



Jennifer Ogden  
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BARRAQ EL ALIYA  
(Ashhal Al Rayyan x Asrah Al Rayyan) 2008  
Stallion

# Excellence in breeding

# “The Straight Egyptian Arabian”

Interview with **SHEIKH MESHAL BIN ISSA AL THANI**  
of **EL ALYA STUD QATAR**

*By Jennifer Ogden*

**Sheikh Meshal Bin Issa Al Thani**, founder of El Alya Stud, is a name synonymous with excellence in the world of Straight Egyptian Arabian horse breeding, particularly in Qatar and the Gulf region. His stud has not only produced national and international champions but has also contributed foundation stallions and mares for other prestigious breeding programs, notably, the stallion Barraq El Aliya (Ashhal Al Rayyan x Asrar Al Rayyan) has earned the title of "The King" for the renowned Al Waab Farm, profoundly influencing its success.

Barraq El Aliya, a Gold Champion Straight Egyptian World Championship stallion himself, has produced both male and female horses that have gone on to win prestigious championship awards at major events worldwide. Among his notable progeny is “Asfour Al Waab” (Barraq El Aliya x Sara Al Jazira), a leading Straight Egyptian sire owned by Barrak Al Hajeri of Kuwait and has been leased to prestigious breeding farms such as Dubai Arabian Stud of the UAE and Al Rayyan farm of Qatar. Barraq El Aliya is also the sire of the famous daughters of Nabeela Saqr (Tallahsman x Ansata Nafisa): Deleilah Al Waab, Ghazalah Al Waab, owned and bred by Al Waab Farm and the exotic Ghezlan Al Waab owned by El Alya Stud.

The strength of Sheikh Meshal's vision shines through as he shares insights into his journey, achievements, and vision for the future of his breeding endeavors.



NOOR AL RAYYAN  
(Ashhal Al Rayyan x Ansata Nefer Isis)  
An Important mare for El Alya Stud, born 2010

**Jennifer:** *How did you get started in breeding Straight Egyptian Arabians, and what has your journey been like?*

**Sheikh Meshal:** My journey began unexpectedly in the late 1990s when I received my first mare as a gift from a relative in 1999. This gesture sparked a passion for breeding Straight Egyptian Arabians leading me down a path of dedication and discovery. The journey has been filled with challenges and triumphs, deepening my appreciation for these magnificent horses.

**Jennifer:** *What is the most rewarding aspect of your work with Arabian horses?*

**Sheikh Meshal:** The most rewarding part is undoubtedly when the horses I've bred excel in both production and the show ring—not only for El Alya Stud but also for other notable breeding programs. Seeing a horse achieve success is a profound accomplishment that validates the hard work and passion that goes into the breeding process.





Sheikh Meshal Bin Issa Al Thani  
with NOOR AL RAYYAN



GHEZLAN AL WAAB  
(Barraq El Aliya x Nabeela Saqr)  
2010 Mare

***Jennifer: What are your long-term goals for your breeding program?***

**Sheikh Meshal:** The primary goal is for El Alya Stud to solidify its position as one of the most successful and influential breeding establishments worldwide. I aim to continue improving the quality of our horses, ensuring they uphold the beauty and strengths that the Straight Egyptian Arabian horse is renowned for. Recognising they are an important part of the of the people of Qatar and the Arab region's heritage.

***Jennifer: Can you share some of your recent successes in shows?***

**Sheikh Meshal:** Certainly! We've recently celebrated significant successes with our horses, particularly with the offspring of our most important broodmare, Noor Al Rayyan (Ashhal Al Rayyan x Ansata Nefer Isis). One of the most illustrious championship wins has been with Namara El Aliya (Ansata Nile Echo x Noor Al Rayyan),



BASHEER AL WAAB  
(Sinan Al Rayyan x Amaal Al Waab)  
2018 Stallion

who, among many other important wins this season, was recently crowned the 2024 Junior Gold Champion World Straight Egyptian Arabian Filly, owned by Sheikh Abdulaziz Bin Saoud Al Thani of Al Hamama Stud. At the same show, Ghaya El Alya, a daughter of Ghezlan Al Waab (Barraq El Aliya x Nabeela Sakr), was awarded the Yearling Filly Gold Championship.

Another important win for El Alya Stud was with Sinan El Alya a son our Noor Al Rayyan, sired by Sinan Al Rayyan, who won the Yearling Gold Champion Colt title at the Katara Peninsula show in 2023. He has been retained as a valuable breeding stallion for El Alya, having sired his first foals this season, including a beautiful filly from Rolaa Al Rayyan (Fares Al Rayyan x Rayyana El Alya).

**Jennifer:** *What qualities do you think give your horses an edge in competitions?*

**Sheikh Meshal:** While maintaining the Arabian horse identity is not our only focus in competitions, it certainly



SINAN EL ALYA  
(Sinan Al Rayyan x Noor Al Rayyan)  
Nov 2021 Colt

plays a crucial role. The emphasis is on the horses' physical qualities and their genetic traits—not only their extreme beauty and Arabian type—but also their hardiness and endurance capabilities for which the desert-bred Arabians are renowned. We believe this gives them a competitive edge.

