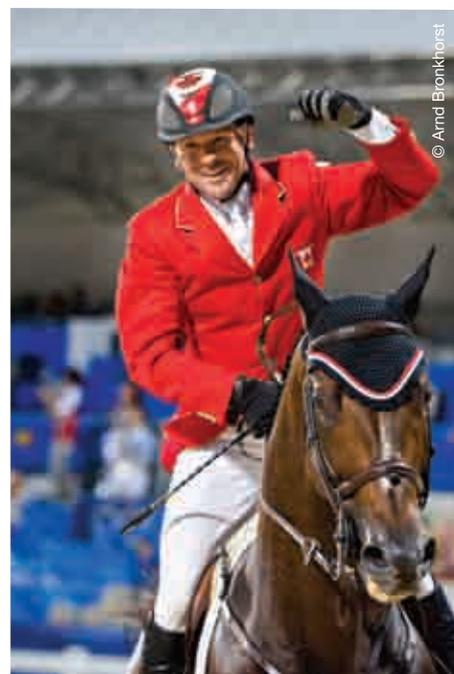
2008 OLYMPICS

SHOW JUMPING

TOP TEN

INDIVIDUALS

By Aliaa El Tabei



▲ Eric Lamaze, Canada

GOLD MEDALLIST ERIC LAMAZE RIDING HICKSTEAD:

Born April 17th 1968, Eric was originally named to the Canadian team for the 1996 Atlanta Olympics but lost his place and received a 4 year suspension after testing positive for cocaine. In 2000, he again tested positive for stimulants and was therefore again unable to compete, this time at the 2000 Sydney Olympics. Eric's aggressive riding style and ability to bring home dramatic victories have made him a fan favourite. In addition to being a crowd pleaser, Eric has also been pegged as an athlete to watch at the Games by equestrian experts. This individual recognition is especially significant given the fact that Canada has not won an Olympic medal in equestrian show jumping since 1976; he jumped a fast clear round to help give his team the gold. Adding to Eric's amazing comeback tale is the story of how he worked up from the very bottom to get to top of his game. Eric, a junior-high drop out, grew up in a troubled home and had little financial backing. So, in a discipline commonly viewed as an elitist sport, Eric got his start by working in the horse industry in exchange for an opportunity to ride. Some of his achievements include 13th place with his team at the 2006 World Equestrian Games and ranking 27th on the individual level, along with being named 2007 Equine Canada Equestrian of the Year.



SILVER MEDALLIST ROLF-GORAN BENGTSSON RIDING NINJA:

Born June 2nd 1962, Rolf-Goran was one of 21 Swedish athletes who participated in the equestrian events at the 2008 Beijing Olympics. He rides for Flyinge Ryttarförening Club in Sweden and is coached by his father Sven-Erik Bengtsson. He studied mechanical engineering and speaks 3 languages: German, English and Swedish. Some of his achievements are winning the bronze individual medal in the World Cup Championships in Sweden, and the silver team medal at the 2004 Athens Olympic Games. This is the first individual medal for Sweden since Clarence von Rosen won bronze at Los Angeles in 1932.

◀ Rolf-Goran Bengtsson, Sweden





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BRONZE MEDALLIST ELIZABETH “BEEZIE” PATTON-MADDEN RIDING AUTHENTIC:

Born November 20th 1963, Beezie has been riding since the age of 3 and first appeared on the international scene in 1985. She is one of the highly ranked American riders and is trained by her brother-in-law Frank Madden. At the 2004 Athens Olympics, Beezie won the team gold medal together with Peter Wylde, McLain Ward and Chris Kappler. Some of the horses that left a mark in her career are Trudeaux, Medrano and Nortehrn Magic, along with Judgement and the famous Authentic.

◀ *Beezie Madden, USA*

RANKED 4TH, MEREDITH MICHAELS- BEERBAUM RIDING SHUTTERFLY:

Born December 26th 1969 in Los Angeles, Meredith is the daughter of film director Richard Michaels. As a young-adult, Meredith studied political science at Princeton University, continuing to compete during her college years despite a serious accident in 1991 leaving her with 2 broken wrists. She then went to train in Germany with Paul Schockemöhle in 1991 planning to remain only for a summer, which eventually turned into a permanent stay. Following her marriage to the well-known German show jumper Markus Beerbaum in 1998, she changed her citizenship. Her past and current top horses include Shutterfly, Checkmate, Stella, and Quick Star. Some of Meredith's achievements are winning a gold medal at the 2008 World Cup Final in Gothenburg, Sweden, the first woman to have reached the No. 1 position on the FEI show jumping world rankings (December 2004), as well as individual and team bronze at the 2006 World Equestrian Games in Aachen, Germany.

Meredith Michaels-Beerbaum, Germany ▶



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RANKED 5TH, RODRIGO PESSOA RIDING RUFUS:

Like his father Nelson Pessoa who was an accomplished show jumper, Rodrigo was admired by a lot of spectators. Born on November 29th 1972 in Paris, France, he competed in the best international competitions with style and efficiency showing a lot of talent. His first major achievements came in 1996 when along with his team, Rodrigo won the bronze medal in the 1996 Atlanta Olympics. It was topped up with another team bronze 4 years later in the 2000 Sydney Olympics. In the 2004 Athens Olympics, riding Baloubet, he won the individual silver medal. 2005 was the year in which Olympic silver turned into gold; the Irish team of Cian O'Connor and Waterford Cristal got disqualified from the 2004 Olympics due to doping and Rodrigo received the long awaited Olympic gold medal. In 2007, Rodrigo won the individual silver and team gold medals at the Pan American Games, held in his home town Rio de Janeiro.

Unfortunately on October 4th 2008 the FEI stated that the B sample of Rufus has confirmed a positive test for a banned substance; novamide, a pain reliever. Rodrigo was fined 2,000 Swiss Francs and both he and Rufus were disqualified from the entire Beijing Olympics.



▲ *Rodrigo Pessoa, Brazil*

McLain Ward, USA ▼

RANKED 6TH, MCLAIN WARD RIDING SAPPHIRE:

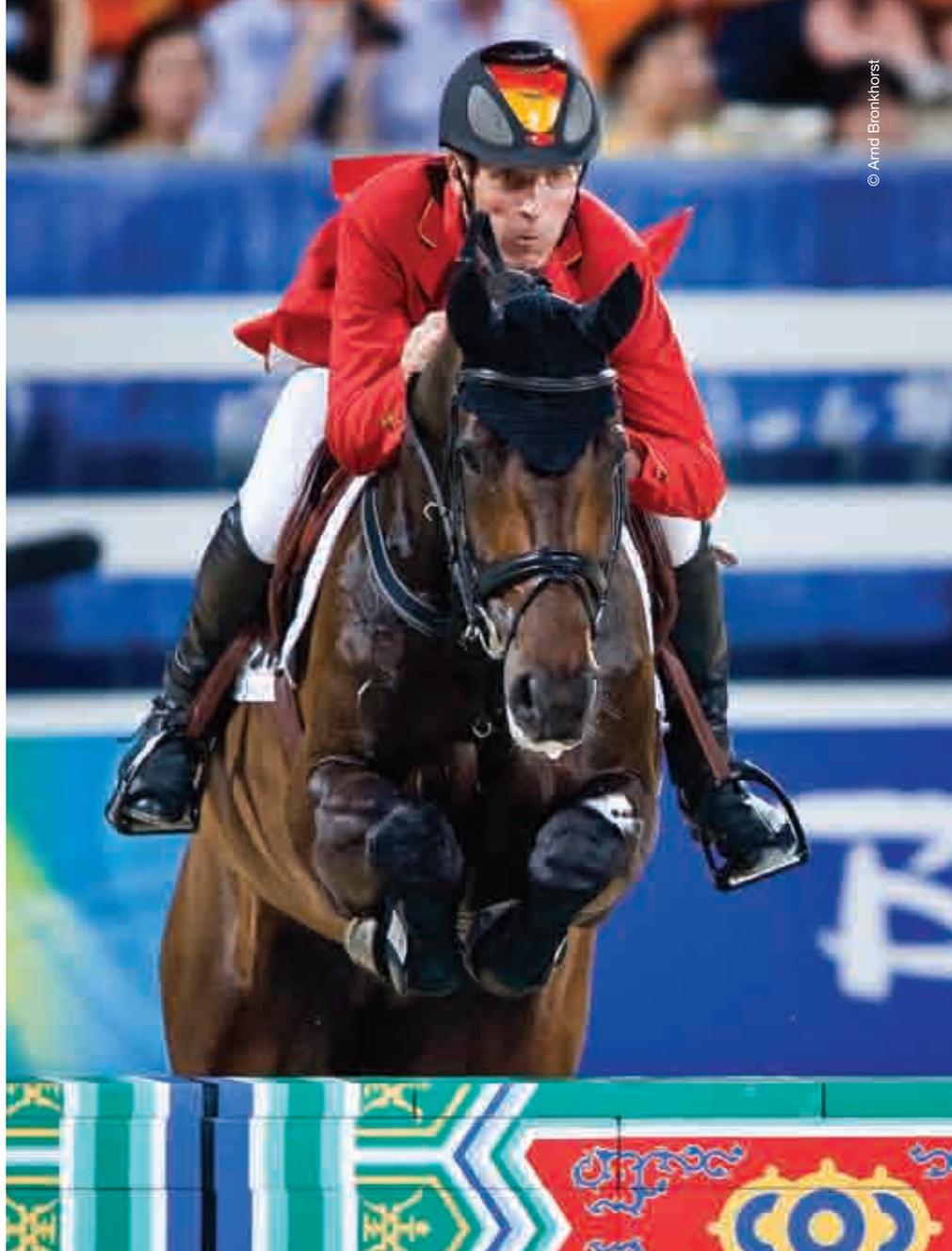
Born October 17th 1975, McLain is the son of accomplished rider Barney Ward, winning the Grand Prix of Devon 20 years to the day before McLain won it in 2002. When McLain was 14 years old, he became the youngest rider to win the United States Equestrian Federation Show Jumping Talent Derby. He then went on to win the medal finals. The 2 victories made him the youngest rider to win both in 1 year. In 1999 McLain became the youngest rider to top the \$1 million mark in grand prix earnings. McLain returned to his second consecutive Olympic Games coming in 6th place at the 2008 Beijing Olympics riding an excellent mare that jumped impressively helping him to win a silver medal along with his team mates. Since 2004, McLain and Sapphire have been successful together in the show jumping ring; building off their team gold medal from the 2004 Athens Olympics, McLain and Sapphire went to the 2006 World Championships and contributed to a team silver. In 2006 and 2007, McLain won the prestigious Grand Prix of Devon, making it his 5th win overall at the event.



RANKED 7TH, LUDGER BEERBAUM RIDING ALL INCLUSIVE:

Born August 26th 1963, Ludger started studying business administration but did not finish due to seeking a career in show jumping. He began riding at the age of 8 and had a very successful career as a junior. His most notable accomplishments include winning 4 Olympic gold medals (his first at age 25) and numerous European and World Championship medals: team gold at the 1988 Seoul Olympics, individual gold at the 1992 Barcelona Olympics, team gold at the 1996 Atlanta Olympics, and team gold at the 2000 Sydney Olympics. During the 2004 Athens Olympics, Ludger and his horse Goldfever managed to finish with only 4 penalty points, helping Germany earn the team gold medal. However, following the competition, Goldfever tested positive for the prohibited substance betamethasone. The FEI found Ludger guilty of breaking the rules, stripping both him and his German team of their medals, dropping Germany down to bronze. Ludger believed the substance to have been present in an ointment administered to the horse due to a skin irritation, and the FEI agreed that the substance provided no competitive advantage. However, in accordance to the rule, Ludger was disqualified.

Ludger Beerbaum, Germany ▶



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RANKED 8TH, MARC HOUTZAGER RIDING OPIUM:

Born January 9th 1971, Marc Houtzager competed in the 2002 Show Jumping World Cup and won the meeting in Dublin. After that he kept on riding international tournaments, but never succeeded on World Cup level again. In 2008 he and his team mates became Dutch national champions in Mierlo. Marc himself won an additional silver medal at the event in the individual competition. He was selected to represent the Netherlands at the Super League meeting in Rome where they finished 4th. At CHIO Rotterdam he came in 5th on the individual level. Later that year he finished 4th at the Grand Prix in Aachen with his horse Opium. Due to injuries of former Olympic champion Jeroen Dubbeldam and Albert Zoer, Marc Houtzager was selected by coach Rob Ehrens to represent the Netherlands at the 2008 Beijing Olympics.

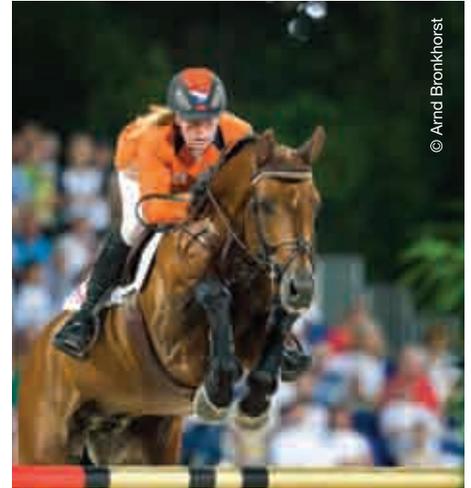
▼ *Marc Houtzager, the Netherlands*



© Arnd Bronkhorst

RANKED 9TH, ANGELIQUE HOORN RIDING O'BRIEN:

Born April 25th 1975, Angelique came in 4th place at the 2000 Dutch National Show Jumping Championships, announcing her appearance for the upcoming years. Together with her horse Hascal she won the 2001 Championship in Papendal. She was selected to compete in the Show Jumping World Cup circuit and managed to win a silver medal at the meeting in Jerez in 2002. A few years of less successful years followed, however in 2006 she finished 3rd at the Dutch nationals behind Gerco Schröder and Harrie Smolders. In Mierlo in 2007 she won her 2nd national title with her horse Blaudendraad's O'Brien, finishing in front of Gerco Schröder, Erik van Vleuten and Ben Schröder. Angelique was also selected by coach Rob Ehrens to represent the Dutch team at the 2008 Beijing Olympics along side Marc Houtzager.



▲ Angelique Hoorn, the Netherlands

RANKED 10TH, JEAN-CLAUDE VAN GEENBERGHE RIDING QUINTUS:

Born November 17th 1962, Jean-Claude is a Belgian-Ukrainian equestrian who started to ride at the age of 12. At the age of 14, his first horse, an Irish mare named Kimono helped him win 15 national classes. Jean-Claude won the Belgian Cup, became national champion, came in 4th place during the European championships, and closed his junior time as unofficial world champion in Le Vaudreuil. With horses as Osta Carpets Queen, Omnistor Freestyle, Osta Carpets Carrera, Omnistor Avontuur and many others, all major victories were achieved. Jean-Claude competed in 3 Olympic Games including Seoul and Barcelona, however during those 2 games he rode for the Belgium team. As a Belgian, Jean-Claude won the 1987 Aachen Grand Prix, and the 1989 and 1993 Rome Grand Prix. In the 2008 Beijing Olympics, Jean-Claude rode for Ukraine finishing 10th in the individual rounds and 12th with team Ukraine during the first final but failing to reach the second final.

▼ Jean-Claude van Geenberghe, Ukraine





▲ Steve Guerdat, Switzerland



▲ Edwina Alexander, Australia



▲ Camila Benedicto, Brazil

RANKED 10TH, STEVE GUERDAT RIDING JALISCA SOLIER:

Born June 10th 1982, Steve is the youngest rider on the top 10 list coming in 10th place with several international names such as Jos Lansink and Jean-Claude Van Geenberghe. Despite his young age, he has had many achievements; 2003 European Championships team bronze and 2005 team silver. He was also ranked 5th with his team in the 2004 Athens Olympics. In 2005, he came in 6th place in the final of the World Cup in Las Vegas, and shortly thereafter won the Grand Prix of Cannes and the Prix des Nations Rotterdam. Two years later he achieved his 2 victories in both Grand Prix World Cup Geneva and Vigo riding Jalisca Solier. In April 2007, he returned to Las Vegas to take a fantastic 3rd place with his reserve horse. Steve is also Grand Prix winner of many international competitions, including HSBC Grand Prix at CSI-W Geneva, the 2004 World Cup Rolex Grand Prix at the 2006 CSI-W Geneva, and the 2007 Grand Prix de Vigo. Steve was also the youngest member of the top 20 riders of the World as of August 12th 2005. After leaving the stables of Jan Tops in the Netherlands, he returned to Switzerland to ride in the stables of Mr. Urs Schwarzenbach which was an ideal framework for himself and his 6 horses. Steve then had the chance to ride 4 horses belonging to Yves G. Piaget, his new sponsor. Steve is also one of the 3 riders sponsored by the Little Dreams Foundation, which helps young talent, along with Rodrigo Pessoa and Malin Baryard-Johnsson.

RANKED 10TH, EDWINA ALEXANDER RIDING ITOT DU CHATEAU:

Born March 29th 1974, Edwina's coach and partner is former Dutch champion Jan Tops. She moved 10 years ago to Europe to improve her riding and now uses the Netherlands as her base for most of the year. Edwina began riding at the age of 8 and in 1996 was named Australian Young Rider of the Year. In 2006, she became the first Australian to make the final of the individual jumping competitions at the Aachen World Equestrian Games, where she finished 4th place.

RANKED 10TH, CAMILA BENEDICTO RIDING BONITO Z:

Born December 7th 1977, Camila was a reserve and was selected after one of the Brazilian riders dropped out due to a horse injury.

