

HORSE TIMES



no. 51

THE LEADING EQUESTRIAN MAGAZINE IN THE MIDDLE EAST



SPECIAL OLYMPIC EDITION - RIO 2016

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LETTER FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Dear Readers,

This is a very special issue. After all HorseTimes is all about creating a positive change in how we view, manage and enjoy our sport through innovative reporting and perspectives to better serve our sport and you, our readers. The concept of dedicating a full issue to a particular event stemmed from this philosophy, but more so from how truly grand this event is. The Olympic Games is the very pinnacle of the top level of the sport.

We have in the past documented Olympic moments, medals and achievements. But for this issue we decided to take a more in-depth and personal perspective on the Rio Olympic Games 2016. Not just the winners, but also the city of Rio itself, and the preparations, efforts, and moments we witnessed there, the Olympic flame and the historic and mythical ideas behind it, the incredibly complex and coordinated transportation of the horses for such long distances, the riders and their revelations, and finally the medals as well as some entertaining facts that we think you might enjoy.

[Share with us our journey to Rio...](#)

Khaled Assem

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THE OLYMPIC CREED

“The essential thing is not to have conquered but to have fought well.”

The most important thing in the Olympic Games is not to win but to take part, just as the most important thing in life is not the triumph but the struggle.



ABOUT THE OLYMPICS

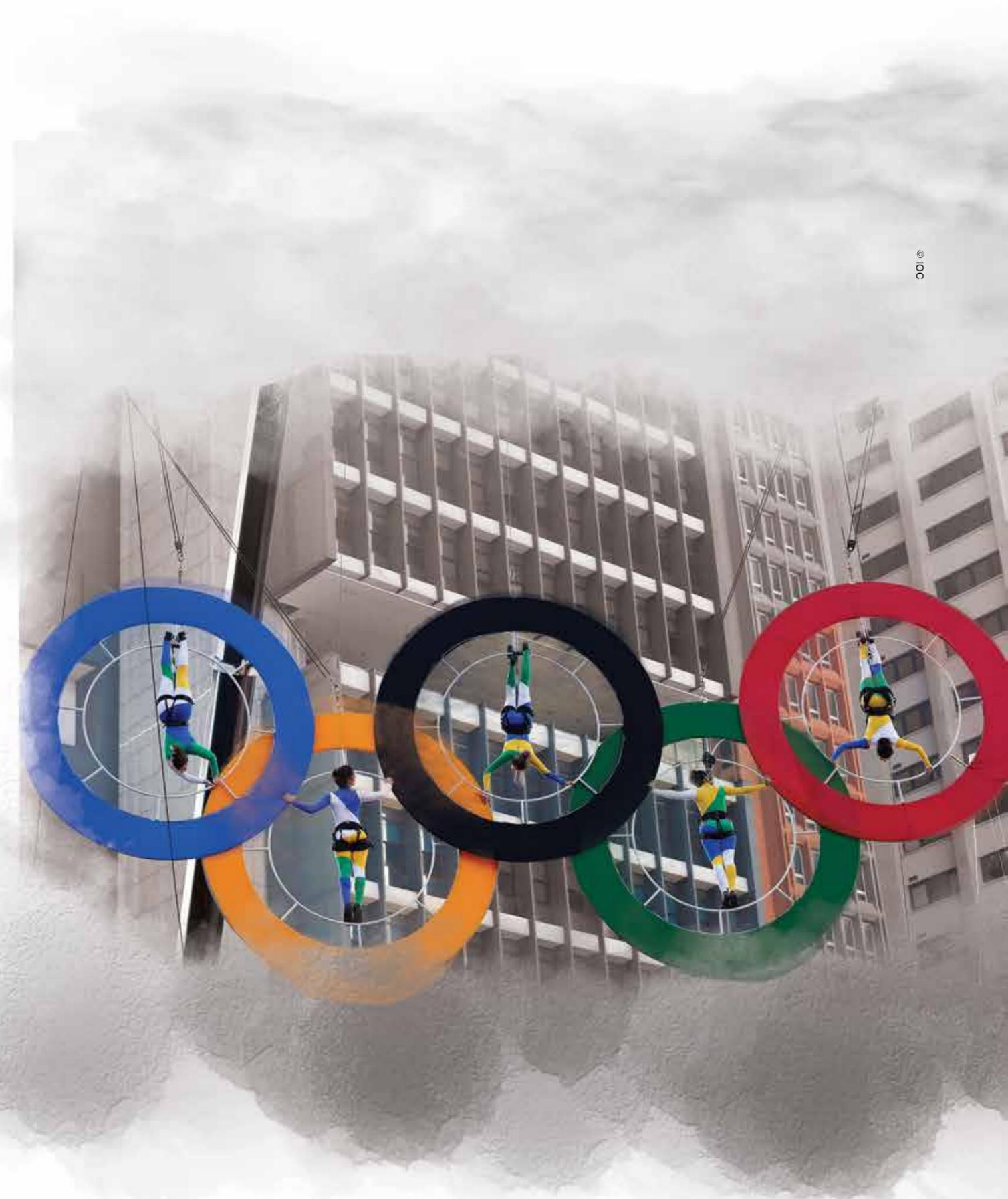
“According to historical records, the first ancient Olympic Games can be traced back to 776 BC. They were dedicated to the Olympian gods and were staged on the ancient plains of Olympia. They continued for nearly 12 centuries, until Emperor Theodosius decreed in 393 A.D. that all such “pagan cults” be banned.