***Jennifer: Which mare families do you focus on in your Straight Egyptian Arabian breeding program, and what qualities do you value in them?***

**Sheikh Meshal:** Our breeding program focuses on mare families that are renowned for their authentic Arabian type, embodying the traits that the desert Arabian horse was celebrated for—not only beauty with the classic Arabian head but also refinement, athleticism, and the ability to maintain strength and endurance. While we have not solely concentrated on the Ansata Neferis line, we prioritize the overall beauty and resilience that these mares can pass on to their offspring.



MISK EL ALYA  
(Basheer Al Waab x Obayyah Al Dhaiya)  
2024 Colt

***Jennifer: How have the important mare families influenced the traits of your breeding stock?***

**Sheikh Meshal:** The influence of these mare families is clearly reflected in the success of our horses. For example, acquiring Noor Al Rayyan at around four months of age was a strategic decision that has paid off handsomely. She developed into an extraordinary mare, achieving numerous championships and producing multiple champions herself. Her legacy continues as she has offspring that carry forward her winning traits. El Alya has retained three daughters by Ansata Nile Echo: Nasah El Alya, Naifa El Alya, and Nashmia El Alya. Additionally, there are two other daughters by Ansata Nile Echo: Najdiyah El Alya, proudly owned by Al Doha Stud, and Namara El Alya, owned by Al Hamama Stud in Qatar.

Another key mare for El Alya was Raya Al Rayyan (Ansata Sokar x Nadrah Al Rayyan), who has produced some exceptional fillies by Nasser Al Rayyan, including Nadirah El Alya, owned by Al Doha Stud, and Nahaba El Alya, born in May 2024. These fillies represent our ideal for the Straight Egyptian Arabian—extremely feminine, refined, and characterized by type, while still maintaining the strength and hardiness of a desert horse.

A more recent addition to our breeding program is Obayyah Al Dhaiya (Nawaf Al Mohamadia x Tala Al Fala), an important addition for the Obeyyan strain tracing back to the Magidaa family. She has given us a special filly and colt in 2024 by Basheer Al Waab.

***Jennifer: What trends do you see in the Arabian horse market, particularly for Straight Egyptian Arabians?***

**Sheikh Meshal:** Recently, the market has faced challenges due to the sale of lower-quality horses at reduced prices. This trend negatively affects the market perception of Arabian horses. However, I believe that high-



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NAHABAH EL ALYA  
(Nasser Al Rayyan x Raya Al Rayyan)  
2024 Filly

quality horses, which sometimes do not receive the attention they deserve, still hold significant potential and value.

***Jennifer: How do you ensure that you are preserving the heritage and integrity of Straight Egyptian Arabians in your breeding choices?***

**Sheikh Meshal:** Preserving the heritage and integrity of the Straight Egyptian Arabian horse involves a meticulous and thoughtful selection process grounded in several key principles. At El Alya Stud, we prioritize genetic diversity, which is crucial for maintaining the health and vigor of the breed. We carefully select breeding stock that exemplifies the classic traits of the Desert Straight Egyptian Arabian, aiming to preserve



FILLY  
(Sinan El Alya x Rolaa Al Rayyan)



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NASHMIAH EL ALYA  
(Ansata Nile Echo x Noor Al Rayyan)



their unique physical characteristics, including athleticism, beauty, and the distinct “type” for which the Egyptian Arabian is renowned.

In 2021, we purchased Basheer Al Waab (Sinan Al Rayyan x Amaal Al Waab) as a yearling colt. Basheer has wonderful charisma with excellent movement, and his dam, Amaal Al Waab (El Thay Kamil x Ameera Sakr), introduces a different female line for us. His first foals have proven to be what we had hoped for, with his first daughter winning the Gold Champion title at the first Al Rayyan National Pennisular AHS in December 2024.

#### ***Jennifer: In Conclusion:***

In speaking with Sheikh Meshal, it is evident that he emphasizes the importance of adhering to traditional breeding practices that respect the original qualities and bloodlines of these horses. Each breeding decision is made based on comprehensive research into the horse’s lineage and contribution to the breed. This approach allows him to honor the rich heritage while ensuring that the traits valued in Straight Egyptian Arabians—such as endurance, beauty, and trainability—remain at the forefront.

Moreover, he has engaged with the wider Arabian horse community, collaborating with other breeders, sharing knowledge, and being willing to share some of his best individuals with other important breeding farms. This ensures he is contributing to the preservation and heritage of the Straight Egyptian Arabian horse.

Ultimately, it is clear that his goal is to produce horses that not only excel in competition but also embody the true essence of the Straight Egyptian Arabian breed. By balancing tradition with innovation, El Alya Stud is enriching the future of these extraordinary horses for generations to come.