RANKED 10TH, JOS LANSINK RIDING CUMANO:

Born March 19th 1961, Jozeph "Jos" Johannes Gerardus Marinus Lansink is an equestrian from the Netherlands, but currently representing Belgium. Jos started riding at the early age of 3. In 1982, he worked for Hans Horn. Jos previously coached the Dutch jumping team but is currently coaching the Qatari team. He first competed in the Cup of Nations of the Netherlands in 1986. In late 1987, a new horse came to their stud which helped him move up the ladder. Felix, the new horse, came in 7th place at the 1988 Seoul Olympics and won a bronze medal in Rotterdam in 1989. Since then, Jos is usually ranked in the top 3 in international competitions with different horses. Jos won team gold at the 1992 Barcelona Olympics alongside Piet Raymakers, Jan Tops and Bert Romp. He competed in 4 consecutive Olympics for his native country, starting in 1988. In

2001 Jos became a citizen of Belgium, for which he competed at the 2004 Athens Olympics. Jos won the gold medal in the 2006 FEI Aachen World Equestrian Games riding Cavalor Cumano and is currently the World Champion.

▼ Jos Lansink, Belgium





SHOW JUMPING TEAMS

◀ USA, Team gold

GOLD MEDALLISTS: The United States team of Beezie Madden riding Authentic, McLain Ward riding Sapphire, Laura Kraut riding Cedric, and Will Simpson riding Carlsson Vom Dach won gold in the team show jumping with 3 clear rounds in a dramatic jump-off with Canada.

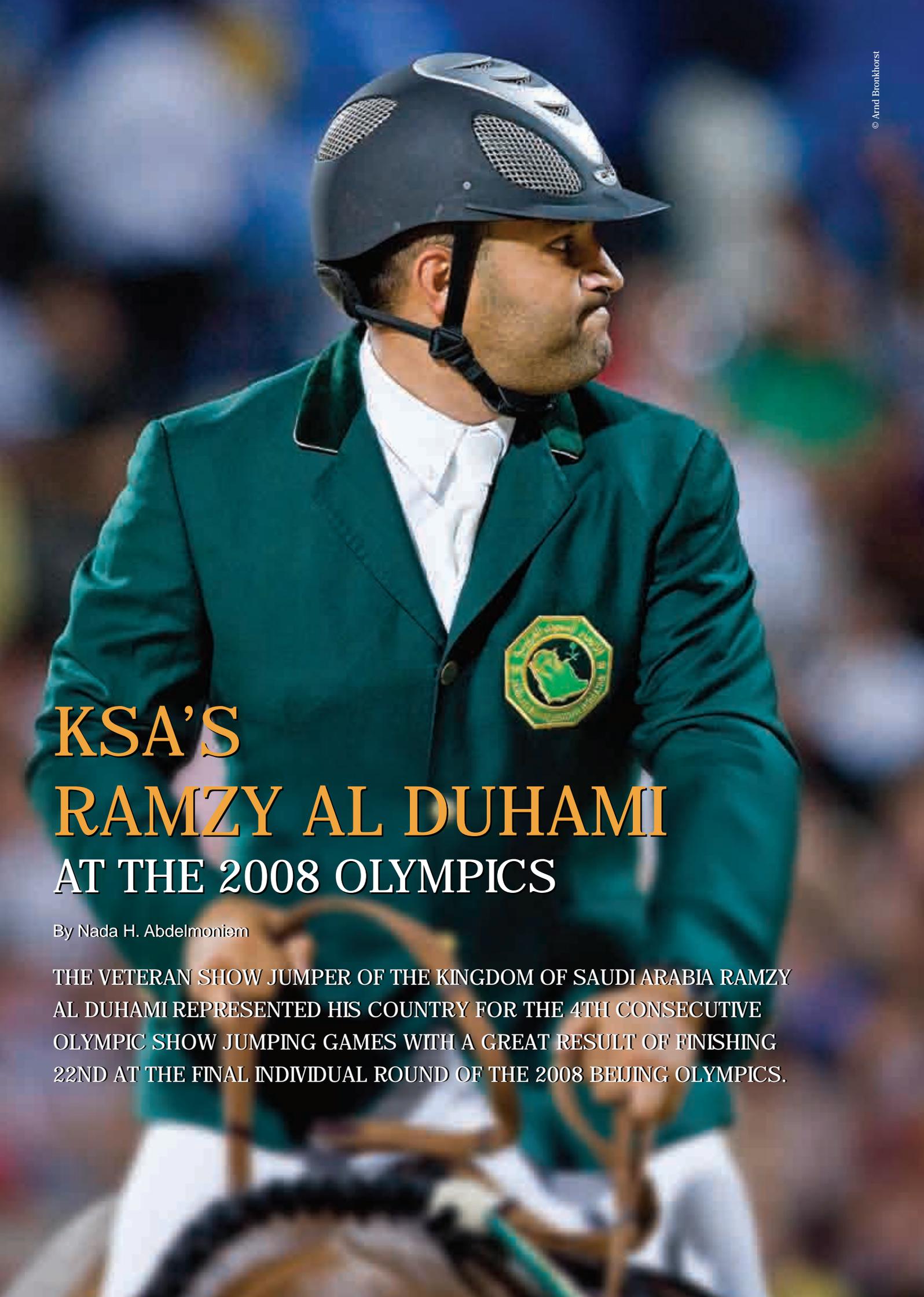
SILVER MEDALLISTS: The Canadian team of Mac Cone riding Ole, Ian Miller riding In Style, and Eric Lamaze riding Hickstead, who had finished equal on 20 points with the defending champions after the allocated jumps, had to settle for silver.

BRONZE MEDALLISTS: The Norwegian team of Stein Endresen riding Le Beau, Morten Djupvik riding Casino, Geir Gulliksen riding Cattini, and Tony Andre Hansen riding Camiro secured bronze with 27 points, their best score at an Olympics. In another case of doping, Tony Andre Hansen has been provisionally suspended from the Olympic Games after his horse Camiro returned a positive dope test. **HT**



▲ Norway, Team bronze

◀ Canada, Team silver



KSA'S RAMZY AL DUHAMI AT THE 2008 OLYMPICS

By Nada H. Abdelmoniem

THE VETERAN SHOW JUMPER OF THE KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA RAMZY AL DUHAMI REPRESENTED HIS COUNTRY FOR THE 4TH CONSECUTIVE OLYMPIC SHOW JUMPING GAMES WITH A GREAT RESULT OF FINISHING 22ND AT THE FINAL INDIVIDUAL ROUND OF THE 2008 BEIJING OLYMPICS.

During the 1996 Atlanta, 2000 Sydney, and the 2004 Athens Olympics Ramzy competed as an individual and a team member, showing his best achievements so far during the Beijing games. Along with Ramzy, HRH Prince Abdulla bin Miteb Al Saoud, Kamal Bahamdan, and HRH Prince Faisal Al Shalan, the team finished 13th and are yet to achieve better results in further Olympics.

Born January 5th 1972 in Riyadh, Ramzy began riding at the age of 10 in his father's farm which eventually turned into a stable. Ramzy discovered his love for horses after first jumping with one of his fathers Arabian horses.

Ramzy's past training & achievements include:

Training

2006-2008 Stanny Van Paeschen Training & Equestrian Centre, Belgium

1998-2005 Nelson Pessoa Training & Equestrian Centre, Belgium

1994-1996 Paul Schockemöhle Training & Equestrian Centre, Germany

1990-1994 Berni Trures Training & Equestrian Centre, USA

Equestrian Achievements & Awards
2007 Pan Arab Games Egypt - gold medallist, bronze medallist

2006 World Equestrian Games - Aachen
2004 Athens Olympics

2002 World Equestrian Games - Jerez
2003 Pan Arab Games Algeria - gold medallist, bronze medallist

2000 Sydney Olympics
1999 Pan Arab Games Jordan - gold medallist, bronze medallist

1997 Pan Arab Games Lebanon - gold medallist, silver medallist

1996 Atlanta Olympics
1991 Asian Athlete of the year
1991 Amateur World Cup winner - California
1991 Pan Arab Games Syria - gold medallist, silver medallist

What was it like for you when you arrived in Hong Kong?

As it was my 4th Olympics I have to admit that I was excited to be there with my team but I certainly was not expecting to feel the excitement I did when I reached the finals. Of course to be at the Olympics is a great honour and so you can not but help be

proud of representing your country, and I am sure this applies to all riders.

What is required for preparing for the Olympics?

I would have to say that the first element is and always will be the HORSE. Once the horse is there you then devise a programme for that particular horse and rider. You also have to take into consideration the difference between preparing as an individual or as a team rider. Once you have your horse and programme you also have to think about your horse's and the riders' fitness. My advice will always be to give your self at least 2 years preparing for an event such as the Olympics or the World Equestrian Games.

How long did it take for you to prepare for the Olympics and achieve the results which you did?

Unfortunately in my case I only got the horse 'Allah Jabak' 2 months prior to the games due to my late selection as part of the team. This opportunity was only possible with the generosity of HRH Prince Abdulla bin Miteb who was not only kind enough to lend me his horse but also tried to familiarise me with some of the horse's jumping habits. As you know people train for years with their horses before such a prestigious event and so I was in a little bit of a disadvantage. However Prince Abdulla's support and my intense training with Olympic medallist Stanny van Paesschen, I had the confidence to go on and be part of Saudi Arabia's team.

On the same note, my results during the event were achievable because of the full support of all my team members and the moral support of the President of the federation HRH Prince Nawaf bin Faisal and the Vice President of the federation Prince Abdulla bin Fahad. They were with me every step of the way and their words of encouragement were inspirational to all the team.

What's missing between being an international rider residing and training in the Middle East and another international rider residing and training in Europe?

Of course Europeans have been experienced in this sport for much longer than Middle Eastern riders, and so their experience and discipline is far more advanced than ours. Hence a rider residing in Europe will probably have more opportunities in excelling his skills due to the availability of different trainers, the abundance of horses as well as shows. However I think the sport is excelling in such a grand level in the Middle East with





regards to the riders; we are not far behind in our ability to compete with Europeans and the rest of the world. Especially with the constitution of the Arab League circuit which has helped in upping the level, not only the rider's level but the events themselves. This is evident with the Al Maktoum Challenge that started in the United Arab Emirates and was followed by the shows in Qatar such as the Global Champions Tour. I think the levels of these shows are of the highest standards, and it is this level of sport that will encourage our riders to excel to top levels.

What are the greatest challenges you face?

As I rider I think the challenges we face are never ending (smiling)! But it's a great feeling when you overcome any obstacle. For example in this sport the greatest challenge is always finding suitable horses for each rider. There are many great riders out there but as they say: "No Horse No Rider." I also believe that the relation between each horse and rider is so important that it creates the winning formula. These days I find myself looking at younger horses; firstly because of the continuous

rising prices of horses in general and secondly because of the joy that comes from building a relation with a younger horse who will evolve into a grand prix show jumper. This is what makes all the challenges and obstacles that one faces well worth the effort.

How would you personally develop show jumping in the Middle East?

I'm a firm believer in good training for all riders in all aspects of riding. My contribution would be in helping and developing the training of aspiring riders. I enjoy it and I feel I can learn from my students as well as them learning from my experiences. In the future I would also like to be part of organising show jumping events to develop furthermore the skills of our riders and the levels of our events.

How did it feel to qualify for the Individual Round?

Of course it was an honour and a privilege to be included in the final individual round especially since I honestly did not think I was going to get that far. I can only say it was because of the support that I had from my team mates, the federation, our Chef

D'equipe, my groom, and the whole management that was working with the Saudi team.

Do you have special plans for London 2012?

It's my love for horses and this sport that keeps me going. I'm sure every rider feels the same way, but I would love to have the opportunity to represent my country again in the London Olympics and before that the World Equestrian Games in Kentucky. My aim is to always be prepared as a rider or as part of the team management. If I have a horse you can be sure that I will be ready!

What can you tell us about the Saudi team?

I think our performance and our success in the past has shown our dedication and admiration for this sport. We are a team of brothers with the same goals to excel to the highest standards. My generation of riders and the new generation of young riders work closely to keep our standard of riding rising which is the formula to success. **HT**

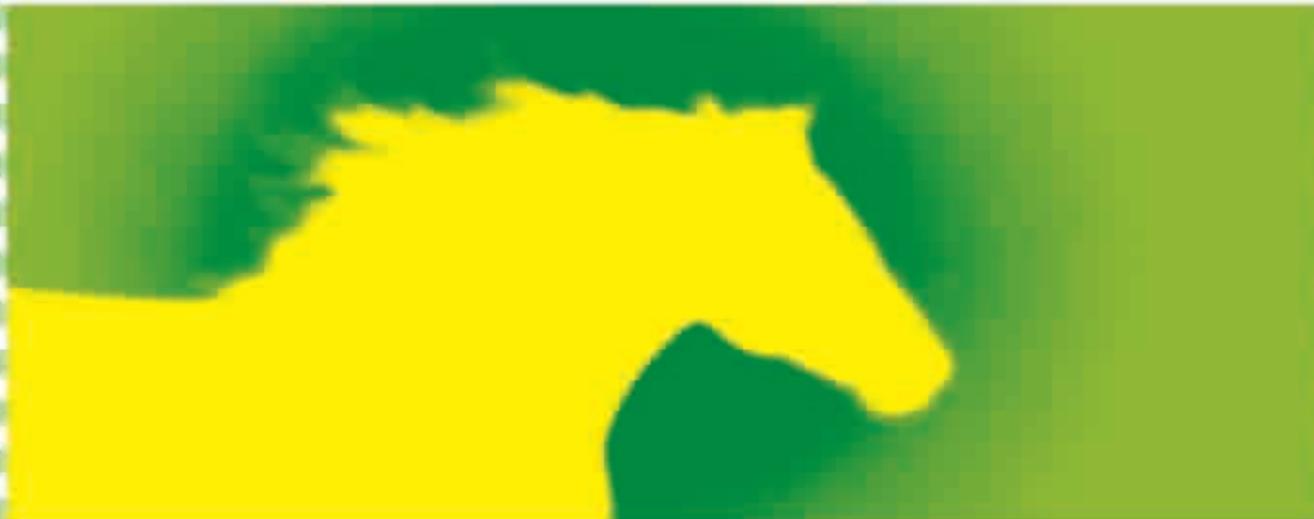


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SHARON HUNT

AN OLYMPIC BRONZE EXPERIENCE

www.sharonhunteventing.com

By Sue Akehurst, England



Congratulations to Sharon Hunt and Tankers Town, who on the British Eventing team won the Olympic bronze medal in Hong Kong. "It's been the most amazing experience and I couldn't be more proud of 'Jasper' and the team. I can't wait for London now!"

Sharon born October 11th 1977 is the youngest of Great Britain's Eventing team. She began riding at the age of 7 and got her first pony at the age of 11. Since then many young horses have been bought and educated by Sharon hoping to find a superstar.

Tankers Town (Jasper), a 16.2hh Chestnut Irish Sports Horse, is 14 years old, with 1,090 points, and owned by Mr & Mrs Terry Hunt & Sharon. Sharon bought and solely produced him from the age of 4 right through to international eventing success. Sharon has also bought and produced Good Sport II to win the Burghley Young Event Horse final in 2000. Sharon is currently ranked 25th in Great Britain and 47th in the world.

What's it been like since you got back

▼ *Cross Country at Badminton, a 4 Star Event, the highest grade & one of only 5 such events in the world*



from the Olympics?

I've been back for just over 3 months now and it's been great. Tankers Town is really good - I've just started working him again and I also have some other fabulous horses on the yard so I am working hard for next season, the European Championships in 2009 and the World Games in 2010. The whole Olympic experience has made me even hungrier and I am keener than ever to be the one standing on that podium with a gold medal and the national anthem playing! As such I am training really hard and everyday is focussed on upping my game.

I've had some real highlights since I've been back - celebrating with friends and family, going to the Olympic Parade in London and I am also really looking forward to going to Sports Personality of the Year in December - but my real focus is on the next event.

Were you pleased with Team Great Britain's bronze medal?

Being my first Olympics, I was really pleased. I think the expectations for Team GB were slightly higher but we had very difficult competition with the Australians and Germans and we hadn't beaten the Australians all year so I think a bronze was realistic. Obviously we'd always want to do better and certainly for London we're aiming for gold.

When did you first know you were going to the 2008 Olympics?

In May I competed at Badminton where I finished 5th and I had the phone call a couple of days after that. I couldn't believe it and, for a couple of weeks, I was extremely ecstatic and a bit nervous! Actually some nerves are good and after the last World Equestrian Games, I got a real taster of coping with the pressure of competing at a top international level and so it was just a case of focusing on the job in hand.

Explain what's involved in preparing for

the Olympics?

Obviously, in one sense it's a whole lifetime of preparation - every hour spent training, every minute in the saddle you hope will culminate in a chance to represent your country in the Olympics. Nevertheless, there are no guarantees and it takes a tremendous amount of work and dedication to train even one horse up to 4* level. Even then, the Olympic team only requires the top 5 horses and riders, and even if you make it that far, it can be hard to keep the horse sound - poor Zara Philips had a tough time with that right before the 2008 Olympics. That's why it is so incredibly important to try and establish a yard with more than one horse at the very top level but for me, that takes a combination of all my time, energy and commitment combined with backing and sponsorship. So while it's immensely rewarding for me - and the owners of my horses - it's also hard work!

On a day-to-day level there was a lot of preparation to get ready for the Olympics.

Basically no stone was left unturned and nothing was left to chance. I have always liked to keep myself fit and all the riding obviously keeps me in good physical shape but prior to the Olympics, on top of my usual riding schedule, I also undertook a fitness regime to ensure I, like my horse, was in absolute tip-top condition. I cycled, ran, swam and thanks to Life Fitness, who lent me a cross trainer, I worked hard on the cross trainer too! It was sometimes hard to fit everything into a day but it was absolutely worth it and luckily I am someone who thrives from being busy!

What was it like for you when you arrived in Hong Kong?

We had to fly out earlier in order to acclimatise myself and the horse. When we arrived, despite being in Hong Kong and not Beijing, what struck us was the enormity of it all. When we landed we got

a bus to the Olympic village and then we went to check on and ride the horses. Tankers Town flew separately; I had to put him on a plane and seeing him get packed off in a cargo plane was most peculiar. When I got there I think he looked quite pleased to see me! Horses are very resilient and he was exactly the same as he was at home really - I was quite surprised.