Olympia, the site of the ancient Olympic Games, is in the western part of the Peloponnese which, according to Greek mythology, is the island of “Pelops”, the founder of the Olympic Games. Imposing temples, votive buildings, elaborate shrines and ancient sporting facilities were combined in a site of unique natural and mystical beauty. Olympia functioned as a meeting place for worship and other religious and political practices as early as the 10th century B.C. The central part of Olympia was dominated by the majestic temple of Zeus, with the temple of Hera parallel to it.

The Olympic Games were closely linked to the religious festivals of the cult of Zeus, but were not an integral part of a rite. Indeed, they had a secular character and aimed to show the physical qualities and evolution of the performances accordingly.

The oldest myth which concerns the beginning of the Olympic Games is that of Idaios Daktylos Herakles. According to other myths, Zeus, the father of humanity, fought and defeated Cronus in a struggle for the throne of the gods. Finally, the well-known demigod Herakles is mentioned. He staged games in Olympia in honour of Zeus, because the latter had helped him conquer Elis when he went to war against Augeas.”

Source: IOC



THE OLYMPIC FLAME

The Olympic Flame, along with the five rings, the most recognisable symbol of the Olympic Games, represents the positive values that Man has always associated with fire. It is also a link between the Ancient and Modern Games and underlines the profound connection between these two events.



© IOC

According to the Ancient Myth of Prometheus, who stole the power of fire from Zeus, fire is the symbol of life, rationalism and freedom as well as inventiveness and was symbolised by the ageless flame that used to burn on the Altar of Prytaneion in Ancient Olympia throughout the celebration of the Ancient Olympics. It's the place where the flame for the Modern Olympics is being lit. The present ceremony in Ancient Olympia for the lighting of the Olympic flame, and the Olympic Torch Relay that follows, happened for the first time in 1936 for the Games held in Berlin. Many historians believe Hitler's Third Reich introduced the relay as a propaganda stunt to publicise the Games. There were never any relays held at the ancient Olympics. However, in Athens and other cities of Ancient Greece there were torch races (*Lampadedromia*) held in honour of certain gods, including Prometheus.

The ritual of the Lighting of the Flame starts from the Altar of Hera, in front of the goddess' temple (Heraion), which is opposite to the Temple of Zeus, at the archaeological site of Olympia.

The ceremony begins with the procession of the priestesses, all under the supervision of the High Priestess. Dressed in archaic-style clothing, priestesses surround the Altar.

Then, the High Priestess calls the Sun God Apollo to light the torch using a concave mirror to focus the sun's rays. The High Priestess then says a prayer to Apollo and Zeus.

When the flame lights, the High Priestess relays the flame in a small ceramic pot and heads to the Panathinaiko Stadium with all priestesses in procession.

They pass by the Olive Tree, where they stand for a moment and "*Amphithalis Pais*", the young boy cuts off an olive branch, as a symbol of peace and a meaningful winner's prize.

When the procession arrives at the Stadium, the High Priestess lights the torch of the first runner and the torch relay begins.

Source: www.euronews.com



RIO DE JANEIRO

Rio was founded in 1565 by the Portuguese as a fortification against French privateers who trafficked wood and goods from Brazil. Piracy played a major role in the city's history, and there are still colonial fortresses to be visited. The Portuguese fought the French for nearly 10 years, both sides having rival native tribes as allies.

For the next two centuries it was an unimportant outpost of the Portuguese Empire, until gold, diamonds, and ore were found in Minas Gerais in 1720. Then, as the nearest port, Rio became the port for these minerals and replaced Salvador as the main city in the colony in 1763. When Napoleon invaded Portugal, the Royal Family moved to Brazil and made Rio capital of the Kingdom.

It is a common mistake to think of Rio as Brazil's capital, a distinction it lost on 21 April 1960 when newly built Brasilia became the capital. Rio de Janeiro is the second largest city in Brazil, on the South Atlantic coast.

Rio is famous for its breathtaking landscape, its laid back beach culture and its annual carnival.

The harbour of Rio de Janeiro is comprised of a unique entry from the ocean that makes it appear to be the mouth of a river. The harbor is unique also because it is surrounded by spectacular geographic features including Sugar Loaf Mountain at 395 meters (1,296 feet), Corcovado Peak at 704 meters (2,310 feet), and the hills of Tijuca at 1,021 meters (3,350 feet). These features work together to collectively make the harbor one of the Seven Natural Wonders of the World.

In 2009, the city won their bid to host the games of the XXXI Olympics in the summer of 2016. This was the fifth bid by the city, whose 1936, 1940, 2004 and 2012 bids lost, but 2016 proved to the world that Rio was Olympic class. 🏆



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Duncan Grice,
Headmaster of Malvern
College Egypt, talks about
how the school develops
leadership in its students.

STUDENT LEADERSHIP AND SERVICE LEARNING AT MCE

Student leadership and service learning are intended as major pillars supporting the academic learning at MCE. The aims of the programme are ambitious and idealistic and seek to develop skills and attitudes to develop our students holistically as future leaders and potential world changers. Always we adhere to the following:

- Student learning is at the centre of all that we do.
- Students have the opportunity to lead as well as create their own leadership opportunities.
- Service learning develops the capacity to empathise with other people and gain an understanding of our relationship to the world.

Service is intended to encompass project development, fund raising, raising awareness as well as practical service.

Opportunities are developed in three main ways:

- School mandated – e.g. Prefects
- Student created – e.g. student led clubs
- Organic – roles that develop over time

School Mandated structures include the Head Boy and Head Girl, school prefects, house captains, student council, service committee as well as the environment club and community club.



MCE STUDENT LEADERSHIP TEAM

Last week saw the induction of our student leadership team.

College Guiding Statement 6 says: 'The College prepares children to live their lives honestly with a spirit of respect for themselves and others, while College Guiding statement 7 says: 'The College prepares children to take risks and show endurance and resilience to achieve goals'.

Both of these College Guiding Statements were displayed fully by the students who stood for the positions of Head Boy/Head Girl, Prefect and House Captain.

Our candidates for Head Boy and Head Girl were well prepared, had thought about why they wanted the position and were of a calibre which belied the age of the young mouths from which they were emerging. The choices were obviously difficult in the extreme.

The role of the Head Boy and Head Girl is to be Leaders of the student community. To represent the College at external and internal functions and events as well as co-ordinate the Prefect Council to support the students and assist the staff when appropriate. They are the role models for students in encouraging international understanding, acceptance of difference and diversity across the College community. They guide or assist visitors around the College and introduce them to the Malvern community. They, along with the Prefect Team, ensure that Malvern College is always welcoming and friendly and that Prefects are actively engaged in College life.



STUDENT LEADERSHIP TRAINING

If you look at the words from our 8th College Guiding Statement 'The College challenges each child to be the best that they can be and discover who they might become.'

We therefore have a duty to invest in the talents of our young people. These students undertook a leadership training programme aimed at inspiring, empowering, and engaging them through collaborative and innovative experiential learning workshops. This was led by last year's Head Boy from Malvern College UK who is currently experiencing a gap year at MCE. His insight and experiences were of tremendous help to our young leaders as they embark on their personal journey of discovery.

HOUSE CAPTAINS

Eight House Captains were elected by the students in their houses after speeches on the hustings and a secret ballot. Their role is to lead their House teams in sport, music, art and drama as well as to lead the service projects of their House. Additionally, they help with the organisation of House events and are a role model for the House and demonstrate House spirit. Always they will display good sportsmanship and team spirit.

As the College grows, leadership opportunities will arise for more and more students at MCE.

For more information about Malvern College Egypt, visit www.malverncollege.edu.eg or contact Duncan Grice directly at headmaster@malverncollege.edu.eg

Malvern College Egypt, a school of many nations but a family of one.



JOURNEY TO THE OLYMPICS

Horses are considered athletes in the Olympics as the riders are. The work done by the rider during the course is equivalent to the work done by the horse. Both of them get the Gold, Silver or Bronze medal. If one of them is tired or it happens to be not his day both of them will suffer, they both have to be healthy and fit because show jumping, dressage, and eventing are all about team work. A kind of team work that does not exist in any other sport, it is the team work of two different species, Horses and Humans.

Just as these Olympic riders need to have comfort throughout the journey in the plane to Rio to calm down from stress, also the horses need the exact same comfort during that flight. From some countries the journey in the plane could take up to 12 hours. So riders have to be comfortable and they will try to travel in business class. Horses also have their own

business class on the plane. Horses are loaded into stalls at ground level, then levered up into the plane. Normal stalls accommodate three horses, but as these are Olympians, they fly the same as the business class, two horses per stall.

Most people think a lot about the food that would be served to them during the flight, meat or chicken, rice or macaroni, what desert will get to be served to them? As Olympic horses stay in “business class” they get special hay, “haylage”. It is a kind of hay with an extra amount of moisture than normal hay. It is better than normal hay so that the horses could remain hydrated during the long journey. To combat dehydration which is the main problem for horses during the trip they do not only eat “haylage” they also drink a lot of water and they are kept in a temperature controlled atmosphere.



As humans are allowed a backpack on the plane, each horse is allowed 1 large hay net, water and his or her own personal bucket, and a small overnight bag with a spare head collar and rug, in case it gets chilly. Each groom has an allocated baggage allowance, by weight. However this includes the horse itself, plus water, hay, 30kg shavings as bedding, water buckets, feed buckets, tack bags (for saddles and bridles), rugs and any spare equipment. Horses, like people, like to travel in comfort. Some may wear a light rug but generally they wear as little as possible to stay cool and comfortable. Most will wear protective leg gear.

Every horse has a passport. In the United States a horse passport would cost you \$300 for international travel and \$50 to travel in the States. Make sure you like your horse's name because a name change will run you \$1,000!

Did you know that stallions stay in the front of the plane so they do not get distracted by the mares during the flight? *True.*

Another interesting fact is that unlike humans, horses have their special take-offs and landings. Pilots take longer and more gradual take-offs so the horses don't get spooky. They also take a longer and more gradual landings so the horses do not feel the difference. As Liz Brown, a British Team Eventing vet said, "The pilots will control a more gradual take off and a slower landing to a typical flight. When you're on a passenger plane you'll experience a positive landing where they brake quite hard, but with horses they do a longer landing... so they don't feel that sudden deceleration." 