What was it like being part of the 2008 Olympics?

There was a real air of excitement about the whole event and while it was phenomenal, I'm pleased to say that I never felt overwhelmed by it all. It was amazing to be part of this incredibly talented team and we all got on so well, so it was really special - all my team mates were extremely supportive and helpful. I also received incredible support from my own team, owners, sponsors and family so it was fantastic and I am proud to have shared it with all of them!

If there was one slight down side, the fact that we were in Hong Kong - and away from Beijing, the opening and closing ceremonies and all of the other athletes - did detract from the experience a bit but that's just made me more determined than ever to compete at London 2012!

What was it like competing at the Olympics?

I did my dressage test on the Sunday morning at 7.30am, which was pretty early but still the arena was completely full, which was amazing! We then did our cross country the next morning. As soon as we'd had our briefing we walked the course. We'd been told that it would be the equivalent of a 4* but sometimes they make it a little bit easier for some of the other less experienced nations to make sure they can get round but it didn't seem much easier to me! I am usually quite confident but I have to admit on the first walk I thought: "oh my goodness, it's quite hard!" but it always gets better the more you walk it, and when you know where you're going. It was such a twisty and turny course, which made it very difficult to remember exactly which line to take so I really had to walk it and walk it so I knew exactly where I was going.

It was fantastic to ride although it seemed a little bit surreal because of the pressure and everything.

What was the show jumping in the Olympic stadium like?

The show jumping was the most phenomenal experience because the stadium was completely full and the atmosphere was just electric so it was very special and really good.

What was it like standing on the Olympic podium and collecting your medal for Team GB?



▲ Sharon Hunt & Tankers Town, Olympic show jumping

It was absolutely unbelievable really and I felt very emotional. It was such a happy occasion and it was great to do it with such a fabulous team of people!

What training have you had to do to get where you are?

I do remember my very first riding lesson and while I must have had some natural talent, it has certainly taken a long time to train and to be where I am but I've still got a lot more to learn. Basically it's a 7-day-a-week job and it's really early mornings and although my parents are involved they are not there everyday so it's really a case of self-motivation. It's been really good for me and I get out of it what I put into it. On an everyday basis, I work very long days in all weathers. I tirelessly aim to improve my own performances and also those of every horse on my yard, for the benefit of my career and my owners.

What are the greatest challenges you face?

It can be difficult finding new owners and people who are willing to back you but it's a great opportunity for them because to follow their own horse and the progress it makes is really rewarding both as a lifestyle pastime and financially too. We go to the most beautiful settings - Badminton and

Burghley - and obviously if the horse is good enough to go to the Olympics and all these different events, it really is fantastic for owners. I am also always looking for sponsors - I currently have seven sponsors now, which is very good. I had sponsors before the Olympics but obviously that's helped as it definitely raises the profile. It's important to keep attracting owners and sponsors as I need to work with a large base of young horses.

What's the plan for the next four years until London 2012?

Tankers Town will be too old by then - he'll be 18 unfortunately so he's got a couple more championships ahead of him - the European Championships and the World Games but I am now producing my other horses so that they will be at his level by the London Olympics. I currently have about 5 horses that I think will be suitable and that's a good number to have to potentially be the next Tankers Town.

What are your ambitions?

To win medals at the European Championships and World Games and to win individual and team gold at the London Olympics in 2012. HT



VIEW POINT ON THE BEIJING OLYMPICS

By Ina El Kobbia, Germany

▲ *Isabell Werth on Satchmo showing disobedience during the Piaff*

On 8/8/2008 at 8.00 pm local time all eyes were on China! China in return left nothing to chance; an impressive number of 2008 drummers opened the 29th summer Olympiad in Beijing's newly built main stadium that is nicknamed bird's nest due to its particular architectural structure. The world witnessed a spectacular opening ceremony that gave an overview of China's more than 3,500 year old history up to today leaving the audience with no doubt that China, with its 1.3 billion people is a world power. The closing ceremony was equally stunning. During the Olympic Festival industrial productions were reduced in order to improve air quality and dog's meat was struck from the

traditional Chinese menu cards to make international guests feel as comfortable as possible. China has spared no effort to host the Olympics. Yet, these Olympics will most likely be remembered as the most politicised games since the Cold War; Chinese officials found themselves confronted with severe international criticism regarding individual human rights and freedom of press which even led to boycott threats especially from Western countries. Additionally, at the commencement of the Olympics a new political crisis arose; the world learned that a conflict has broken out in the Caucasus with Russian troops marching towards Georgia.

However, the admittedly stunning organisation of these Games and the outstanding performances of the athletes made many put politics aside for a moment or two. Who will not remember the King of the Kings: American swimmer Michael Phelps: 8 starts, 8 wins, 8 gold medals and 7 world records! Many called him supernatural and asked themselves: why don't his muscles ever get tired?? And yet another king captivated the masses; he did not run over the finish line, but instead jogged over it and danced his way from record to record, the unbelievable Jamaican sprinter Usain Bolt! He left his competitors far behind with a smile setting 3 world records and taking 3 gold medals!

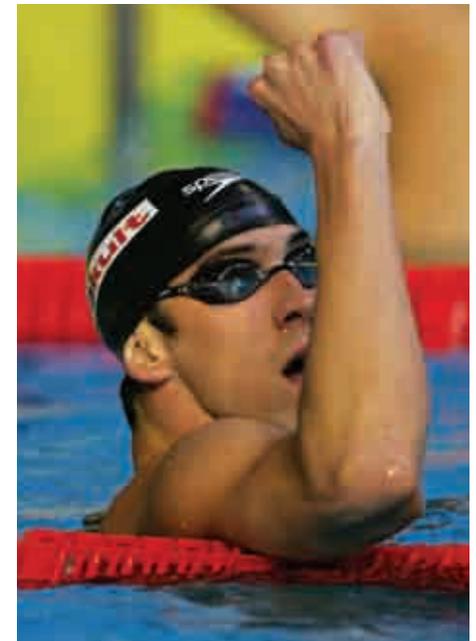


▲ *German Eventing team*

▼ *Usain Bolt*

▼ *Michael Phelps*

Remembering equestrian sport at the Olympics, true low points were Germany's jumping riders! For the first time in ages Germany had to watch other nations receive gold, silver and bronze medals; the German team found itself far behind with a disappointing 5th rank together with the Dutch team; and as if that had not been enough, German jumping rider Christian Ahlmann was disqualified and had to leave the Olympics earlier due to doping allegations concerning his Olympic horse 'Coester'; he was not alone though, Brazilian rider Bernardo Alves, Norwegian Tony André Hansen and Irish Denis Lynch also faced doping allegations. It looks like equestrian jumping sport is far from being a "clean sport"! In contrast, a true highlight was American jumping rider Beezie Madden, who took the individual bronze medal and additionally together with her strong team mates the team gold medal. Canadian Eric Lamaze was the big surprise of the equestrian Olympiad; known previously for his heavy drug consumption, he proved his riding talents by winning not less than an Olympic individual gold medal in jumping edging out Swedish renowned rider Ralf-Goran Bengtsson!



A true highlight at least for Germany was indisputably eventing; Germany won both, the team gold medal and the individual gold medal. Another highlight was dressage; unbeaten until today the German dressage team took the gold medal ahead of its permanent rivals from the Netherlands. Then there was the

dramatic Kur of the world's top dressage couple German Isabell Werth and 'Satchmo'; nobody thought that this would ever happen, nobody understood where it came from, but as if this outstanding performance had enough of all the competitions and of his rider he showed during the piaff clear and strong signs of disobedience, then continued the Kur, which consisted of highest degrees of difficulty, as if nothing had happened. It was a moment of shock for the rider who thereby had to give up hopes for an individual gold medal, nevertheless Isabell & 'Satchmo' ended up with the silver medal. Dutch Anky van Grunsven was next, she showed a good but not spectacular Kur and as regularly seen before her horse 'Salinero' did not show

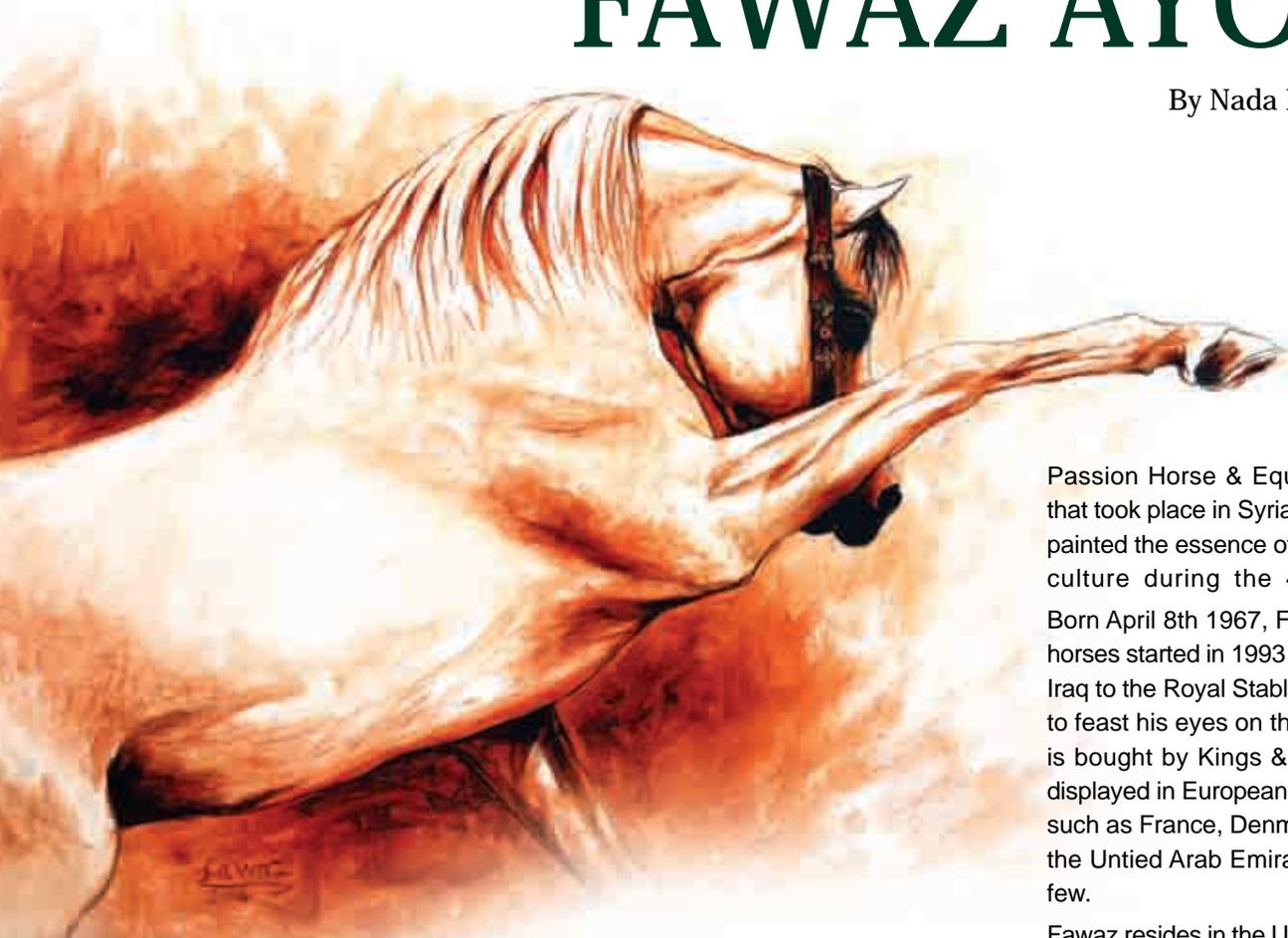
the end-halt, yet the judges considered the performance good enough for an individual gold medal.

To conclude this viewpoint, I would like to note that the 2008 Olympics were bigger, higher and more spectacular than its predecessors and most probably the next Olympics to come will try to even top these results! It is also probably fair to say that the Olympic Movement, which declares the intention to contribute to a peaceful and better world by the means of sport, remains an everlasting goal that however far it seems is worth to carry on from one Olympiad to the next; in that sense I would like to say: "Goodbye Beijing 2008, hello London 2012." **HT**

HORSES & ART

FAWAZ AYOUB

By Nada H. Abdelmoniem



ARABIAN HORSES: PEACE & BEAUTY

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International artist Fawaz Ayoub presents his passion for Arabian horses in his paintings that are displayed in many parts of the world; in portraits demonstrated in equestrian clubs, exhibitions, books and magazine covers. His work is time-honoured in a way due to his belief that fine art is about more than just imitating what the eye sees; it is about what the mind imagines. To him, Arabian horses are simply an artistic creation.

Fawaz is always keen to present Arab culture in his paintings; during the Arabian

Passion Horse & Equestrian Exhibition that took place in Syria in October, Fawaz painted the essence of the true Levantine culture during the 4 day exhibition.

Born April 8th 1967, Fawaz's passion for horses started in 1993 after travelling from Iraq to the Royal Stables in Jordan simply to feast his eyes on the horses. His work is bought by Kings & Presidents and is displayed in European and Arab countries such as France, Denmark, Malaysia, and the United Arab Emirates just to name a few.

Fawaz resides in the United Arab Emirates but is constantly travelling with his paintings which are on high demand by international publications, exhibitors and buyers. His upcoming works can be seen during the World Arabian Horse Championship scheduled on December 12th 2008 in Porte de Versailles, France where he will be painting a portrait during the 4 day event. **HT**





قوان أبو ب
2009

AL ZAHRAA STUD

15TH NATIONAL SHOW & EGYPT'S 11TH INTERNATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

Dr. Nasr Marei
International Breeder,
International Judge
& Chairman of the Organising
Committee



AL ZAHRAA IS A STATE-OWNED STUD FARM THAT IS DEDICATED TO THE BREEDING AND PRESERVATION OF THE EGYPTIAN ARABIAN HORSE IN EGYPT. HISTORICALLY AND TO THIS DATE IT REMAINS THE BLOODLINE SOURCE FOR MANY INTERNATIONAL AND LOCAL BREEDING PROGRAMMES. AL ZAHRAA AS WE KNOW IT TODAY HAS GONE THROUGH MANY PHASES IN THE LAST 4 DECADES; IT TRACES BACK TO 1898 WHEN THE ROYAL AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY WAS FORMED AND LATER ESTABLISHED A DIVISION THAT WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE PRESERVATION OF THE EGYPTIAN ARABIAN WITHIN EGYPT. THE SOCIETY WAS ORIGINALLY SUPPORTED BY MEMBERS OF THE ROYAL FAMILY WHO BRED AND ACQUIRED SPECIAL BLOODLINES. IN 1952, THE ROYAL AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY BECAME THE EGYPTIAN AGRICULTURAL ORGANISATION (EAO) AND AL ZAHRAA WAS ESTABLISHED.

CAIRO NOVEMBER 13TH – 16TH 2008



◀ *Kharelle*

THE 2008 11TH SHOW COMPARED TO THE ONES IN THE PAST:

This is the first time that I receive the responsibility of organising Al Zahraa show; it was a huge challenge and I was rather reluctant at the beginning. Yet I thought that by organising a good show I would prove several points one of which that all breeders can get along better as this would add to the chances of the show's professionalism. Secondly I had a goal which was promoting the show to become more "international" and by that I mean receiving more entries from outside Egypt. It was almost possible to receive 2 whole new entries from 2 different countries with each entering with 6 horses, but due to the equine flu in Egypt, they were unable to make it. Those entries were the United Arab Emirates represented by Al-Aryan Stud and Qatar represented by Al-Shaqab Stud. Luckily we had entries from Saudi Arabia represented by Al Khalediah Stud. Thus making the show more international will help gain more exposure for Al Zahraa and its status would come to a better stand amongst the shows in the Middle East.

For the first time in 2 shows we had 374 entries which was nearly the double of any entries in shows in the past; our maximum entries would be 150 horses at the maximum. One of the signs of success is having a great number entry. With my experience as a judge, a show organiser, and a breeder of course, breeders had more confidence in having more horses compete. It was a blessing but it was still a big responsibility to manage 400 horses plus 374 entries at Al Zahraa farm. That means that the total number of horses in the stabling premises nearly doubled in a few days time.

On the technical part I think the event was very professionally prepared under the support of the Chairman of the Disciplinary Committee Barbara Pfistner, the Chairman of the ECAHO Show Commission Dr. Francesco Santoro, and the President of the ECAHO Mr.

IN MY PERSONAL VIEW I BELIEVE THE QUALITY OF HORSES HAS BECOME LESS GLAMOROUS THAN IT USED TO BE

Willy Luder whom are the parties which can really give a solid assessment to the quality of the show. They testified to that and mentioned that this was the best show conducted in Egypt. They also added that it can compare favourably with some of the important shows in Europe. The breeders testimony of the show was also as positive if not more.

THE RATE OF PROGRESS OF AL ZAHRAA:

In a nutshell if you take all state-owned farms all over the world, most of them were either dispersed or do not have much contribution to the Arabian horse industries. For example Marbach in Germany, Babolna of Hungary, and Tersk in Russia. But on the other hand we have 3 major state owned farms which have kept their names and rate of progress through their contributions and those are the ones of Poland.

When it comes to Al Zahraa which has gone through many phases in the last few decades, in my personal view I believe the quality of horses has become less glamorous than it used to be. They do have very good mares and their stallions need to be reviewed. Moreover, other genetic tools are required to be used. The genetic pool of the Egyptian Agricultural Organisation (EAO) has become smaller due the use of limited numbers traced to certain bloodlines. It is difficult for a state-owned entity to undergo drastic changes but if it were my farm I would probably get rid of more than half of the 400 horses that are there. They all come from original valuable and irreplaceable pedigrees but their quality is very low. That would be the most logical step to take in order to revive Al Zahraa. Having said so, there is a new management now run by Mr. Ahmed Hamza; for the first time in the history of Al Zahraa the Chairman is also a breeder. The Minister of Agriculture, Mr. Ameen



▲ *Kenz Noor & Imperial Baalanah*

Abaza is very keen to improve the EAO and Al Zahraa. It is a golden opportunity to make the change needed.