One more interesting fact: *Horses do not get jet lag as we humans do, so they just walk out of the plane like nothing happened. Oh, to be a horse on a long-haul international flight!*



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SHOWJUMPING IN THE OLYMPICS

Rio 2016: Equestrian events in review

A total of **222 athletes** from **43 countries** participated in the **6 equestrian events** at the Rio 2016 Olympics, held Aug. 6-19 at the National Equestrian Center in Deodoro. The six events included individual and team Jumping, Dressage, and Eventing.

Five nations made their Olympic debuts this summer: Chinese Taipei and Qatar fielded athletes for Jumping, the Dominican Republic and Palestine for Dressage, and Zimbabwe for Eventing.

To qualify for the Jumping events at the 2016 Olympic Games, riders had to be at least 18 years of age, and horses at least 9 years of age.

A total of **75** spaces were available for the Jumping competitions. **15 national** teams were selected, which could consist of **3-4 athletes**. Teams were decided as follows: host country, the five best-ranked teams from the 2014 World Equestrian Games, the three best-ranked teams at the 2015 European Jumping Championship, the two best-ranked teams from the 2015 Pan-American Games, the best-ranked team from Group F at the Group F FEI selected Olympic Qualification event and from Group C at the 2015 Group C FEI selected Olympic Qualification event, and the two best-ranked teams from Group G at the 2015 Group G FEI selected Olympic Qualification event.

Individual riders could only qualify if their country did not qualify as a team, and a total of 15 spaces were reserved for individual riders.





France won the team gold for Jumping, and veteran Nick Skelton brought home the individual gold for Great Britain.

2016 Olympic Games Trivia:

Both the oldest and youngest competitors competed in Dressage: the oldest competitor was **Julie Brougham, 62**, from New Zealand, and the youngest was **Giovana Prado Pass, 18**, from Brazil.

Individual Jumping gold medalist **Nick Skelton** was part of the gold medal winning team in London 2012, and rode to the gold in both Games on his horse **Big Star**.

Brazil's Pedro Veniss and the 12-year-old Selle Francis stallion Quabri de L'Isle

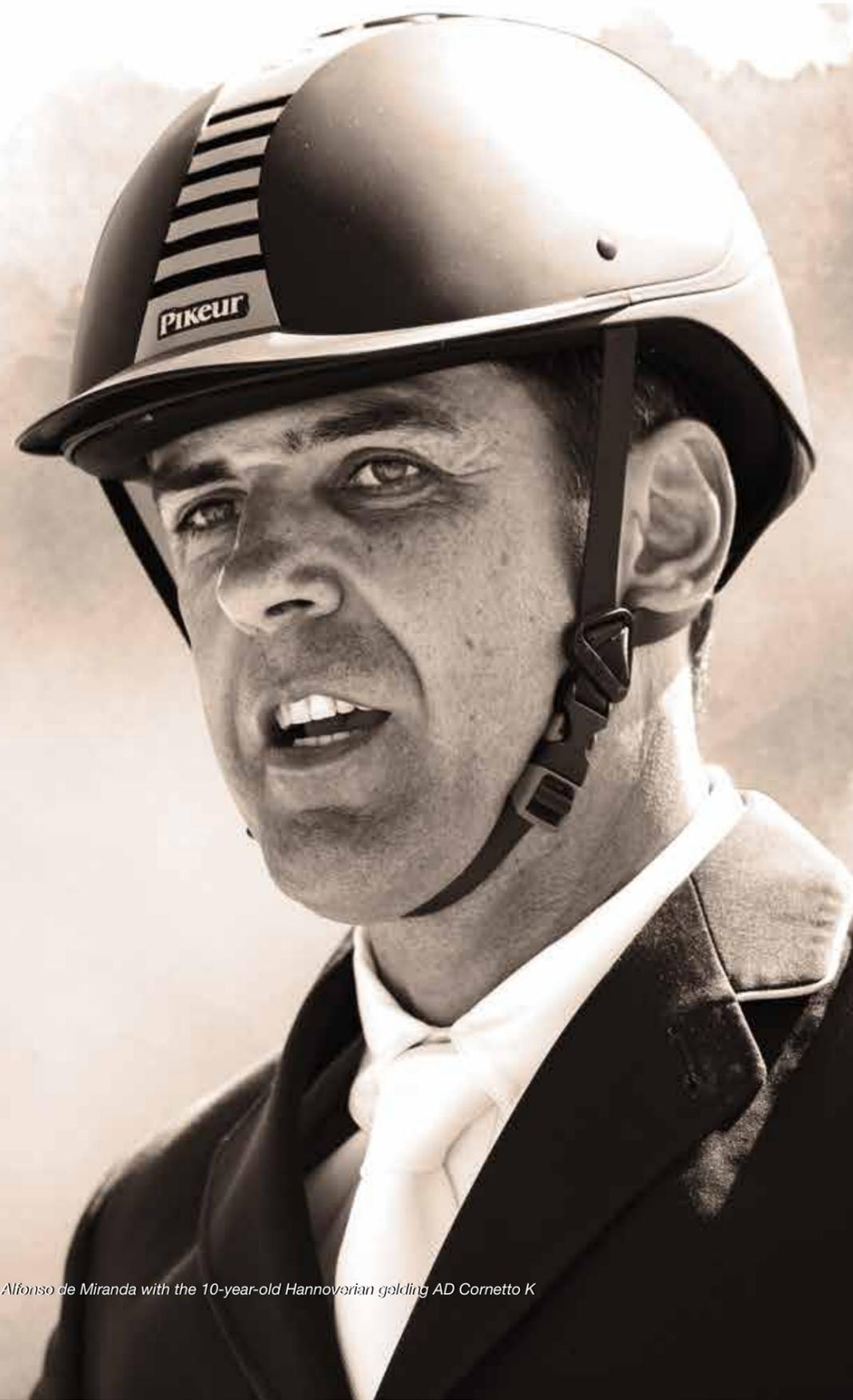
Interesting Facts:

There are a few equestrian events that are no longer part of the Olympic Games. In 1900 there was Horse Long Jump and High Jump, and in 1920 there was Vaulting for teams and individuals. Also, Polo was part of the 1900, 1908, 1920, 1924, and 1936 Games.

In 1912, the Dressage competition included a jumping test of four obstacles of up to 1.10m in height (the last was a barrel that had to be jumped while rolling toward the horse), but no piaffe or passage. Riders could earn bonus points for riding with one hand.

In 1936 Austria's Arthur von Pongracz competed in the dressage at the age 72, becoming one of the oldest ever competitors at the Olympics.

Stroller, at 14.1hh, is the only pony to ever compete at an Olympic Games. By a thoroughbred out of a Connemara pony, he won the silver medal in individual showjumping at the 1968 Mexico Games, ridden by Marion Mould (Great Britain).





© Richard Julliard

The Jumping course at the 1932 Los Angeles Games was so difficult not one nation completed the course with three riders, so no team Jumping medal was awarded. Because of the Great Depression, only 35 entries from 6 countries even competed that year.

After two horses died during the Eventing competition at the 1968 Mexico City games, strict safety measures were put in place. No horses have died at the Olympic Games since.

At the 1936 Berlin Games, a Czechoslovakian rider Capt. Kawecki received 18,952 penalty points as it took nearly three hours to catch his horse after he fell off during the cross country! (Great Britain took home the bronze despite over 9,000 penalty points – also for a rider whose horse had to be caught after he fell off.) 🏆

Brazil's Eduardo Menezes and the 11-year-old Oldenburg gelding Quintol



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NICK SKELTON

A MASTER, AN OLYMPIAN, A LEGEND

© Eric KNOLL



THE MAN

“Nick, you are a Big Star!”

That was the caption written under the Instagram picture that Rodrigo Pessoa (the Brazilian Olympic gold medalist show jumper) posted on Instagram when Nick Skelton won the individual jumping gold medal at the Rio Olympics of 2016. It was a statement of fact from Rodrigo Pessoa rather than a compliment. **Nick Skelton is a true legend that was ending his life-long career with his greatest and most amazing success, an individual Olympic gold medal.** For a career that has spanned decades the international show jumper Nick Skelton has been crowned 2016 Olympic individual show jumping gold medalist with his fantastic Dutch Warmblood stallion Big Star. Thinking that his horse might be a little rusty after all these years and himself being a little bit too old to win an Olympic gold medal, truly he made history and became Britain's **oldest gold medalist since 1908** with shooter Jerry Millner, who won gold in 1908 aged 61. *“I've had a long, long career and to do it now is unbelievable to me,”* Skelton declared. Competing in his **seventh Olympic games**, he was the oldest Olympic champion in Brazil.

With a career that has spanned nearly four decades (38 years), and with decades of experience, the international show jumper Nick Skelton also had his ups and downs. These ups and downs can only be seen by looking through his legendary history, but a legend is not always a clean run but rather a road full of dust and scrapes that made this person a legend.





His prestigious career which led him to win thousands of classes and hundreds of Grand Prix events and over £6.5m in prize money was as follows. Nick Skelton was born on 30 December 1957 in Bedworth, Warwickshire in England. He began riding at the age of 18 months (a year and a half), got his first pony called Oxo who was born in the same year Nick was born in. He left school early at the age of 16 years with no qualification; he then went to work full-time for Ted and Liz Edgars who were his trainers.

Then he started riding Apollo. Together Nick and Apollo formed a partnership that won nearly all the top prizes in the sport. **Nick Skelton holds the British equestrian high jump record, when he jumped over an incredible 2.32 meter fence on Lastic in London back in 1978 after two failures.**

His first Olympic Games was in 1988 in Seoul. Things started to get bad when Nick broke his neck in September 2000 which could have ended his show jumping career. *“I hit the floor and heard a loud crack inside my head”*. The doctors warned him not to ride horses again which could lead to a fatal end. He “retired” from the sport in 2001. He recovered from his neck injury and began competing again in 2002. His most disappointing moment was in the Athens Olympic Games of 2004 riding Apollo, where he was leading until the final round when he was eliminated. He was then honoured to receive his Officer of the Order of the British Empire (OBE) from Queen Elizabeth II. In 2012 in the Olympic Games in London, he won the Olympic Team gold medal with his fellow team members John Whitaker, Peter Charles, Ben Maher and Scott Brash.