Another factor that would help is that I was appointed as the Head of the Board of Trustees by the Ministry of Agriculture. The task is to study the stud and present

a report of how Al Zahraa can be improved in regards to management, finances and breeding. The Board is already working on this and I think there will be some good changes. Do not expect results of these changes once applied before a number of years.



▲ *Anessat Al Khalediah*

THE EGYPTIAN ARABIAN HORSE; WHERE IT STANDS, ITS RECOGNITION & ITS PROMOTION:

What is known internationally, the Straight Egyptian, is still maintaining its position. The EAO, Al Zahraa and Egypt will still remain the source of all straight lines. We would like to enrich this and keep its reputation since it is a national treasure. We have competition from other parts of the world so we have to be very pragmatic about it. At one point in the 50's and 60's, Europe and America bought some of the best horses in the EAO and they carried on a very intelligent breeding programme. Today they may have better horses. However in the last 10 years we have improved and are able to compete internationally and even prevail over international Egyptian Arabians and non Egyptian. The dip came while the Egyptian society underwent a 20 year political, social and economical structural change while the rest of the world carried on. We are regaining our positions as you have

witnessed in these 2 shows we had attendees from Australia, America and Italy whom were really happy to see that there is a revival of the Egyptian horse. Four years ago we had 4 major breeders; today there are 280 breeders; this says a lot. Egypt will still be the source. Implementing major changes, importing genetic tools, and increasing the size of our gene pool will bring progress.

THE COOPERATION LEVELS BETWEEN AL ZAHRAA & PRIVATE BREEDERS:

Al Zahraa is the official registry of Arabian horses in Egypt so the relationship is very close. All private breeders bloodlines' trace back to Al Zahraa. Al Zahraa still provides horses to private breeders either by selling them or allowing its breeding stallions to the private breeder's mares, so there is always good contact. They are notified by breeders about the breedings of their mares and inform them when the foal is on the ground. Al Zahraa inspects the newly born, conducts DNA tests to verify parentage, and then brands the

horses. They have the official stud book for their own horses and for those of private breeders. So really...we all add to each other.

MR. FERDINAND SCHWESTERMANN

International Breeder, President of the Pyramid Society Europe & Al Zahraa National Show Judge:

"The breeding programme in Egypt has had a great revival and the quality of the horses has increased over the years.

It was a pleasure to be invited to judge the National shows; all the results have been fantastic. The horses are highly maintained compared to what I have seen in past.

I have been coming to attend Al Zahraa shows for many years and I have to say that this year's organisation has been put outstandingly by Dr. Nasr Marei, Mr. Ahmed Hamza and all the sponsors. It is just such a step forward for Al Zahraa & the EAO and many compliments to them...I am an organiser myself and I understand what it takes."



▲ *Shammaa Al Khalediah*

DR. FRANCESCO SANTORO
International Breeder, Chairman of the ECAHO Show Commission & Al Zahraa National Show Judge:

"I have been attending Al Zahraa for more than 15 years; what I see this year is completely different and changed in all aspects; the organisation is very professional and the quality of horses is very much developed.

During the National show we judged many beautiful horses and I was surprised because several years ago the conditions of horses were very poor. Now they are well bred and well preserved.

Al Zahraa is a very big organisation and I would like to see them employ new breeding programmes in the future. Having said so, all I can say right now is simple: "look...look around you!" It has changed and it will continue on changing to the better." **HT**

*Pictures courtesy of Ayman Hammad
 Core Graphics
 ayman@coregraphic.net
 www.coregraphic.net*

RESULTS

Senior Stallions Reserve Champion

SHAFE PSUUDE
 (PADRONS PSYCHE x FOCUS SHALIA)

Breeder: U.S.A
Owner: Al Khalediah Farm K.S.A.

Most Classical Head, Males

KENZ NOOR (ET)
 (IMPERIAL MADORI x NAKSH EL KOLOOB)

Breeder: Noor Stud - Egypt
Owner: Rabab Stud – Egypt

Most Classical Head, Females

IMPERIAL BAALANAH
 (IMPERIAL BAAREZ x IMPERIAL ORRAPHA)

Breeder: U.S.A
Owner: Al Farida Stud – Egypt

Junior Fillies Reserve Champion

ANESSAT AL KHALEDIAH
 (F SHAMAAL x FS PREMIRRA)

Breeder: Al Khalediah Farm K.S.A.
Owner: Al Khalediah Farm K.S.A.

Junior Fillies Champion

SHAMMAA AL KHALEDIAH
 (F SHAMAAL x WIEZA WIATROW)

Breeder: Al Khalediah Farm K.S.A.
Owner: Al Khalediah Farm K.S.A.

Senior Mares Reserve Champion
 KHARELLE (DAKAR EL JAMAAL x KHEMOSELLE)

Breeder: U.S.A
Owner: Al Khalediah Farm K.S.A.

Senior Stallions Champion

F SHAMAAL
 (MAYOUN x SARAMEENA)

Breeder: Germany
Owner: Al Khalediah Farm K.S.A.

Junior Colts Champion

EL PALACIO VO
 (AL LAHAB x EL DORADA)

Breeder: U.S.A
Owner: Al Khalediah Farm K.S.A.

Junior Colts Reserve Champion

JAREER AL KHALEDIAH
 (PADRONS IMAGE x BARAH AL KHALEDIAH)

Breeder: Al Khalediah Farm K.S.A.
Owner: Al Khalediah Farm K.S.A.



TAG Heuer

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TAG Heuer Timing racks up a new honour:

The highly-technological Chronoprinter 540 is approved by the International Equestrian Federation!

La Chaux-de-Fonds - February, 2008: TAG Heuer is proud to announce that the new and innovative Chronoprinter 540 has been approved by the prestigious Federation Equestre Internationale (FEI).

Show jumping timekeeping is not the easiest task we can imagine. The technical perfection of the infrastructure is 1 thing; the handling of this technique is another. In addition, the need to provide accurate results as quickly as possible is extreme. So far, the new Chronoprinter 540 is FEI approved a state-of-the-art in term of technology in the field of highly precise time measurement for sport.



TAG Heuer has made profitable its extensive and unique timekeeping expertise in the most highly demanding sports, such as, Show Jumping to develop the most accurate Timing installation. As ever, the TAG Heuer Timing division has respected and surpassed the most stringent demands for accuracy.

Chronoprinter 540 main features:

FLEXIBILITY:

The numerous integrated timing modes such as NET TIME, NET TIME + 2 INTERMEDIATES, PARALLEL SEQUENTIAL, PARALLEL DIFFERENTIAL, TRAINING, SPEED MEASUREMENTS...etc. will satisfy the most demanding timekeeper. The CP 540 is able to accommodate the majority of sports disciplines operating as a stand-alone unit. When connected to a PC running TAG Heuer's extensive range of race management software, it is also the ideal time base for all professional sports-timing.

PRECISION:

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COMFORT:

The large graphic LCD display with backlighting ensures clarity of vision for the timing information in all situations. The ergonomic, intuitive, snap-action keyboard provides well-spaced and extremely precise keys. The timekeeper will easily navigate the keyboard, even with gloves on.

DESIGN:

The originality of the design of the CP 540 is obvious. The choice of the materials with its robust ergonomics have been carefully studied and developed for durability in any environment.

EXPANDABILITY:

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ARABIAN PASSION

DAMASCUS INTERNATIONAL
HORSE & EQUESTRIAN EXHIBITION
SYRIA 7 - 10 OCTOBER 2008

By Nada H. Abdelmoniem

▼ *Mahmoud Madkhaneh, Fawaz Ayoub & Sharif Al-Ferm*



Under the patronage of the Syrian Ministry of Agriculture & Agrarian reform, the Arabian Passion, Damascus International Horse & Equestrian Exhibition kicked off with the participation of 41 international exhibitors from 12 countries: Qatar, Egypt, the United Arab Emirates, Iraq, France, Italy, the Czech Republic, Argentina, Canada, Poland, Pakistan and last but not least, the host Syria.

With the aim of shedding some light on some of Syria's Arabian horse history along with its current equestrian industry, and to reveal the nobility created with the amazing Arabian horse, the exhibition

was thought of as a national project that was solely built on plans that will be implemented both strategically and vigilantly throughout the upcoming 4 years. The eventual aim of the project is to make Damascus one of the most important cities on the international equestrian scene.

With the diligent efforts of young blood from Profair International Exhibition & Conference Organisers, as well as the full support of Aldimashqeia Arabian Horse Stud and the Syrian Arab Horse Association, the Arabian Passion project has been greatly systematised and

arranged to demonstrate the vision of what Syria, land of Arabian Horses, can bring.

**MAHMOUD MADKHANEH,
ARABIAN HORSE
BREEDER & FOUNDER
OF ALDIMASHQEIA
ARABIAN HORSE STUD:**

What are your thoughts regarding the exhibition?

The fair has preceded lots of expectations considering this is the first time Syria hosts an international equestrian exhibition; it has been a good achievement. Both visitors and exhibitors have shown satisfaction.

Most of the exhibitors are from the Middle East, with a few from Europe; will you be inviting more exhibitors from Europe and the Americas in the 2009 project?

We are looking to make this exhibition more of a tradition rather than a business perspective. We wish to hold it on annual basis, and we wish to make it more international of course. All countries are welcome to join; it would especially be a good chance for many European countries to get an idea about the Arabian horse industry in Syria.

An Arabian horse auction was undertaken in the final day of the fair; what are your thoughts in regards to that?

The auction presented horses only from Syria; furthermore, this was the first time for some of the participating breeders to



▲ *Opening Ceremony*

undergo a horse auction. We expected to sell out 50 horses, and only 9 were sold given the high prices the breeders bided for.

As the owner of Aldimashqeia Arabian horse stud, what can you tell our readers about the Arabian horse in Syria?

Aldimashqeia Arabian horse stud is one of the biggest studs in Syria; we have both beauty and race contests which are held at the same time as contests in Dubai and France for example. We need to change dates and travel with our horses to these shows in order to gain mileage. As for the Arabian horse from Syria in specific, we have pure blood Arabians which have not been inbred and have been kept pure. I am one of the breeders who inbred and produced an excellent French Syrian Arabian WAHO horse. I believe in continuing with trials until I reach a successful phase.

Do you breed Arabians for business or for passion, or for both?

When I first thought of organising this auction, I only thought it would add mileage to the breeders and expose them to what is new. I have around 200 horses, and hence Arabians are simply a passion to me. I grew up loving horses and hanging pictures of them all around my room; I bought a pure Syrian horse 6 years ago and started to inbreed. Thankfully, so far, Aldimashqeia stud horses have won many national prizes. On the same note, we as breeders are very much supported from our government; all Arabian horse breeders are entitled to receive pellets at half price. If a breeder wishes to establish a stud, receiving a licence would be an easy

process. Thus, equestrian and Arabian horse awareness and knowledge is now present, support and willingness to enhance and innovate is also present.

**SHARIF AL FERM,
Managing Director of Profair
International Exhibition &
Conference Organisers:**

What are your comments in regards to the exhibition?

I'd prefer calling it a national project not a show or an exhibition; we really want to put Syria on the international equestrian scene. I am happy and satisfied with this first project because we were able to invite 41 exhibitors from 12 countries which is, in exhibition criteria, a good achievement. The visitors were more than what we have expected, and the visit of Mrs. Manal Al Assad, the honorary president of the Syrian Equestrian Federation, showed significance and support to the exhibition and its organisers.

In terms of promotion, what was required from Profair in order to reach equestrian industries?

It took us about 10 months of hard work; we are a team of about 8 individuals; 2 partners, myself and Mahmoud Madkhaneh, the owner of Damascus & Aldimashqeia Arabian Horse Stud. We persisted on presenting attractive brochures, website designs, art designs, and marketing, along with wanting to be presented in high class mediums such as Horse Times magazine, the Italian publication Tutti Arabi, and the Arabian Dream which is the magazine of the Venice show held on annual basis in June. We collected data of almost 4,000 professional horse businesses from a 9,000 worldwide database, and hence this was an accomplishment to be able to contact and stay in touch with all 4,000. Furthermore, we approached arabianessence.com which is a professional Italian website in which we advertised for our show with a link to our own website. We also used their mailing list services so they helped in sending our newsletter. In Syria we were able to contact companies who are involved in the equestrian industry, along with Bassel Al Assad and Seif Al Sham clubs who we were honoured to have as those are the two prestigious clubs in Syria with very

sophisticated and up to date facilities. We also got in touch with 2 similar exhibitions which was a good channel for promotion; one is the Verona Exhibition held every November in Italy, the other is Al Fares Exhibition which is held every 2 years in Dubai and in Johannesburg. Our cooperation levels with the exhibitions I have mentioned have helped in the participation of a numerous variety of exhibitors from around the world.

Since you have shown positive thoughts about the exhibition, what are the plans for the 2009 exhibition?

We are planning on holding the exhibition on annual basis; we seek to make it an awaited sports, cultural, and trade event. We have even pushed our dates from October 7th until October 16th as The Abu Dhabi Hunting & Equestrian Exhibition is held during the same time, and of course, we wish for many more exhibitors to participate.

Having mentioned all this, are you willing to invite exhibitors from outside the Middle East?

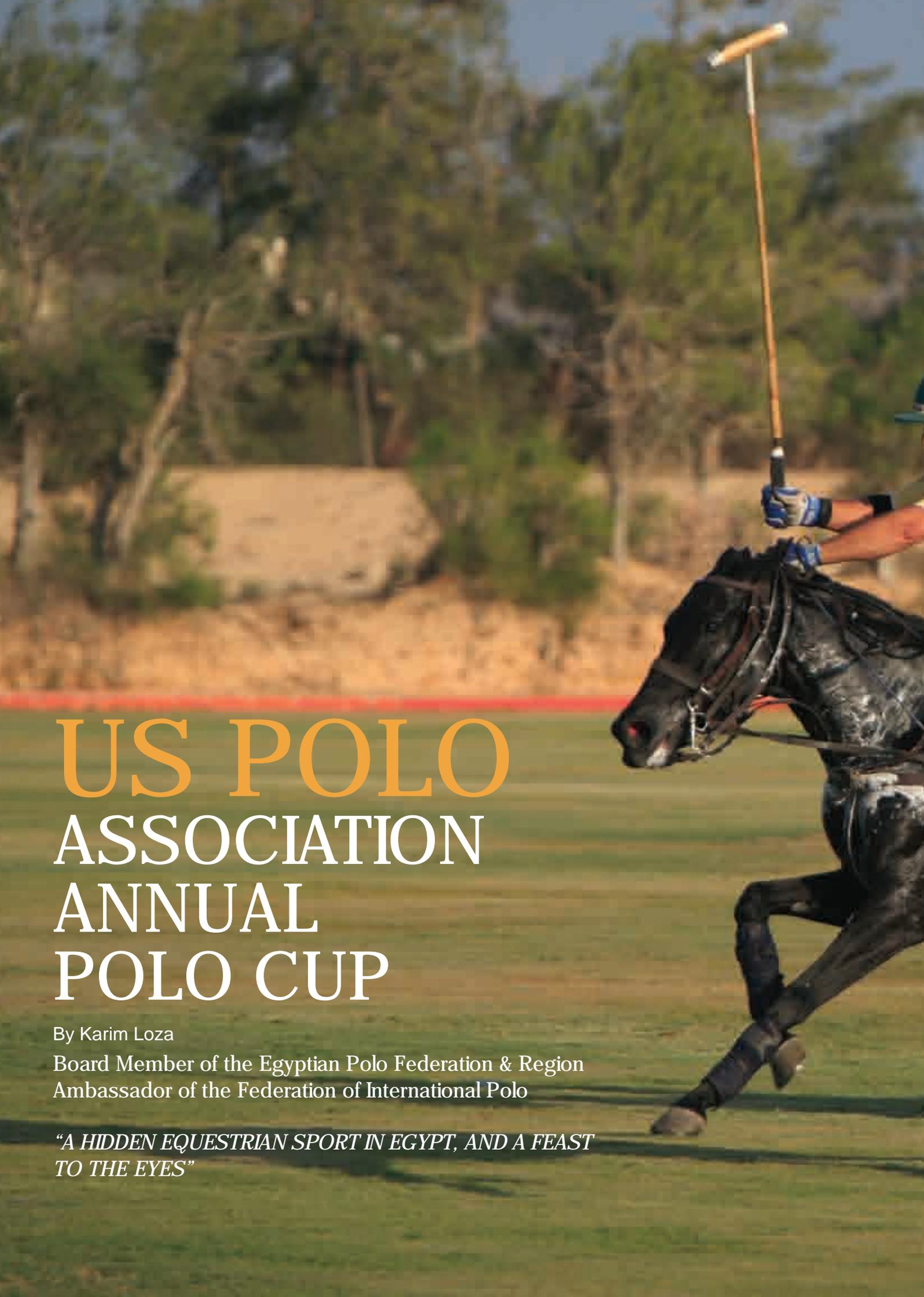
We do have agents in Germany and Italy who are helping to promote the event throughout Europe.

What are your comments regarding the horse auction?

This was the first horse auction ever held in Syria and we succeeded in presenting 105 horses. However the organisation of such an auction required the presence of highly organised and experienced parties thus we invited the director of Al Zahraa Stud from Egypt whom managed the auction; Al Zahraa is known to breed some of the best Egyptian Arabian horses in the world which added to the credibility of the auction. This was a good chance for the Syrian breeders to evaluate their horses in a correct sense since there is much potential for excellent production. During the auction Syrian breeders were able to acquire the know-how of how to present their horses at a reasonable price.

What do think it would take for Syrian breeders to reach the level of international Arabian horse breeding?

It's quite difficult and we are going to need 3 generations of breeding to reach the top levels of producing Arabian horses; however our horses can compete in endurance. HT



US POLO ASSOCIATION ANNUAL POLO CUP

By Karim Loza

Board Member of the Egyptian Polo Federation & Region
Ambassador of the Federation of International Polo

*“A HIDDEN EQUESTRIAN SPORT IN EGYPT, AND A FEAST
TO THE EYES”*





BENEATH THE LIGHTS OF A BEAUTIFUL ALEXANDRIAN OCTOBER AFTERNOON, KING'S RANCH EQUESTRIAN CLUB HOSTED THE EGYPTIAN POLO TEAM AND THE AMERICAN TINICUM POLO PARK TEAM WITH 8 RIDERS FROM BOTH TEAMS MOUNTING THEIR POLO PONIES FOR A FRIENDLY MATCH ON A VAST 300 YARD FIELD CONSTRUCTED TO INTERNATIONAL POLO FIELD STANDARDS. SPONSORED BY THE US POLO ASSOCIATION & THEIR AGENT QUATTRO TRADING & SERVICES, THE EGYPTIAN POLO FEDERATION HOSTED THE 11TH POLO EVENT IN EGYPT.

played in Alexandria at Semouha and Sporting clubs as well as the Army Cavalries. International teams have always particularly enjoyed visiting Egypt as it offers the benefit of 2 playing seasons: in Cairo during the winter and in Alexandria during the summer...a luxury rarely available in other parts of the world at that time.

The exuberant attacks of Ali El-Kashef led to 4 goals in the American team's net, yet at the final chucker coming to an end and the sun setting, the American team charged the field attempting to tie a very close score of 5-6; eventually the win went to the Egyptian team.

Polo is a sport with long tradition in Egypt. Starting in the 12th century, the game was played by the Mamluke cavalry as a form of military exercise. More recently, from about 1890 to the late 60's, the Gezira Sporting Club 3 large polo grounds were ranked as the best of their kind in the world. The game was also widely

Egypt produced a number of talented polo players who played and won a number of international tournaments: Seifalla Pasha Yousri in the 1920's, 8 goal handicap, was the Egyptian Ambassador to the USA, won a number of tournaments in the USA & Argentina, Victor Smeika in the 1940's, 4 goal handicap, won a number of tournaments in France & the UK, and Salah Foda in the 1950's played in Italy. Alex Ebeid in the 1970's, 80's & 90's, captained the 'Falcons Polo Team' and won 7 times the Coupe Do'r of Deauville France, and twice the Queen's Cup in the UK. Alex still is a great support for the game although retired from the

high goal tournaments and currently plays at his farm in Gloucestershire, UK. Farouk Younes, from the 1970's to date, reached 4 goal handicap, played in various parts of the world and won the Silver Cup in Deauville France, Gold Cup in Sotogrande Spain, and the General Monte Cup in Argentina. Farouk was Region Ambassador of the Federation of International Polo (FIP), Tournament Director of the zone playoffs in India and Pakistan, and Tournament Director for both World Cups of France & Mexico in 2004 & 2008. Farouk retired from the high goal tournaments and plays at his farm in Abou Seir, Egypt, but still remains Board Member of the FIP Executive Committee and Chairman of the Egyptian Polo Federation.

The Egyptian Polo Federation was established in 1930's, one of the oldest federations in Egypt, and it currently includes 4 active clubs; Gezira, Semouha, Sporting & the Police Sporting Union club, along with 2 associate member clubs; King's Ranch and Shams Jockey club. Part of the federation's various roles & activities is organising the local polo season that typically starts in October and ends in June. The federation organises events for the visiting teams from various parts of the world; during the last 3 years teams from the Netherlands, Brazil, Switzerland, India, Spain, Pakistan, Zambia, Germany, Italy and Jordan have played in Egypt. The federation also organises trips for the Egyptian teams to play abroad; 2 teams travelled during the 2008 summer; one to the USA and the second to the Netherlands.

▼ *Ali El-Kashef*



▲ *Danny Santana*

FAROUK YOUNES, CHAIRMAN OF THE EGYPTIAN POLO FEDERATION:

"The game was very competitive and I think the Egyptian team played very well; they compliment one another in a beautiful way. The American team they play very well as individuals, but today as a team they were less coordinated, however they were riding horses they are not acquainted with. At the last chucker, they gathered-up as a team, along with having very good horses, which eventually made the match tight."

ON THE SPORT DEVELOPING IN EGYPT:

"In the near future, we need younger players; we have been working on developing the sport for the past 4 years by brining in professional trainers and umpires. We have also been sending our players to participate at international events in order to gain mileage, as well as inviting international teams to participate locally as to enhance the experience of our players. The most efficient way to attract players and young

blood is to boost the culture of the game through the media and of course through sponsorship.

ON POLO PONIES:

"Usually polo ponies are bought directly from the race track; I personally have a series of Argentinean horses that are imported along with my line of horses that are bred locally."

HESHAM EL-GHARBY, FOUNDER OF THE TINICUM POLO PARK CLUB & TEAM MEMBER:

"We are here playing amongst friends and the match was extremely nice; we would like to come and play matches again and again.

The polo sport in Egypt is quite hidden, although there is much potential for the game to develop; the team performs well and are gaining experience due to travelling to compete in international competitions, as well as inviting international teams to participate here in Egypt." HT

HORSES IN HISTORY

HIDALGO & FRANK HOPKINS

By Anthony Amaral, *from Western Horseman Magazine, 1969*

FRANK HOPKINS...BEST OF ENDURANCE RIDERS? TWO FACTORS PRONOUNCE FRANK HOPKINS AN EXTRAORDINARY HORSEMAN: HIS ABILITY TO RATE HIS ENDURANCE HORSES FOR THEIR MAXIMUM EFFORT AND HIS SUCCESS WITH THE MUSTANG HORSE.

Two factors pronounce Frank Hopkins an extraordinary horseman: his ability to rate his endurance horses for their maximum effort and his success with the mustang horse. After having spent nearly 60 years in the saddle on the western frontier riding dispatch for frontier generals and having competed in more endurance rides than any other man, Frank believed that the mustang was the most significant animal on the American continent. In one of Frank's few published comments, he wrote: "I know what the mustang strain means, it means a horse that can keep going day in and day out, that doesn't need bandaging, fussing with, and that can win endurance rides whether the rules are made to order or not..."

Frank shared the same high opinion of the mustang as did the Sioux Indians who Frank knew well. He was born shortly after the Civil War in a log cabin in Fort

Laramie, Wyoming. His father was an army scout and his mother is reputed to have been the daughter of a Sioux chief. Frank often rode with the Indians to capture and break mustangs.

In his early teens he rode dispatch for Generals Miles and Crook. Later he was a buffalo hunter and worked with Buffalo





Jones, Bill Matheson, William Hinrer, and Bill Cody. He was riding mustangs and had developed definite opinions about them. When Frank was riding as a messenger for General Crook, the general mentioned to Frank "...if troops can't overtake a band of Indians in 2 hours, it's better to give up the chase." Frank pursued the comment and the General



replied that the wiry Indian ponies "...can go 90 miles without food or water. They can wear out all the cavalry horses we have on the frontier."

Frank probably was aware of the problem even before General Crook had realised the situation. Besides the phenomenal endurance of the mustang, Frank also rated the mustang as an intelligent and economical horse.

"You can't beat mustang intelligence in the entire equine race. These animals have had to shift for themselves for generations. They had to work out their own destiny or be destroyed. Those that survived were animals of superior intelligence. The mustang was grass-fed all his life. He picked his own food from the country, could live where even a cow would starve, and knew how to take such good care of himself that he was always ready to go."

ARTICLE BY ANTHONY AMARAL, SENT TO GILBERT JONES, FORMER PRESIDENT OF THE SPANISH MUSTANG REGISTRY, WHO THEN SUBMITTED IT TO THE EDITOR OF THE SMR NEWSLETTER IN THE 1950'S:

Hidalgo will never have a bronze monument erected in his memory to grace a green turf, as have Man O'War and Citation. And for some reason or other, his name and pluckiness escape the pages in books that list the "Who's Who" of the equine world.

Yet, pound for pound, Hidalgo, a pinto mustang bred and raised with the Indians on a harsh South Dakota reservation, was more horse than a dozen of his blue-blooded cousins put together. But the remarkable story of Hidalgo is also the account of Frank Hopkins, a westerner who had no peer when endurance riding was the rage at the turn of the century. All in all, the slender, dauntless Hopkins who developed his endurance riding ability carrying dispatch for such frontier generals as Miles and Crook, competed in 400 long distance rides. If blue ribbons had been awarded to the winner at the finish line, Hopkins would have tallied 400. One of his lengthy rides started at Galveston, Texas and ended at Rutland, Vermont. A 1,800-mile ride in 31 days and finished 2 weeks ahead of the next rider. The greatest contest was still to come however; 3,000 miles across the Arabian desert against esteemed desert-bred Arabian horses.

Hopkins had raised Hidalgo from Sioux Indian stock on the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota. Like many Mustangs of that time, Hidalgo was descended from horses brought to this continent by the Spanish Conquistadors. Hopkins preferred this type of horse for his rides. They were not much for looks but their indefatigable endurance outweighed their poor appearance. In ensuing years, Hopkins teamed up with the Buffalo Bill Wild West Show as a specialty rider. While in Paris during the

World's Fair in 1889, Rau Rasmussen, a lover of fine horses, approached him and a businessman who dominated most of the camel freighting around Aden on the southern tip of Arabia. Rasmussen spoke to Hopkins, telling him of an endurance ride that was held in Arabia each year, as it had been for 1,000 years. Only desert-bred Arabians had ever competed in the long trek. But Rasmussen had heard of the prairie mustangs, those scrubby, coarse-looking horses which had outrun the fastest horses the frontier cavalry had mustered against mounted Indians. He asked Hopkins if he would be willing to pit one of his mustangs against Arabian horses. With the financial support of the Congress of Rough Riders of the World, Hopkins' acceptance immediately stirred keen interest in cavalry and civilian horse circles throughout the world. Hopkins arrived in Arabia in 1890 for the endurance race, bringing with him 3 horses; Hidalgo, then 8 years old, was Hopkins' final choice for the ride. Slightly over 100 horses started on the ride from Aden. The great caravan of skilled Arabian riders rode their most prized mounts. They were spirited, accustomed to the difficulty of traversing the sands, and accustomed to the sun that sprayed exhausting heat upon them. Even among the mass of mounted horsemen, Hopkins stood out with parti-coloured, 950-pound Hidalgo from the American plains. Hopkins held Hidalgo at a steady pace as they made their way through the dry heat and over sandy soil. The march progressed to the Persian Gulf and up toward Syria and then along the border of Syria and Arabia. Each day the riders started with the sun, following it until they were marching into it. Horses

dropped by the way, some exhausted, some lame. At the end of the first week, the scarcity of water and the meager diet the horses were forced to exist upon in the barren country had culled the inadequate horses.

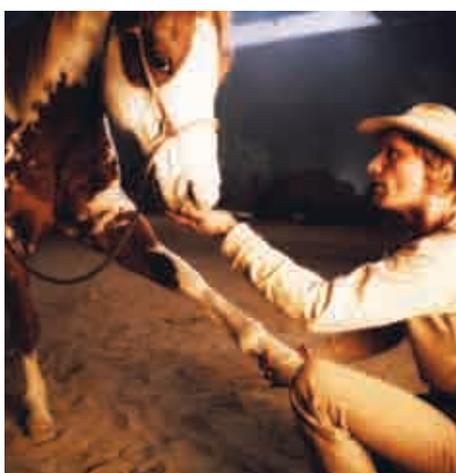
The strung line of riders dwindled daily. Entering the second week of the gruelling trek, Hopkins made his move and started to pass the other desert riders. In the

wake of the sand kicked up by Hidalgo, treasured Arabian horses of the Bedouins fell farther and farther behind, while Hidalgo kept to a steady pace.

On the 66th day of the ride Hopkins rode Hidalgo to the finish stone, leaving behind him 3,000 scorching miles. Hidalgo had lost considerable weight, drawing his pinto hide close to his bones. Hopkins had him well rested and fed when the second horse



▲ Hopkins & parti-coloured Hidalgo walking the deserts of Arabia



arrived 33 hours later. The Arabs praised Hidalgo for the distinction he had won. He had lived up to his name "exceptional," "exalted."

The story of Hidalgo is still mentioned among Arabian horse enthusiasts, but always with the conjecture, was Hidalgo an exceptional horse? Did he, as the typical representative of the mustangs of the American plains show superiority over the most acclaimed breed in the world, the Arabian horse? **HT**



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MONTY ROBERTS

(Part 2)

By Sue Akehurst, England

WHEN IS IT CORRECT TO PUNISH A HORSE? AND HOW WOULD THAT PUNISHMENT TAKE FORM?

Well, first we have to define the word punish; I define the word punish as bringing extrinsic pain to that horse of some sort or another. It might even be psychological pain, and you can bring extrinsic pain to a person or a horse by shouting at them. You can drive the adrenalin up, you can bring

up the fear and I would call that punishment. It's extrinsic, it means forceful. Striking the horse is punishment, kicking the horse, jerking the horse's mouth, it's all punishment. If we can define punishment as extrinsic measures to forcefully change the behavioural pattern of another. It's never alright to punish a horse, ever, ever, ever, ever, ever, ever, ever! Now you might give me another definition for punishment that I would say OK to, under certain circumstances. But then I would call that discipline not punishment because discipline can be

intrinsic, it doesn't have to be extrinsic; it doesn't have to be forceful. That might be setting the horse to work, it might be asking the horse to do something that's slightly uncomfortable and then stopping that discomfort and stroking the horse and loving the horse when they get it right. It might be like that. Discipline? Why work is full of it. Punishment? I don't want to hear about it.

How important is the reward and the timing of giving the reward when the horse does something right?

Giving a reward to a horse for positive action is the single most important factor in any training. You need to look for what the horse does wrong and cause that always to receive negative consequences. But more importantly you need to look for what is right and use positive consequences to reward those. No food and no money! They don't know what money is and food is a bad reward for a horse. Food is good for seals and dogs and other carnivores, but not very good for a horse. No blade of grass has ever run from a horse, so they don't consider it as a trophy. But the carnivore has to stalk and capture his food so he considers that a trophy, just like we do when we shoot the deer and put it on the car and take it around the neighbourhood to say we're the great white hunters! Hence, it is extremely important, and how fast? 3 seconds. A horse will lose the importance of it in about 3 seconds. You need to reward within 3 seconds.

Have you ever found a horse that is beyond help?

Most people would ask: "Have you ever found a horse that you couldn't work with?" NO, I haven't. But have you ever found a horse that is beyond help? Yes. Because some people have driven horses beyond



help and that's just something you can't do anything about. But you can live with that horse somehow, but causing it to be a normal horse may be completely out of the question. How many of these? 5 in my career of 70,000 or so!

A short break is taken during the interview whilst he reviews the horses for the demonstration later that evening; he doesn't touch the horses. He has 5 horses to choose 3 from for the demonstration. He looks to check to see that they are sound firstly, as this is obviously very important. He cannot work with a horse that isn't physically sound. He introduces himself to the owners. He has never touched the horses before and his people have not been around and "trained" the horses prior to the demonstration. He states that most of the people who bring their horses to a demonstration do not continue to seek help after they leave the demonstration. Consequently 50% of the horses he works with go back to square one. But when they stay in touch, when they ask and cooperate with people who do his concepts, 99% work! He asks them to give him the respect that they at least give the methods a fair chance. Some of

the horses that he loads go home and then he gets a call saying it loaded a couple of times and now it's back, it won't load again. He asks: "Are you still using the halter?" the owner replies: "Well No I didn't, I've got a halter but I didn't put it on yet!" "It doesn't work if it's not on him, I guarantee you that! Please, it's your horse, your life, but I am just suggesting to you that facts are in, and those that stay in touch are successful, and about 60% or so of those that don't stay in touch are not successful in subsequent times."

Monty: "Your horse will come in in a moment and he will only be out there for about 3 or 4 minutes in the round pen. You and I will be outside the round pen. I don't go near your horse until the audience is here."

Monty: So what do we have? Non-loaders? How did you get here?! Bribery?! How long did it take?"

Owner: "Just over an hour and unfortunately people got involved on the floor, ran at him with brooms and whips, beat the hell out of him and he threw me on the floor and he dragged me along etc."

Monty: "Today?"

Owner: "Yes, we are all covered with mud and blood!"

Monty jokes with owner: "Oh we have to cancel him I don't want to be injured!"

Owner: "He's alright!"

Monty: "But I don't want to be injured!"

Owner: "No he is alright, it's just the whips, it's just, when we are using someone else's transport, and it's just so traumatic."

Monty: "It's alright, I know, I've had it all my life, don't worry. You will not have any violence perpetrated on your horse in this building in this demonstration. That's a guarantee. We will also help any horse that isn't chosen with this loading business, we will help. Later, during the demonstration, the horse was loading freely without the use of even a lead rope!

How many starters? We will probably use one starter. So one won't be used, watch what we do and try to use the same techniques. I am not sure which we will use at present, but that's the way it goes. I just want the most educational demonstration that we can produce. So the other horse is the spooky one? How

▼ After approximately 20 mins of Monty working with the horse, it had happily loaded on its lorry



spooky?"

Owner: "Very!"

Monty: "How old?"

Owner: "5."

Monty: "And you ride it?"

Owner: "Yes."

Monty: "And you ride it fine?"

Owner: "Yes, until something comes along, plastic bag in the hedge, or worst of all someone with an umbrella!"

Monty: "What happens then?"

Owner: "He will freeze, rear, spin and bolt home. He is terrified"

Monty: "Can he walk across anything on the floor, a plastic sheet or anything?"

Owner: "NO WAY!"

Monty: "OK, good!"

Later in the demonstration after about 15-20 minutes working with the same horse, Monty has the horse walking over a large bright blue plastic sheet and happily following a large umbrella!

Do you find your methods work with the horse undertaking non-ridden work, and with mules and donkeys?