THE HORSE

Some people might see show jumping as an individual sport consisting only of the rider. They might also think that team work is not present in it. But the fact is that in the Olympics the horse is considered an Olympic athlete as much as the rider is. This means that behind every successful rider there is a successful horse and behind Nick Skelton there is Big Star.

The Dutch Warmblood Stallion has proven his name as “Big Star” after giving Nick Skelton all that he has in the Rio 2016, helping him to win the individual Gold Medal.

Big Star is the son of Quick Star, a legend which was ranked third in the World Breeding Federation. Quick Star was the horse ridden by a talented rider Meredith Michaels Beerbaum. Big Star was foaled on the 1st of June in 2003, and was bred in the Netherlands. Big Star, the bay stallion, began his career at the highest level of show jumping at the age of 7 years. He was elected the KWPN (Dutch warmblood) of the year. Big Star’s bloodlines include the most influential sires of both the French and Dutch lines.

This is what Nick Skelton says about him: “He’s an unbelievable character, he knows the occasion and he’s one of those horses who knows when it’s important and he can come up with goods”. He adds, “He is an absolutely amazing horse, you can trust him, he wants to do it, he has all the right attributes. He’s the best horse I’ve ever had or am ever likely to have.” Nick also mentioned him after his victory, “When you’re riding him you don’t worry about the courses too much, it’s all well within his capability. He’s not stretching or putting a lot of effort in...I knew if I didn’t make a mistake he will not...Big Star should have been on that podium too, without him I would have not been there...Somebody asked me who I dedicated that medal to and I said Big Star because he’s been amazing”.



THE VICTORY

It wasn't that easy at the beginning for Nick and Big Star to win the individual gold medal. As they came into the competition, it was not so good. In the 1st qualifier Nick and Big Star knocked down a fence. He was the 15th rider down the list but well worth the wait, for what followed was magnificent. Over bars, double and triple combinations Big Star was spectacular. Tossing his head and tucking in his forelegs over the fences with elegance showed how much he enjoyed winning. The result was near perfect and with a double clear Skelton was on top of the list.

People waited to see who could match him and they bet on Steve Geurdat, the previous individual gold medalist. But unfortunately Steve couldn't. Nick was first and he went for a clear with tremendous speed. He went for a medal, but which medal we don't know yet. Then comes Peder Fredricson with a clear round but slower than Nick and he goes for a medal. And here comes the Legendary Eric Lamaze on Fine Lady 5. He is super-fast, faster than Nick but he has one problem: he is riding Fine Lady 5, he is not riding Hickstead. Fine Lady 5 is great but not as great and careful and legendary as Hickstead. He knocks down a pole, but with a speed faster than Nick.

At the end, the Gold goes to Nick Skelton and Big Star, the Silver goes to Peder Fredricson and the Bronze goes to Eric Lamaze. *"It's unbelievable, I am speechless for once. To be in the sport all this time and win just caps it. You always dream about this but when it actually happens it is real life."*

THE LEGEND

The whole world was talking about the tremendous victory. His eyes filling with tears, Nick Skelton got 615 messages on his phone after his victory. “He promised to reply to every message... “I suffer from really bad chronic pain so getting a leg up is painful...I have a metal hip on the left side so that doesn’t help either”, the veteran explained. Despite all that Nick Skelton achieved a dream by winning an individual gold medal.

Another astonishing thing happened after his victory. Nick Skelton’s autobiography sales leaped after his gold medal. His autobiography “**Only Falls and Horses**” sold out after his win in Rio. Abebooks.com reported that his auto-biography was at its top search term the days following his win and that all copies are sold out. “The Rio 2016 appeared to have zero effect on bookselling until a 58-year-old from Warwickshire won a gold medal... Clearly there is an interest in his remarkable life and career”, says Abebooks’s Richard Davies. It is even weirder on Amazon where there is only one used copy for a stunning amount of 1,776.58 sterling. Unfortunately, he thinks that Tokyo 2020 would be out of reach for him. “I would be old...when Big Star stops, I stop”, he concluded.

“It’s a technical job, you have to place the horse in the right position at the right speed with the right momentum. To get that right takes time, lots of practice and a good partnership”.The words of a Master, an Olympian and a Legend. 🏆





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UN RÊVE EN OR THE FRENCH TEAM

HOW WAS THE TEAM CHOSEN?

The Chef d'Equipe, Philippe Guerdet, chose the team. He watched the horses for six months in all of the shows we have been to and he took his final decision just two weeks before the Olympics. All the riders have a lot of experience and having young riders in the team is not easy. Simon's horse was injured two days before the show and Penelope's mare had a stomach problem but recovered quickly, so it's a very difficult situation and the pressure is very high especially for young riders. However, all the riders coped really well and they are very close so they supported each other which provided a good atmosphere to win.

WHO CHOSE THE SEQUENCE OF JUMPING AS A TEAM? WHY DID HE CHOOSE THAT SEQUENCE? AND WERE ALL THE RIDERS OKAY WITH THE CHOICE?

Philippe Rozier chose the sequence. He spoke on behalf of the Chef d'Equipe and the team. Due to having more experience, Philippe Rozier, chose to go first; second was Kevin Staut; third was Roger Yves-Bost; and last to go was Penelope Leprevost

HOW DID IT FEEL LOSING YOUR NUMBER 1 RIDER, SIMON DELESTRE?

The team was very supportive and decided that they will focus on one goal which was to go clear. They didn't watch other riders or the time. Their only goal was not to drop any poles; suddenly, they found themselves with a medal! A Gold Medal!

DO YOU HAVE ANY COACHES FOR MENTAL MOTIVATION?

Mental coaching is very important for all riders in all levels. It's very important for winning because it's not just about riding well or a good horse or having a good relationship with the horse; all the small details are what makes a winner. Mental fitness is not just for winning, it's also to help you in training and making an effective programme for both the rider and the horse. 🏆



BEHIND THE SCENES

PEDER FREDRICSON

© Richard Julliard



“I’m very happy with how my horse jumped every day; it was my third Olympic games so I was well prepared and I used all my experience to make it happen; I’m interested in mental preparation and personal development, so I worked on that and I welcomed the stress and used it as fuel.”

He was probably not known to many outside the showjumping community until his astonishing appearance on the podium in Rio 2016 Olympics. Standing to the right of gold medalist Nick Skelton on top of the podium, proudly wearing his silver medal and being crowned as Rio 2016 individual silver medalist was Sweden’s Peder Fredricson. Perhaps what may have made him even more famous to followers was his “dab” on the podium while receiving his honours!

He succeeded in show jumping, reaching the top of the sport, competing in Olympics, winning an individual silver medal in the Rio 2016 Olympics, so was this the result of the usual strenuous focused showjumping trajectory? Well, no.



ALL IN was super, I have to say the jumping was effortless in one way as he is an amazing jumper, I worked a lot on his condition and he was quite fresh even after the last round.

Having been an eventer and having participated in the 1992 Barcelona Olympics in eventing, he one day got a call from commercial retailers H&M offering to sponsor him in showjumping. **“Well, it happened because I got a sponsorship with H&M, but they wanted a showjumper”**, he explained. **“They wanted another jumper and it wasn’t difficult to persuade me. It was the other way round really — I was wondering why they wanted me, why I got the call”**.

“My brother and my wife were doing showjumping and it was also something I thought was interesting to get into and I could travel around with them, doing the same thing.” He adapted to the new discipline easily and was talented in it. **“It’s not so different really,”** he shrugs. **“You do showjumping in three-day eventing. It’s just that I don’t have to do dressage and I’m really happy about that. But I do miss cross-country sometimes.”**



I saw ALL IN at the world games for young horses in Zangersheide, Lanaken ridden by Nicola Philipaerts, so I tried him and after I could not stop thinking of the feeling he gave me.“

In addition to all of that, he is a professional graphic designer. When the FEI launched its competition for pictograms for its seven disciplines to celebrate the massive global growth of equestrian sport, they invited people to submit designs. Peder entered and to his surprise won the competition beating out Kevin Staut who also entered and so he designed the new pictograms for the FEI.

“As a rider, I know how the pictograms should appear, the correct proportions, the connection and the movement. I’m really happy to have done this and I’m proud that my designs were chosen,” he said. **“I didn’t do the Olympic rings”** he adds with a laugh, **“but I did do some logos for Stockholm International Horse Show. I’ve taken a break from that for the last three months though.”** And we can see why!

He won two gold medals as a junior at the 1989 European Championships and finished 14th in the 1992 Olympics in eventing. Since 2000, he has focused on showjumping, and in 2004 he made his Olympic début in Athens where he finished fourth in the individual competition. With all that exposure and Olympic background you would have thought that he was already a celebrity, but here he is, this year’s silver medalist. It goes to show that if you put your mind to it, you can achieve the most unexpected results! 



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THE BIRTH OF AN OLYMPIAN SHEIKH ALI AL THANI

“It’s not just about the riders, it’s the system we have, Jan Tops, our trainer, the vet, the grooms, the horses, the stables and the whole system is very effective.”

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN PREPARING FOR THIS ACHIEVEMENT?

We have been working and planning for the Games for four years; we made a plan and our first goal was to qualify. As you know it's not easy for our region to qualify as we only have one spot. After we qualified we had a new goal which was to be in the best shape possible and give the horses the best care. I have to say that the whole team was great; we all had great results and we got what we worked so hard for.

WHAT IS THE MOST DIFFICULT STRUGGLE YOU WENT THROUGH TO BE WHERE YOU ARE TODAY?

Thank god, I can't say we had struggles; however, as you know we work with horses so the main problem we can face is injuries to horses so we were all doing our best and hoping to get the five horses safe and sound to the Games. I had two horses ready for the Olympics but one of them was injured just months before the Games so I was in stress all the time because I had to keep the horse in the best shape till the Olympics.

IF YOU CREDIT THIS ACHIEVEMENT TO ANYONE, WHO WOULD IT BE?

My father; When I first told him that I want to ride a long time ago he told me, "If you really want it go for it, never give up, but if you don't want it from the bottom of your heart, you better not start at all, so give it your all and never quit." He is also a sportsman and he gave me a lot of advice; even at the Olympics he called me every day. My father made me who I am today. 🏆





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“FITTY” FIT FOR FUN AT RIO

Luciana Diniz is one of the top riders. She is ranked 29 on the Longines F.E.I. world ranking. She is also the top Portuguese rider. Luciana has a range of top horses like Winningmood, Lennox and Fit for Fun. Fit for Fun is one of the main horses that Luciana competes with. Together they have won numerous Grand Prix competitions at the highest level of show jumping. For example, when Fit for Fun was 11 years old she and Luciana clinched the Global Champions Tour title in 2015. “Fitty”, as she was better known at home, was one of the three Olympic hopefuls for Rio. She is not only a championship horse but a family horse too. Luciana said about her, *“Whenever she jumps she inspires people with her light and her talent”*.