Well everything is different with a donkey. They are less responsive, but my methods work on them that's for sure. But my methods are even more successful with

mules than they are with horses. I think mules are smarter than horses and they just pick up on it quicker. Dr. Robert Miller who counts himself as the world leader in this business of psychology of mules, says that the mules have been waiting for 8,000 years for my methods to come along!

I've also worked a lot with draught horses, horses that pull sleds in the snow for feeding cattle, and trotting horses in Sulki with the bicycle. I've worked with donkeys that were used for packing when I was a child. Mules that were used for packing; that is carrying heavy loads in the mountains and horses that were used for packing...a lot of work with draught horses. I fed my farm for 25 years with Belgium teams and also some mules. I've used mules as riding animals for round-up and the process of dealing with and roping cattle to doctor them, brand them, and that sort of thing so...yes my methods work with them all.

How important do you feel it is for an animal to have time off from work or training?

It's important there is no question about it and under certain disciplines it's more important than others. But I think sometimes people give it too much credence and this business of saying "Oh just turn him out for a year and everything will be fine!" Not necessarily. What is turning

him out to do? If he needs a rest, fine, rest him, but if it isn't necessary, just to turn him out for a year, reducing his intake nutritionally is not a good idea. A lot of times they will go out on very low quality grass and they won't give them the good food they have had in the stable. It's important not to cause the horse to feel like it's drudgery, their work and they do have to have some breaks. But I think judicious use of breaks is important too. If they are enjoying their work and they want to do it, let them do it. They are happier horses than if they were in a field somewhere.

Would your methods have an effect on a horse that is already started and competing, say as a show jumper, when they are not showing any negative signs or problems?

I love that question; that can't happen. Just let me at every horse that shows negative signs, and I'll show you things that he doesn't like about what's happening and you can improve every set of methods that is used with a horse, so my methods work with these horses, professional horses that are already trained and in their discipline. Pie is an example and I showed Kelly a little thing at the last stop that we had and it's already improved one of the little things that he does immensely and he was doing fine before. (Kelly Marks is one of Monty's trainees. Pie is her horse.) So, no, my methods work, none of us are perfect and the higher we get on the world class level of performance the more important any little improvement is. In Olympic competition a 1% improvement means the difference between a gold medal and no medal at all. So my methods work even for the professional that seems to be doing fine.

Do you believe horses and animals have emotions as we do such as happiness, sadness or loss? And how do you feel they express it if so?

It is my opinion that horses do not have emotions as we do. I've recently had an argument with somebody who believes that her horse loves her. They are not capable of that kind of overt emotion. They're just not. Yes, he can call to her voice, because when she calls to him she also brings a carrot or an apple or something, and he learns through experience that that voice produces something that he likes. That's not love,





that's not overt love. The oestrus cycle of our animals is proof positive that full on love and sexual intimacy is not within the prevue of the horses and the animals which we most closely associate with anyway. However, elephants can pine and can grieve. I see dogs grieve like hell when their owner goes away. Horses do not. They miss that voice, because it's connected with something else which they find pleasurable. But there is not the level of emotion in horses that there is in people, not even close, so be careful with that one. Because people tend to anthropomorphise to the extent that they think their horse loves them. You can love a horse and I have loved many horses, I can love, I can crave, I can be very emotionally involved with the feeling of fondness towards them and toward a horse. But they can't feel that toward me.

Can you become a part of their herd? That bonded?

You can certainly become a part of their herd, you can, and they look to you for safety and they can trust you or fail to distrust you but they can't overtly seek you out as we would do in a magnetic way. So that's where the misunderstanding of love can come from.

Is there any type of animal that you would like to try your methods with that you haven't already? Any unusual animals?

Yes, there are, (he smiles). I have tried it with deer, certain fish, some birds, and certainly dogs, cats, horses, mules, and donkeys. But I would like to work more with sheep, pigs and cattle in these concepts; I just don't have time these days to get it done, but there are needs in herding sheep, reindeer, cattle, certain oxen that are farmed, and deer farms...that kind of thing. There's the Yak type animal that they train, even water buffalo, I'd love to do more of that. (Big smile again as he thinks about it).

Have you worked with zoos and some of the more exotic animals?

I have, I have worked with exotics, giraffes, wildebeest and certain big cats, but not enough and I'd like to do more. There are a lot of things in life I'd like to do and my word, we need 2 life times at least and gosh if it goes much longer, I am having 2 life times!

Do you find the big cats, being hunters rather than flight animals need the same methods?

Oh no, well yes it's the same method but the language is totally different, it doesn't matter whether it's a dog, cat, or grizzly bear; all carnivores tend to have an opposite language to the flight animals and the gestures are different, along with the environment that might be different like with fish, trout for instance and salmon which are carnivores...they are predatorial, they are vicious little animals in their world, they are very territorial and they can be angry little rascals...and if we don't learn about their behaviour then we can't know to best offer them the optimum environment. So that's some of my work as well.

If there is anything that you would like to change in your life or if you had your life over, what changes would you make or have done differently?

If I had my life to live over I think the only changes I would make is to be more aggressive about moving forward, I would do more, bigger and earlier. After having said that I think that there is a time and a place for everything and you do have to wait your turn to bring forth these things. I knew a lot more much earlier than I thought I knew and so I wasn't prepared emotionally to bring it forward, not having the confidence that I knew it. Now looking back on it, yes I should have pressed along a lot earlier, but the resistance I have had, would have been for a longer period in my life and I've been under some huge criticism by people who don't believe in what I do at all and it's not easy to take. But I think to answer your question, if I could change it, it would have been more, bigger, and sooner. **HT**

Having read a lot of Monty's books, and seen 8 or more of his demonstrations over the past 10 years or so, I found it a pleasure and honour to finally meet him personally and have this amazing opportunity to talk to him about his work. I wasn't however prepared for the amount of passion, drive, and enthusiasm he still has emanating from him as he works with the horses and talks to me about his work. I found it difficult to stay focussed on the interview as I was time and again drawn in completely by what he was saying, feeling the emotion myself as he discussed the violence he had endured, yet now has so much positive emotion towards really making a difference to this world for horses and for people. I hope Monty Roberts will be able to visit Egypt and show his completely effective but non violent approach towards horse training. If so, I truly hope all who attend his demonstration find him to be as inspiring, interesting and yet also entertaining as I do time and again.

We at Horse Times need to hear your feedback on the article, on Monty's methods, hear your questions, which we can forward to Monty on your behalf, and need to hear from you as to whether you would be intrested in attending a demonstration by him, meeting him, as well as hearing him speak about his methods with a question and answer section. Contact us here at HT, or email sue@horsetimesegypt.com

Pictures courtesy of Neil Fortescue www.neilfortescue.com

60 SECONDS WITH FADI AL ZBIBI

Country: Syria

Date of Birth: January 1st 1975

Star Sign: Aquarius

What's your best achievement?

My latest achievements are my best: qualifying for the 2008 World Cup Finals at Goteborg - Sweden, winning the bronze medal with the Syrian team at the Pan Arab Games in Egypt 2007, coming in 2nd place at CSI Dubai Grand Prix, wining CSI Abu Dhabi, Manama, and Damascus Mini Grand Prix in 2008.

Who is your favourite athlete (rider or other sports person)?

The Saudi Arabian Olympic rider Khalid Al Eid, not only because he is a perfect rider to my eyes, but because of his morals and humility.

Do you keep any pets?

I keep no pets, but the smallest animal I can keep is a Shetland pony!

What is your favourite movie?

The epic movie about the constitution of Islam directed by the late Moustapha Akkad: The Message.

Who is your ideal celebrity (female or male)?

It would be difficult to say who my favourite female celebrity is unless I would want a divorce! So let me say that my ideal male celebrity is my 2 year old son Hadi.

What is your favourite gadget?

My Mobile phone!

What is your favourite music record?

I like classical music in general; Yanni is good.

What is your second favourite sport?

Horse riding, horse riding, and horse riding!

Do you like to cook?

Not more than making a cheese sandwich when I am starving, so not really!

To your close friends & family, you are known to be?

Daddy habibi (*Habibi* is Arabic for darling).

If you had the power to change something, what would you change?

Myself!

Do you support any charitable organisations?

Absolutely; I support organisations that stand up for Arabs and Muslims especially in Palestine. **HT**



Syrian team during the Pan Arab Games, 2007 ▲





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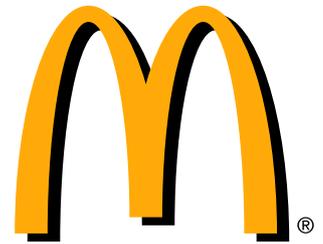


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▲ Basmala Ahmed with an Olympic athlete



▲ McDonald's Champion Kids

Aiming to educate the children in Egypt about the Olympic Games and adhering to its commitment to promote active lifestyles, McDonald's Egypt launched the Champion Kids programme.

The programme selected 2 Egyptian children, Basmala Ahmed Mohamed El Dahan (6 years) and Youssef Tarek Hussien Mahmoud (6 years) who won a 4 day all expenses paid trip to Beijing with an adult guardian and lived the Beijing 2008 Olympic Games experience which McDonald's is the Official Restaurant of, in addition to visiting the Chinese historic sites.

The trip engaged the children with peers from different countries around the world and allowed them to fully experience the Olympic spirit, as they were given the chance to interact with Olympic Champions and watch the competitive games.

The 2 children watched games and medal ceremonies live at the stadium, and also

visited the Olympic Green and the Athletes Village.

“Our social responsibility and commitment towards the wellbeing of our children in Egypt leads us to initiate unique programmes that can effectively influence them and encourage them to adopt active lifestyles. The McDonald's Champion Kids programme coincides with this vision, and possesses a strong potential to achieve these supreme objectives” said Mohamed Mansour, General Manager of McDonald's Egypt.

Champion Kids leaflets with information about the Olympic Committees and the Arab achievements in the Olympic Games were available in all McDonald's Egypt stores. The leaflets also included a detachable section with questions on the mentioned information. Children had to answer the questions and deliver them to the McDonald's Store Manager, and the names with the correct answers entered a draw to determine the 2 winners.

The draw in which the two children were selected took place in the Egyptian National Olympic Committee (ENOC) under the committee's auspices and the Ministry of Social Solidarity.

“McDonald's Egypt congratulates the winners and was glad to provide them with this once in a lifetime opportunity to experience the Olympic Games in full. The programme was conducted as part of McDonald's official sponsorship of the Olympics and has successfully engaged the minds of children from all over the country. We look forward to repeating this success with more competitions in the future” said Mohamed Mansour General Manager of McDonald's Egypt.

This programme is part of McDonald's interest in social activities particularly in the field of sports, which it believes will contribute towards leading a 'Balanced Healthy Life' for children in the Egyptian Community. **HT**



▲ McDonald's Champion Kids

▼ Michael Phelps talking to Youssef Tarek



▲ Mohamed Mansour



▲ Youssef Tarek



DRESSAGE JUDGING

HOW CAN WE MAKE IT BETTER?

By David Pincus, England



▲ David Pincus riding his homebred Grand Prix stallion Sheepcote Wurlizer by Weltmeyer

IN THE PAST 30 YEARS DRESSAGE RIDING HAS DEVELOPED INTO A GLOBAL SPORT. ALTHOUGH NOT AS POPULAR AS SHOW JUMPING OR EVENTING, IT IS GROWING IN POPULARITY. AS THE SPORT GROWS AND OPENS ITSELF, THE JUDGING OF DRESSAGE COMPETITIONS COMES UNDER GREATER SCRUTINY.

Many people find judging inconsistent and unclear, and many believe that unless judging will improve and become more transparent the sport will lose its credibility; some of the reasons for these concerns are very apparent. Very often the discrepancies between the placing of different judges is significant...horses can be placed in the top 3 with 1 judge and lower than 15th with another. In most cases judges who are judging their own nationals place them higher. In the 2008 Olympic Games and FEI Junior/Young Riders Championships there are instances of this happening;

instances when horses display severe disobedience or riders that utilise unethical training methods in public are declared the best in the world. Dressage will be brought into disrepute and require swift rectification which unfortunately, so far has been slow to happen.

The role of the Governing Body of the sport is to devise a system, lay down guidelines in order to create the best possible judging system which takes into account any potential impediments in order to provide a fair competition. The system must take into



▲ Isabell Werth on Satchmo in GP Special

account the strengths and weaknesses of human nature and psychological effects over judging.

A fair system will have the confidences of most participants and will not only be fair but will also *appear* to be fair which is important. The following paragraphs give some suggestions as to the causes and propose some corrective measures. Judges do not sit down in front of the arena with the aim to judge badly, however somehow the current system and procedures will lead them astray.

THE COLLECTIVE MARKS:

One of the most controversial issues are the collective marks at the bottom of the sheets. Many feel that they are outdated and no longer required. Others believe that they are inconsistent and bias the results. A close analysis of the **collective marks** will help us come to a better understanding of the situation.



Historically, before the sport was a competition in days of the cavalry for instance, the collective marks were the general comments given to summarise the assessment of the horse during his training stages by the rider's superior. Their role was to indicate to the rider where his horse requires improvement and at what stage of the expected level is his training, they were not meant as a vehicle to compare and segregate one rider from another; their role was purely educational.

Today a dressage competition is what it says; a competition. The judge's role should be limited to the appraisal of the performance as they see it, movement by movement. Obviously there is and should be an element of comparison between competitors as the aim is to find a winner. The one which performs the test according to the scales of training and is as close to the ideal as laid down by the FEI will be awarded the highest marks. If the

collective marks reflect the test it would be pointless to award them and if they do not, then there is a problem as they will not be relevant to the test performed. It would be impossible to reach a unanimous interpretation of the collective marks and this is the reason why many results transpire as unclear and at times manipulated.

Elements in the collective marks:

The first to appear on the list is the paces; to include all paces in all forms, for example: collected, medium and extended in one mark is very challenging. A horse may be very expressive in his extension but limited in the collected paces or vice versa. There is no uniform agreement as to what paces are the most suitable for dressage. Some have a preference for large expansive paces and some like paces that can collect easily. With modern breeding some horses show paces with amazing knockout factors. The question

is should this have a detrimental effect over the appraisal? Dressage is not a show class but a test of training and riding.

One judge may look at one element while another may look at another element. Judges might evaluate their chosen element correctly but come to a completely different mark much to the confusion of spectators and competitors.

The impulsion mark would have been easy to award but the inclusion of elasticity, suppleness and engagement of the hind legs all under the same heading complicates the issue and has the same limitations as mentioned above.

During the 2008 Olympics the submission mark came under great pressure. For many it was not clear as to how the horse showing the most disobedience in the competition did not receive the lowest mark for submission. Was the rider showing skill at bringing the horse under control or was it poor rider

judgment by pushing the horse too far? There will never be an agreement about this; most of the elements which appear in the collective marks have been taken into consideration when judging. Movement, suppleness, engagement etc. are the basis for evaluating any dressage exercise. To award these marks again is simply duplication.

The rider's marks are the most controversial of all the marks and the one that is mostly debated. Recently on the British Dressage forum there was little agreement as to how to award these marks, it transpires that judges can simply award these marks however they wish without clear guidelines from the Governing Bodies. With modern public scoring facilities, one often sees in international shows that some riders are awarded higher collective marks than others for no apparent reason.

The current use of the collective marks to separate 2 competitors in case of a tie is thoroughly illogical; currently the one with the higher collectives is declared the winner while the rider that performed a better test movement for movement is relegated below.

A good judging system will reduce the subjective element to the minimum, and will leave to be judged only what can easily be agreed upon. Most of the technical elements can be agreed upon according to the scales of training and other directives but the collective marks will always be more subjective as it is impossible to lay exact guidelines on how they should be awarded.

The current judging system suffers from more failings which need addressing:

The rogue judge:

Following judging practises in competitions we often notice that a judge may have a far more influential outcome than others. This judge may award a combination with a significantly higher mark than the others and equally may award another combination a significantly lower mark than other judges. If this difference between the marks awarded by this judge is large enough, then it can make the scores from the other judges almost irrelevant, he will select the winner.

Excessive subjectivity:

Dressage judging as already pointed out is very subjective but must be minimised as much as possible. When Olympic medals are on offer it will be nearly impossible for a judge to be totally impartial to national spirits and hopes and not absorb some of the atmosphere surrounding the competition. One often sees riders receiving higher scores from judges of their own nationality.

Procedures & protocol:

Some of the current dressage procedures contain severe flaws which bring the public to question the whole judging system. The system needs to appear just and correct with



© Ken Braddick-HorseSport

▼ *Isabell Werth on Satchmo in GP Fresstyle*

no apparent questionable procedures.

Judges can wear many official hats and this can create a conflict of interest. Currently a judge can hold a very high ranking official position in his own national federation or the FEI, determine selections, rules etc., as well as be an international judge. A judge should only be a judge and not hold any other official position; otherwise there is always the possibility of conflict of interest.

The manner in which judges are selected for international competitions is questionable. Currently there is no protocol on how to choose judges for major competitions they are appointed by the FEI committee or invited by an organiser which is often a competitor at the same show. With the current structure of the committee it is self serving. At the 2008 Olympics the riders raised an objection to the compositions of the jury and demanded changes of judges' panel. Should there have been a protocol for selection there would be less grounds for complaints.

The way forward:

Criticism without offering an alternative has little value. The following are several ideas which may be used as a whole or will stimulate some thoughts as to how to rectify the situation:

- All collective marks should simply be abolished and the results should be determined according to the execution of the technical movements within the test.
- The rogue judge or the patriotic judge can be dealt with by devising a system in which the scores of judges judging own nationals or out of line (highest/lowest scores) will be automatically discarded. The implementation of this idea needs some adjustments and further thinking but it is a base to start from.
- Avoid judges that have 2 roles such as a judge and an official within the organisation in order to limit conflicts of interest.
- Judges for major competition should be subject to a selection protocol and not based

on any personal affiliation between selectors to the selected.

Most of the flaws which are criticised are in areas where there are no clear coherent guidelines whether it's on the technical judging or procedural side. Where no clear parameters are available individuals can stray or the on-lookers can criticise. If and when these points are corrected, dressage judging will regain the respect it deserves.

When I began compiling my notes I was a fairly lonely voice concerning these issues but recent upheavals in the FEI showed that many people have noticed these flaws and hopefully the brave moves taken by the President of the FEI will change the current situation to a better one. The FEI is seeking to implement some important changes which are supported by some and resisted by others. The leading European nations object to the meddling of newcomer nations in their sport. The newcomers point of view must be taken into account as they propel the European dressage industries (breeding, training etc.) to where it is. Dressage is no longer the domain of a few European countries but is becoming open and very global; many countries which are not featured in the world rankings yet, do have an important role in the whole sport and their involvement in itself has a very positive economical benefit for the leading countries. Isabell Werth and Anky van Grunsven would not be worldwide stars without the world interest in dressage. The German and Dutch breeding industries would not be where they are if world markets did not exist. **HT**

International dressage rider David Pincus B.H.S.I. has been riding since childhood and has had a career in show jumping, eventing and dressage competitions. He now trains horses and riders from Novice to Grand Prix. His students have won many prizes including International 3 Day Events. Past students of his include Claire Oseman, the 1985 European Young Rider 3DE Champion, Vanessa Ashbourne, Reserve Champion in 1986 at the Young Rider European Championships and in the USA, Odded Shimoni, well known trainer and Grand Prix winner, started his career training with David. Linda Foster, a top instructor and FEI competitor from Australia gained Grand Prix experience on his horses. This coming year he is going to start another of his homebred horses at Grand Prix. His 10th home trained Grand Prix horse. The training methods taught by David are those he learned training in Europe. Including the Spanish riding school - Vienna, and in Germany including Warendorf and with Dr Reiner Klimke. David also spent some time in France training with the Cadre Noir in Saumur.

Brooke Hospital for Animals 1934 – 2008



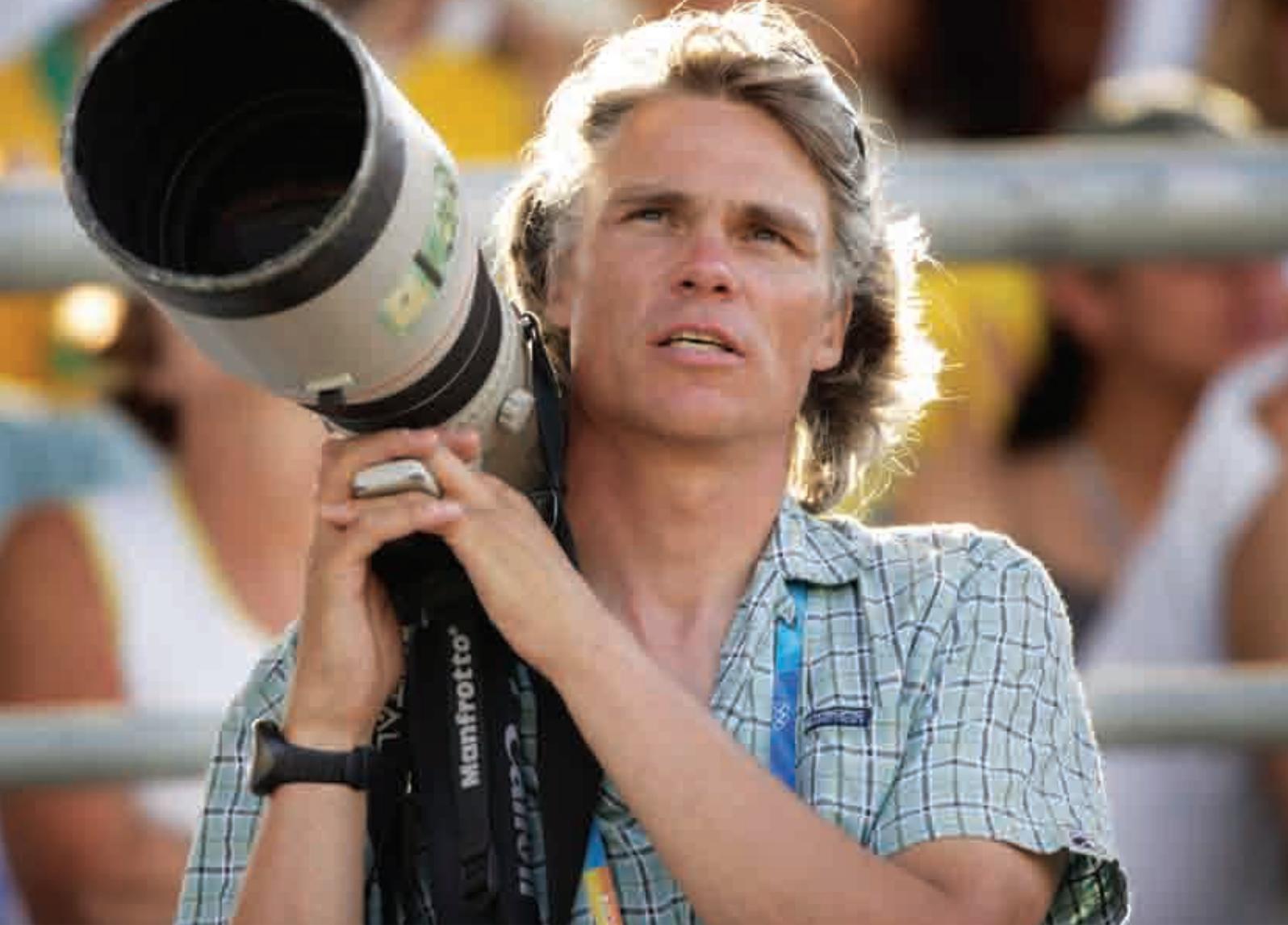
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ARND BRONKHORST

Arnd Bronkhorst is one of the world's best-known equestrian photographers. He has travelled the world to photograph horses in competition, in training and in their natural habitat. Breathtaking and unconventional photos are his trademark. Arnd is mainly interested in the stories behind the news, aesthetics, and the emotions of horses.

Through his huge online image database, Arnd sells his photos to publications around the globe. This online library contains sport images, fascinating detail pictures, and beautiful images of horses in wonderful atmospheric photos. Momentarily there are over 100,000 equine images available on his website. This number is increasing daily as the database is updated every night with the latest changes and additions.

As of 2003, Arnd has been working together with 4 of the best equestrian photographers in the world; these 4 are Jacques Toffi from Germany, Frédéric Chéhu from France, Charles Mann from the United States, and Paula da Silva from Italy. Arnd has worked together with them before, and now this friendship extends to the Online Image Database. The best images of these 4 photographers are added to Arnd's database at www.arnd.nl to further improve the quality and diversity. This means more events will be covered and there will be more

situations on file. The chances of finding the right image have increased tremendously with this development. Also, if the right image is not on file, it is always possible to ask the 4 associate photographers to search their huge photo-archives.

After finishing his Photography studies at the Royal Arts Academy in the Hague, Arnd specialised in equine photography. Since 1986 he has worked for leading Dutch Horse magazines such as 'Hoefslag' and 'Bit'. In those years he also acquired international acknowledgement in equine photography.

Even though Arnd grew up among horses at his parents' riding school, he never was an avid rider like his sisters and mother. Horses were their lives, but Arnd only rode a show once in a while trying to win something or another. Ultimately he tried eventing where it must be said that his companion, the gelding Aquino, had an irresistible desire to race through the woods. This background has helped



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PERISCOPE ON DIAA AMR BISHEER

By Nada H. Abdelmoniem



Country: Egypt

Date of Birth: September 25th 1980

▼ *Diaan during Seif Al Sham Championships, Syria 2008*

Over a cup of coffee and an initial nice chat about David Beckham, the rock band Metallica, and a horse that is dear to his heart, I met with the Egyptian Libran rider Diaa Amr Bisheer who was very outspoken about his positive views regarding the Arab League and the fact that it does represent a step up from national and local shows where competition levels are upped by a larger number of skilled riders. Known to his friends and family as the “Monster”, Diaa showed no monstrous behaviour and only gave Horse Times the chance to direct a periscope on his latest achievements.

Education:

I studied Business Administration at the Maadi Modern Academy in Cairo. I mostly rode and tried to keep up with my studies.

Riding:

I love horses. I was one of those kids who'd see a horse in children's books and go to

my mother to tell her that I loved horses and wanted to see one! She took me to Shams Club, Cairo and it all started there when I was 6 years old with my first trainer Gen. Youssef Ghorab. I went on to compete in national shows until I was 18 then I started competing in small international shows in Europe where I won the 6 bar show in Lowville, France. At 21 years of age, I travelled to Saudi Arabia where I currently reside and train. By that time, what is called the World Cup Arab League was constituted, and this is how I have managed to compete.

Latest achievements:

As soon as I finished university I moved to Saudi; at that time I was riding the Egyptian Federation's horse 'Castro' who helped me a lot in A Class shows even though he was not qualified to be a team horse. I worked hard with him to make him





compete with other horses even though he wasn't supposed to jump this level. In Saudi, a variety of horses were available which enhanced my training. I am currently part of the national Egyptian show jumping team and I compete in the Arab League; during Seif Al Sham international event in Syria, we came in 2nd as a team, and I came in 2nd place on the individual level riding 'Casper'. The 2007/2008 season was quite a good season and very successful for me, though I didn't start with 'Casper' I started with a horse called 'Al Mandoob' who helped me come in 6th place at the Dubai Grand Prix, 1st in the Sharjah Grand Prix, and 4th in Abu Dhabi. I also competed in Bahrain where I rode in the qualifier for the Grand Prix and came in 4th with the same horse, but unfortunately I didn't ride during the Grand Prix because the majority of riders faced problems with the show's organisation and most of us decided not to compete. At the show in Qatar, I came 1st in the Grand Prix qualifier and 3rd in the Grand Prix. Finally, during the last event of the Arab League 2008 season in Syria, I came in 5th place during Bassel Al Assad Grand Prix and 6th in Seif Al Sham's.

Training in Saudi, sponsorship & the 2009 season:

I am being trained by Samir Abdel Fattah, the trainer of the Egyptian team who has supported my training since I was 16. I train with him almost everyday; he's a fantastic man who knows a lot about horses and a great manager as well. My sponsor Dr. Khalid Al Jeraisy is a rider and a comfortable man to work with; he provides

me with a lot of space and freedom which is why I have continued working with him for 5 years now. He doesn't own a club; he sponsors me through one of his companies called 'Al- Alouka', the name written across my riding gear. We ride at Khalid Al Eid's stables because it is preferable for us to gain experience from him. Al Eid also helps us with a lot of our technical problems; he's a very decent person and I'm very grateful for all that he has taught me.

For the 2009 season, I will be riding a new mare called 'Ravanta' who is 9 years old and very promising. She is owned by my sponsor. I will also be riding another mare, 'Oshima' who is the full sister of 'Al Mandoob'; another very good mare, along with 'Ronnie' who I am preparing for the Qatar and Sharjah shows.

Future aspirations & the Arab League:

To compete at the Olympic Games of course! I'd prefer calling it a goal, not a dream; I just have to work as hard as I can to reach Olympic levels. To train in Europe is an option, but it would be unwise of me to go now although I've received some offers from there, however I wouldn't find the same horse power and finances as I do in Saudi. There are more than 20 horses available for riding at Al Jeraisy stables, the majority of which can jump Grand Prix levels, which is difficult to find at any other stable. The Arab League is now very strong and we have the same competitions as in Europe, almost the same courses. I have competed before in Europe; the only problem was speed as their horses are much faster than ours; it's like comparing

a Lamborghini to a Mercedes. Their horses are better and are therefore more expensive, but it can be done. There are riders who have normal horses and believe they could compete with European riders. An example for that would be Khalid Al Eid and Ramzy El Duhami; Khalid has an Olympic bronze medal and Ramzy qualified for the Grand Prix during the 2008 Olympics. He could have won if lady luck was on his side. Those are riders we should look up to as idols and ones that make us believe that we could do it, and do what they did at the Olympics. I believe Khalid broke a very big barrier between us and Europeans. I believe that staying here, with the Arab League, would be a wise choice for everyone...we have fantastic facilities from footings to arenas such as the ones in Sharjah, Qatar and Syria's indoor arena.

Criticism of the Arab League & its lack of top competition:

Everybody wants everything on the spot...to be successful and to get medals on the spot! But everyone has to work very hard and we have to work 20 times harder than European riders because they breed their own horses, keep the good ones for themselves and never sell them outside of Europe, thus this is something we have to do for ourselves, we have to start breeding our own horses. We have to start getting the know-how and start working together. As such, surely in the next 4 years many Arab riders will acquire mileage.

Family support:

Samir Abdelfattah's is not just my trainer, but I consider him to be part of my family; we have very good and bad days together but he never lets me down. He was always the one there for me. Khalid Al Jeraisy is a man that has been supporting me financially for 5 years; his support has helped me gain some success. My family provide me with emotional support and want me to do what's best for me even though its very difficult for them to cope with all this both financially and time wise because they have their own lives and can't travel around with me everywhere. **HT**

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THE HORSE'S MENTAL FITNESS

(Part 3)

By Dr. Mohamed Elsherbini

IT IS POSSIBLE TO TEACH A HORSE TO RESPOND TO QUITE SUBTLE SIGNALS, AND EVEN TO OVERCOME HIS NATURAL INSTINCTS SUCH AS FEAR OF AN UNFAMILIAR OBJECT OR SOUND.

INSTINCTIVE & LEARNED BEHAVIOUR:

It is undoubtedly easier to teach a horse to respond to a signal when the desired behaviour comes mentally. A horse will willingly move forward to a squeeze from the leg, but he will be reluctant to respond to a signal to move backward when he

cannot see what is behind him. By understanding the natural behaviour of the horse, we can use and develop his strengths, rather than work against him.

From learning through his own experience, he can be taught how to respond to particular signals. **A conditioned response** is one that is established by training to a stimulus that is not natural. When a young horse walk forwards on his own accord - perhaps following another horse - some trainers will make a clicking sound with their tongue. When this technique is repeated over a number of occasions, the horse will start to associate the clicking sound with going forwards. Soon, he will move forwards whenever he learns this sound.

The release of the reins is a **negative reinforcement** of the initial response of halting; the horse is encouraged to respond to the aids so that the pressure on his mouth will be released.

TRAINING THE HORSE:

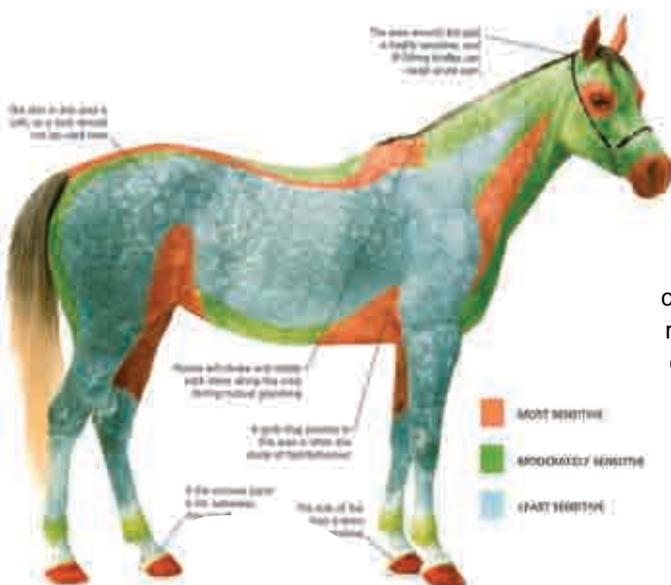
Most early horse training uses conditioning and negative reinforcement. Once basic communication is established between a trainer and a young horse, one signal can quickly be replaced by another. For example, using a voice aid for



young horses is substituted later on by leg and rein aids when the trainer is in the saddle. Negative reinforcement, such as the horse halting to the pressure of the reins, can immediately be followed by positive reinforcement, such as a pat to show the horse that he has responded well. Later on, as a reward of the halt, a pat would also do well.

Habituation: is the decrease in responsiveness produced by repeated stimulation. For example, a horse that has been frightened by traffic at an early age needs to be exposed progressively and regularly to cars so that he becomes used to them. A good example of unintended habituation is when a rider uses very strong leg aids, which results in a diminishing response from the horse.

Sensitisation: is the increase in responsiveness produced by a progressive increase in stimulation. A horse that has become unresponsive to a normal leg aid can be made more sensitive if the rider uses the leg with a spur or stick as the aid to go forwards and then reward the horse when he responds. As the horse becomes sensitised, one can begin to use leg aids only without spurs.



USING PUNISHMENT CAREFULLY:

A great deal can be accomplished in training simply by ignoring undesirable responses. A response that is neither rewarded nor punished tends to disappear. A positive punishment, such as kicking the sides of the horse after he has refused a fence, should be used carefully. If used too much, it can become associated with a type of work, which in turn can lead to unwilling behaviour. The threat of punishment is often enough, for instance by taking your legs away from the horse's sides but not kicking him. Not rewarding an unsatisfactory response can also work well with a trained horse.

HAPPY HORSES MAKE HAPPY RIDERS:

The more a rider thinks of the horse as a partner rather than a machine, the more the horse will give. With a suitable environment, sufficient exercise, and good training, a horse will accept his rider and thrive in the partnership that can exist between humans and horses. If your horse is not settled in his work, try to find the root of the problem so that you can resolve any behavioural issues and develop his true potential. When a horse is happy in his work, notice the relaxed position of the ear, the calmness in his eyes, his regular breathing, and the ease of his movement. These signs are all symptomatic of a contented horse that accepts his rider, enjoys his work, and uses his back. A horse must understand what is required of him, however, also understand his part of the bargain as well trained horses show real intelligence. In the state of captivity in which a horse is held, it is up to the rider or the trainer to assume the responsibility for developing a horse's mental ability and to influence the degree to which he can become independent and find more enjoyment in his work.