Fitty is a Hanoverian Chestnut mare owned by Luciana Diniz and Ralf Junger. For Luciana she is “my pretty girl.” “She is simply beautiful and downright magic!” Fit for Fun is not only beautiful looking she also is a spectacular ride. Luciana said about her: *“Fit for Fun bears her name for a good reason. It is pure pleasure to ride her”*. *“Have you ever experienced a feeling of flying? It is when you’re riding Fit for Fun, it is like flying, it’s magic, it’s lightness, it was a dream come true the day Fit for Fun came into my life”*, she added. *“Fitty is a combination of agility, flexibility and she’s naturally fast”*, says Luciana.

Luciana was totally confident about the Rio Olympics of 2016. She qualified for the games with Fit for Fun. On the first day (the 1st individual qualifier) she had **8** faults; one was touching the water jump and the other one was knocking down a pole and her rank was **53**. In the 2nd qualifier they both had a tremendous clear round with a total of **8** points and her rank was **1**. At the 3rd qualifier Luciana and Fit for Fun had **4** jump penalty points and **1** time penalty with a rank of **24**. They were then qualified to the individual jumping finals round A. They had **4** jump penalties and her rank was **16** but overall she was qualified to round B. They had a clear round in round B but with a total of **4** penalties from round A. Unfortunately, due to the **4** penalties they were unable to compete in the jump-off. Overall they both were a spectacular team at the Games. They made it to round B and their **overall ranking was 9.** 🏆

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QUOTES

PHILIPPE ROZIER

“I was always proud to be the son of an Olympic champion and now we have two gold medals in the family.”

MCLAIN WARD

“We did not really have an option. Elizabeth has been our anchor for the better part of a decade and her record of coming through in the clutch is second to none. But we thought we had a strong team, strong horses. And we thought the course was brilliant - real Olympic calibre team jumping. So we are very proud.”





ROGER-YVES BOST

“There was no pressure because I did not know any of the scores, I watched some riders and then I went out to do my job.”

ABDELKEBIR OUADDAR

“Despite the fact that the results were not like we wanted, we don’t regret anything! Quickly was exceptional as always.”





KEVIN STAUT

“We had a difficult time at the beginning of this week, with Simon Delestre’s horse out and then with Penelope Leprevost taking a fall. But it helped us to fight more. It was a tough week but we stuck together and we have great horses. I am very proud to be part of this team.”

KENT FARRINGTON

“There is no prouder feeling than representing your country”



MEREDITH MICHAELS-BEERBAUM

“Fibonacci jumped super. That was a rider’s mistake. I can’t blame the horse.”



LUDGER BEERBAUM

“Try to stay focused and do your job. You cannot help it if it does not work.”



LUCIANA DINIZ

“I am grateful with my performance in the Olympic Games in Rio, 9th place was a good result and we had great rounds; Fitty was feeling very good and she enjoyed jumping there. I felt lots of love and complicity every time I was going in the arena in Rio, it was an unbelievable experience for me, my family, my friends, and my whole team. We will meet again in Tokyo 2020.”

ERIC LAMAZE

“It feels incredible. It was a lot of work. The Olympics is the most difficult challenge in our sport, we try our hardest to do our best. Anybody in that jump-off deserved a medal. Most of us go to shows every week and you can win a big Grand Prix, but an Olympic medal - well that stays with you forever!”



PEDER FREDRICSON

“My horse jumped well, He did not have one fence down during the whole competition. I had hoped for a medal and I stuck to my plan. It was a great week. I knew I was sitting on a very good horse coming to the Games...”





NICK SKELTON

“I waited a long time. I felt like Big Star was hard done by in London. I am so pleased with this horse. He won his last big competition at the grand prix in Aachen in 2013. There were several problems and he took a long road back. It was hard to go first and I knew I had to be fast to put some pressure on the others.”

“Just keep going. As long as you have a good horse you are all right. I’m not going to stop riding now, the only horse I ride is Big Star and when he stops I’ll stop.”



OLYMPIC BLOODLINES

MARCEL ROZIER got the Gold Team medal in *Montreal 1976* & the Silver Team medal in *Mexico City 1968*; his son, **PHILIPPE ROZIER** got the Gold Team medal in *Rio 2016*.

JOHN WHITAKER and **MICHAEL WHITAKER** both got the Silver Team medal in *Los Angeles 1984*.

PIERO D'INZEO Got the Silver Team medal & Individual Bronze medal in *Stockholm 1956*, Bronze Team medal & Individual Silver medal in *Rome 1960*, Bronze Team medal in *Tokyo 1964* and Bronze Team medal in *Munich 1972*; his brother **RAIMONDO D'INZEO** got the Silver Team medal & Individual Silver medal in *Stockholm 1956*, Bronze Team medal & Individual Gold medal in *Rome 1960*, Bronze Team medal in *Tokyo 1964* and Bronze Team medal in *Munich 1972*.



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