With good training, it is possible to improve a horse's state of mind and develop him mentally so that he can achieve his

highest potential. However, your expectation levels need to be relevant to the horse's age and level of training. The most that can be expected from a young horse is being steady and animated. Such a horse is likely to have a good temperament and to be a pleasure to train and ride.

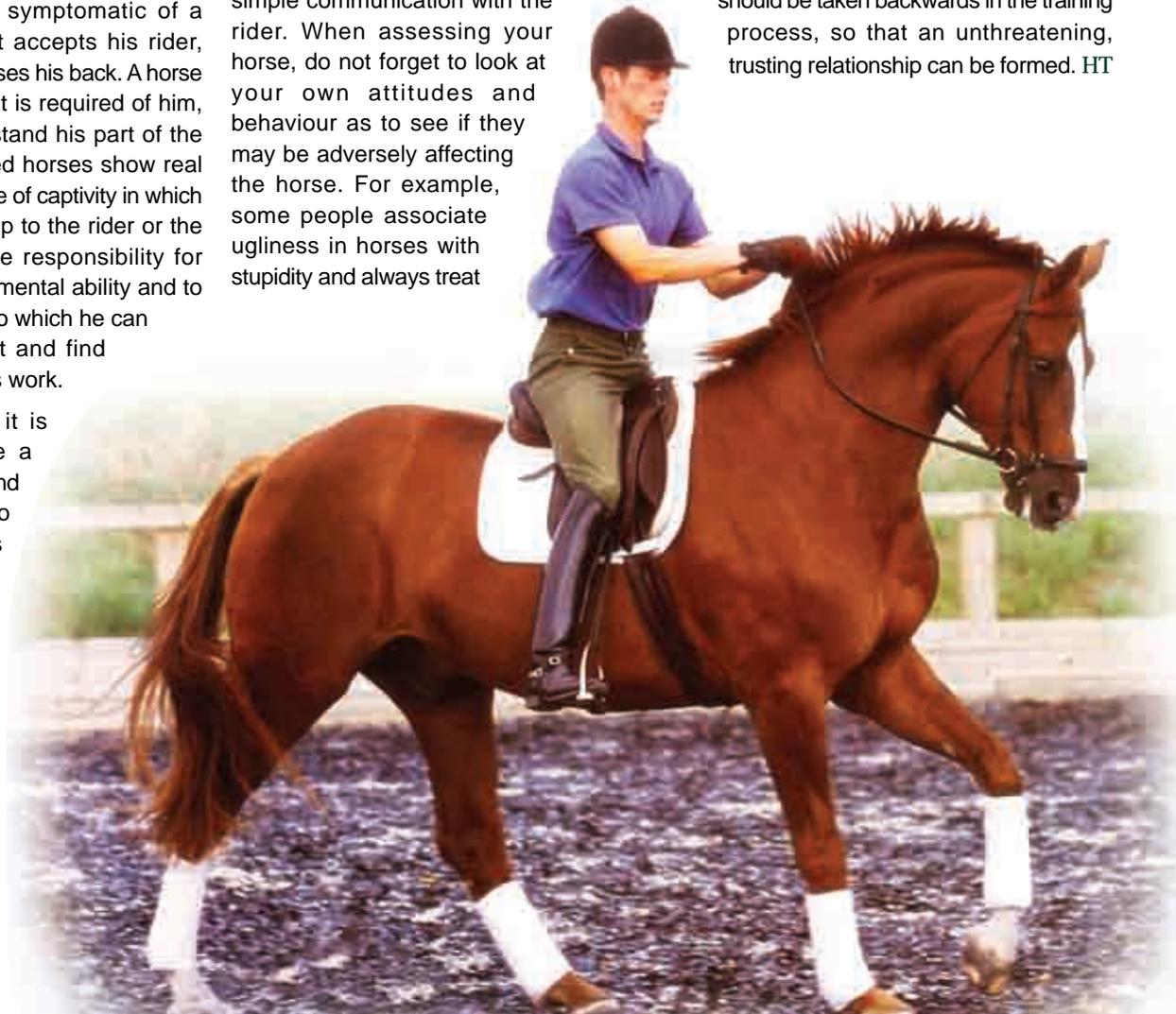
MENTAL PROBLEMS DURING TRAINING:

Whatever the level of your horse's training, you may find your horse unsettled in his work. All horses that have a difficult temperament or show a sudden change in mental attitude should have a thorough veterinary examination. With a majority of difficult horses, pain is found to be at the root of the problem like a badly fitting tack, or sharp teeth, foot or back pain. If the vet and farrier give the all-clear signal, there are a number of ways you can resolve some of the typical problems. Generally, it helps to turn your horse out most of the time and let him have company. A horse walker can be used to supplement daily exercise without human/horse tension. Most horses can also benefit from regular grooming sessions and other close contact with their rider on regular basis. Lungeing work is particularly good for improving a horse's mental attitude and to help him become more relaxed and steady with a simple communication with the rider. When assessing your horse, do not forget to look at your own attitudes and behaviour as to see if they may be adversely affecting the horse. For example, some people associate ugliness in horses with stupidity and always treat

the horse under the impression of being stupid.

Solution Plans:

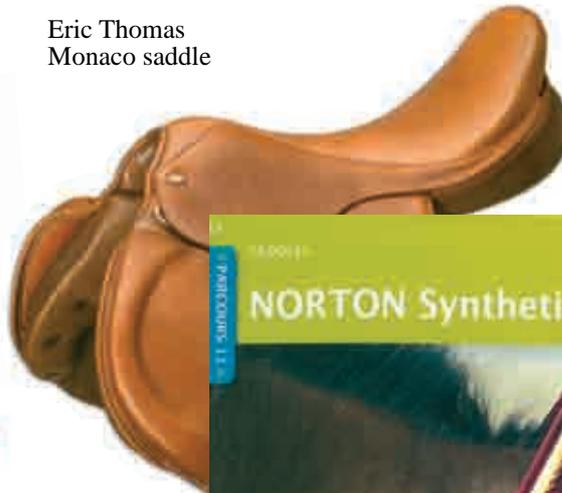
Once you have pinpointed a particular behavioural issue, plan a programme to help resolve the problem. In many cases, this will mean going back to the basics so that you can encourage and reinforce good behaviour. In all cases, follow sensible methods and structured routines. An **excitable** horse needs a structured approach, a calm environment, and long, slow work. He will work best if he is turned out all the time and is always ridden by the same patient rider. A **nervous** horse needs a sympathetic rider. He may also be happier in a more restricted environment. If a horse is **depressed**, it may be because of pain, sickness, boredom, or bullying from humans or other horses. A spirited and kind-hearted rider can motivate these types of horses. **Suspicious** horses might have suffered pain or discomfort in their early lessons or experiences. Taking these horses in controlled environments with lower level exercises will help to build trust. If an **aggressive** horse is not suffering pain, it may be that he has learnt aggression as a survival habit like stallions. Some steps should be taken backwards in the training process, so that an unthreatening, trusting relationship can be formed. HT



Metallic treads for stirrups

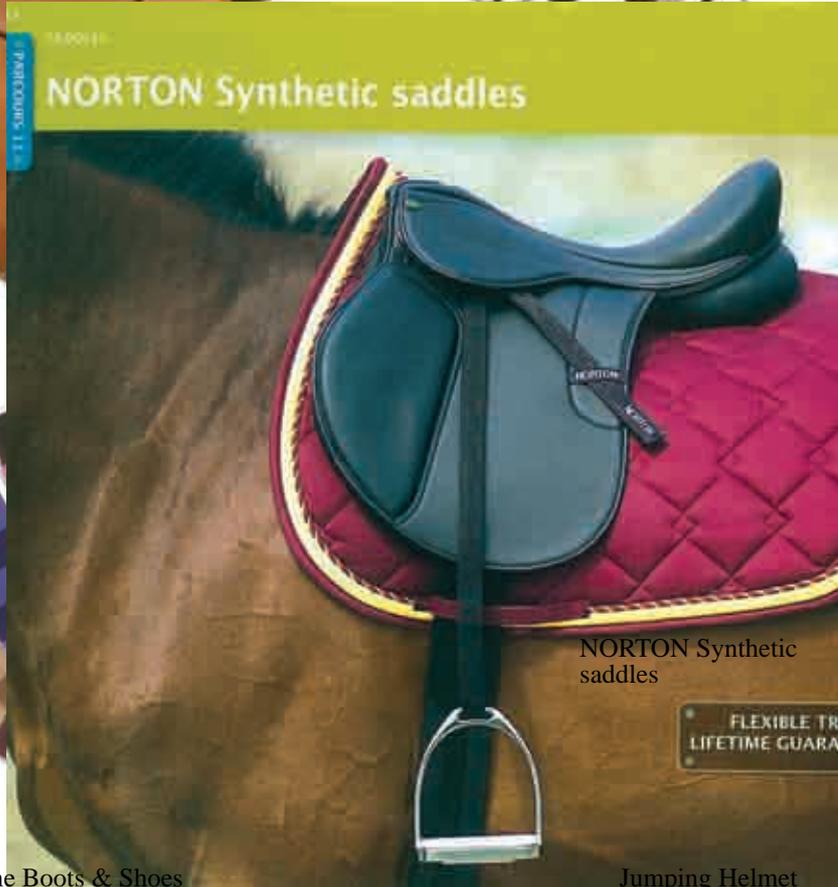


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EQUINE OSTEOPATHY

(Part 1)

By Sue Akehurst, England

Just as people suffer from stiffness, arthritic conditions degeneration, soreness and general wear and tear, so do animals. Osteopathy is a well-established treatment method of manual therapy that works on treating the body as a whole, not just the symptom. Osteopathy is as popular for horses as it is for people. The North American Indians used to use manual manipulative medicine to treat their animals, as well as each other.

Osteopaths in the United Kingdom are regulated by The General Osteopathic Council and all receive 5 years training. Treatments include soft tissue work, ultrasound and electro-therapy, acupuncture, manipulation and craniosacral work. Equine Osteopathy is used to treat such conditions as cold back, head tossing, sacroiliac lesion, tendon injury, ligament overstrain, and lameness due to back disorder.

Problems in the back can disturb the mechanical function of the whole body. Back pain can affect a horse in many ways ranging from lameness in one or both hind-limbs, loss of impulsion, reluctance to jump, reduced bend in the back in one or both directions, elevated head carriage and back stiffness during exercise. Other problems such as pelvic, stifle or hock pain, and changes in temperament and behaviour are also

common symptoms.

Anthony Pusey pioneered the application of human osteopathic techniques in the treatment of animals and worked enthusiastically to place animal osteopathy on a firm scientific footing. His many patients included the horses of the Queens Household Cavalry at Knightsbridge barracks, as well as the horses at Buckingham Palace Mews and Windsor Castle.

Jonathan Cohen studied under Anthony Pusey and was the first osteopath in Europe to hold a university-validated qualification in veterinary osteopathy - an intensive course that included veterinary anatomy, pathology, and physiology. He is a founder member of the Society of Osteopaths in Animal Practice (SOAP). The Society was set up in 2004 following close consultation with the General Osteopathic Council. (GOsC). The aims of the society are to promote the professional development of osteopathy within the area of animal treatment.

Can you explain what Osteopathy is?

Osteopathy is an established, recognised system of diagnosis and treatment that lays its main emphasis on the structural integrity of the body. Osteopathy is also a system of manual therapy with a strong emphasis on anatomy and physiology. In

other words if a wheel is fitted to a car and all the bolts are not done up tightly, then the suspension is not going to work properly on that side of the car, and the wheels are not going to spin smoothly, and then the wear and tear on the car is going to be uneven and the people inside the car are going to have an uncomfortable ride. Similarly if there is a problem with your ankle it is going to affect your knee and your hip and lower back, your neck, and shoulder, everything. So it is about structure, function and correcting unevenness.

How do you become an osteopath? How do you train and what is involved in the training?

Since 1993 osteopathy in the United Kingdom has become a government legislated qualification and a protected title. That means that the government wants to standardise training so that it is regulated. The osteopathic qualification is a Bachelor of Science degree course that takes 5 years to complete. It incorporates a strong foundation in anatomy, medical pathology and osteopathic technique and therefore a clear rationale of how and why an osteopathic technique affects the body the way it does.

What is Thermography and how does

it help with Osteopathy?

Thermography is a non-invasive way of measuring soft tissue temperature changes, commonly used in screening for breast cancer in humans. Chronic or acute injuries all show up as different gradients of colour in thermographic images. The colour gradient one looks at is a good indication of the state of the soft tissues which are being scanned. Shades of red can represent inflammation and blue often indicates lack of circulation. A heat detection camera is used in a temperature controlled room and the scans are fed into a computer to view the images.

If I or my horse needed an Osteopath what signs would I look out for or what would I see or feel?

That's a very good question, and it is also a very broad one. However, to try and sum it up I would say that with horses, riders can notice things like unevenness, and often comment on an inability for the horse to work in any one direction. For example, work on the left rein might be unequal to work on the right rein. Horses can also change in habits when they have functional or musculoskeletal problems, so a horse that has always been a good show jumper may suddenly become agitated when it faces a jump, or start to stop at a place that it never did before. Dressage horses are lovely to work with because the riders, especially at international level, are super knowledgeable about tiny subtle movements, so if the horse is not performing as it normally would then that can be an indication to have it checked.

On a more basic level, a horse may have suddenly become sensitive in their back and may buck or rear when the saddle is put on, or even with just a subtle bit of pressure. Someone may notice as they groom their horse that the animal may flinch when pressure is applied to the back or neck. All of these signs can be good indicators that there may be a functional or musculoskeletal problem. We humans suffer from general spinal stiffness, neck stiffness, and headaches to problems with external joints like knees, elbows, and shoulders. The range of symptoms we suffer from can be huge and the relationship between the rider



and the horse is very important. In terms of how the horse and rider come together; if you find it difficult to look over your left or right shoulder, or similarly if you are much more dominant on one side than the other, it is very logical that eventually this is going to affect how the horse is working. Some people still say, that horses are big and strong and don't need any hands-on treatment. But just look how a horse reacts when a fly lands on its back and how it can turn inside-out because of this tiny little bit of pressure on it somewhere.

So osteopathy isn't just focussing on the back, shoulder and neck it is all the joints?

It is, however, I would say that 95% of what osteopaths see is spinal, from the poll all the way down to the coccygeal (the 35 segments of the vertebrae most distant from the skull) or tail. Also in a lot of cases any kind of swelling or oedema around the joints, around the stifle, hock, or knee etc is quite often something that we would suggest getting a vet to look at as well. It is important to remember that as much as possible, we work in conjunction with vets, because a team approach is advantageous in equine care.

So why and when should I call an osteopath as opposed to a vet?

In the United Kingdom the law states that osteopaths, physiotherapists and

chiropractors must have veterinary consent before treating an animal. 90% of the time the osteopath wouldn't see the vet, but the vet will be made aware either by the osteopath, or the owner, that the horse is going to be seen and treated. A multi-disciplinary team is often more affective when working together and it also ensures that treatments complement each other rather than clash. Vets, farriers, and even dentists will often refer horses to osteopaths following remedial work in their field.

What could I expect during a typical consult?

The osteopath looks for signs of muscle swelling, muscle loss & symmetry and any signs of abnormality. Following a detailed case history, this includes questions about current medication or treatment, the breed, age and sex of the horse as well as a horse's previous musculoskeletal and systematic problems, dental and foot care. The osteopath examines the horse before treating it. When horses show muscle spasm and rigidity upon examination this is a positive sign of back pain. Some horses may even grunt, kick or rear when the osteopath palpates (manually examines) the painful area. The osteopath palpates the spine to assess pain and symmetry in the back. He also observes the way the horse moves actively on the lunge, in the walk, trot and canter to confirm the diagnosis.

Why is the sex of the horse important?

Behaviour can be very different between a stallion, gelding and mare, and also between different breeds. Arabian mares and Arabian stallions tend to be different to say Hanoverian mares and Hanoverian stallions, and although there are commonalities, you tend to get different character traits in different breeds. With a female horse you need to consider, just like with a person, things like pregnancy and hormonal changes i.e.: is the mare in season? So yes, breed, discipline, and any previous history are important.

What kind of treatments are carried out by an Osteopath during a typical consult?

Osteopathy work includes anything from deep tissue work like massage, stretching limbs, articulating the joint (which is gentle

mobilisation), traction and stretching, and segmental manipulation etc. You may manipulate a spinal segment that is out of alignment to help all the soft tissues relax around it, and to help the soft tissue return to normality.

How long would a consult with an Osteopath take?

Typically a new patient consultation takes an hour with a horse, and the second time you see it you might spend an hour again, but you tend to do more treatment and less talking because you don't need to take the whole case history again. The second appointment is as important as the first because when you reach a working diagnosis of what you think is going on, it is to see what happens as a result of the first treatment. If the symptoms get worse, or don't change, you may need to revise your diagnosis. It is the same as a doctor prescribing you a drug. They will get you back to see how you got on and they may lower or increase the dosage or change the medication depending on how you react to it. It is the same with osteopathy. Though we are not prescribing medication, we are doing hands on treatment that affects the physiology of the way the horse is working.

What would be the normal aftercare following osteopathic treatment?

After care includes advice and follow-up appointments where required. If the osteopath sees that a rider is aggravating a horse's back problem with stiffness on the rein, head tilt, over-collection or an unbalanced seat, he might advise on correct training, exercise, schooling and use of correctly fitting tack and rider position. This can prevent reoccurrences of back problems and other issues.

After a treatment, you can get what is



called a healing crisis, which is not as negative as it may sound. It is a global medical term for the reaction that can happen after treatment. No one can predict what happens after you get a flu injection, or after a massage, or what can happen after you have had your neck manipulated. Some horses will be in tip top condition three hours after a treatment, however, you can experience a healing crisis which is when a body that has been working a certain way, changes. You can get a reaction where you get stiffness or soreness, or something that is uncomfortable, before it settles and gets comfortable. So with regards to horse and people I tend to recommend usually about 48 hours of a more relaxed regime. Sometimes you have to know when to allow a little time to rest in order to improve. **HT**

To be continued.....





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