

Nedan Al Shaqab

– Sweden's newest equine citizen

Text:

Mirosław Kołodziej



With the year 2024 inevitably, albeit slowly, drawing to a close, it is most definitely high time we began to sum up what we all have been doing since 1st January... Some of us will certainly wish they had done a little more and tried harder. On the flipside, there are people like Kathleen Ohlsson who seems to be having the time of her life. Who could blame her if a stallion like Medan Al Shaqab has just moved in to the stables at Sweden Arabian Stud?

For the win

All jocularitas aside, Kathleen, together with her husband Joakim, have had a truly successful year indeed. Horses born on the outskirts of Uddevalla, a small town in the province of Västra Götaland in southwestern Sweden, have been making their breeders proud all year round. A quick look at their résumés and we'll find as many as 15 horses with the initial O in their name happily jogging around arenas all over Europe as well as in the Middle East or North Africa. And we're talking about events ranging from C-shows like Arabische Pferde in Westfalen, through Vesuvio Trophy Straight Egyptian, all the way to major shows like the All Nations Cup.

Eight gold medals, two silver ones and two more bronze – won by Alexandra O, Saga O or Pamela O to name a few – speak for themselves. While it's obvious that luck is a vital component in any breeding programme, in the case of the Ohlssons, luck seems not to be a decisive factor, tertiary more like it, with professionalism, experience and vision taking over to produce results many would wish for. Consistency and hard work pay off – only a madman would dare say otherwise.

Love at first sight

If the name Medan Al Shaqab fails to ring bells, no need to worry. Here's what you need to know about him – in a tiny nutshell... He's a 10-year-old grey stallion born at Al Shaqab Stud in the State of Qatar. Sired by the Reserve World Straight Egyptian Champion Farhoud Al Shaqab by Al Adeed Al Shaqab, our soon-to-be teenager is out of Abha Myra, a Marwan Al Shaqab daughter which makes the legendary Gazal Al Shaqab her grandpapa. He's also the maternal brother to World Champion Fadi Al Shaqab, and uncle to Afreen Al Shaqab. Basically... a pedigree to kill for, as none of the aforementioned purebred gentlehorses requires any introduction.

"The very first time I saw Medan was two years ago. I was visiting Raphael Curti for a presentation at Privilege, and of all the horses there, he was the one I liked best. I thought to myself how great it would be to have him in our stables. However, we had another horse that we were leasing at that time, so I didn't use him in my breeding programme. Yet! What I did was observe his offspring", Kathleen tells us in Lier during the European Championship. Paying attention to Medan's kids was undoubtedly a smart idea...

... because last year and this year too, colts and fillies sired by our majestic hero made several purebred Arabian headlines – for a good reason. Let's take a walk down memory lane to 2023, shall we?



**Mayez Al Shaqab
(Medan Al Shaqab
- My first Star
by Windspress Mirage)
Gold Champion Colt
L'Arte De Cavallo 2023**

**Cyros OS
(Medan Al Shaqab
- Afra OS by Antaris OS)
Gold Champion
Yearling Colt Bergamo 2024**



It's early May and we're in the Tuscan province of Lucca where Elisa Bonaparte ruled at the beginning of the 19th century. In the town of Pietrasanta on the foothills of the Apuan Alps, an Arabian horse show is taking place: L'Arte del Cavallo. It was at this ECAHO B International Show that the Al Shaqab-owned Mayez Al Shaqab, out of My First Star by Windspress Mirage, first caught Kathleen's eye, and then took home gold in the Junior Championship.

Moving on to late November that year – we're in the Qatari capital of Doha participating in the Qatar National Arabian Horse Championship. Among the filly foals, there's a cute little girl by the name of Kaltham Al Nasser who is out of Arwa Al Nasser by none other than Fadi Al Shaqab. The Al Nasser youth becomes the Gold Filly Foal of the 2023 Qatar Nationals, beating both Teha Al Shaqab and Sultana Al Thamer.

***Kaltham Al Nasser (Medan Al Shaqab - Arwa Al Nasser by Fadi Al Shaqab)
Gold Filly Foal Qatar Nationals 2023***



Mid-July 2024, many of us met in Ströhen for the International Days for Arabian Horses organised at Ismer Stud. There's no distinction here for yearling and juniors, so all young horses go to the same championships. Who comes on top in the Fillies Championship? Unanimously the grey yearling out of Binta El Jyar by Jyar Meia Lua – “Benita, LM Benita” to paraphrase James Bond, from the Austrian stables of La Movida Arabians. And it was more than sheer luck as two months later at Purosangue Arabi a Bergamo Festival, she was once again unanimously chosen by the judges to become (this time) the Gold Yearling Champion.

There was one more yearling in Bergamo that weekend present at the show sired by Medan Al Shaqab, bred and owned by the well-known Gestüt Osterhof. A bay colt out of Afra OS by Antaris OS for whom it was his debut in the world of horse shows: Cyros OS. Karl-Heinz Stöckle's boy first won his class, and then was awarded gold by the judges.

The last major success of Medan's progeny came less than two weeks after Kathleen's announcement. Rayyana Mudhar out of Mezen Al Zobair by the Marwan Al Shaqab son Marajj, bred and owned by Sheikh Hamad Ali Al-Thani, easily won the Gold Champion Filly Foal title with the highest score of all foals at the Al Shaqab International Arabian Horse Show. One might say it was testament to making the right decision regarding where Medan Al Shaqab would find his new home.

“Following the All Nations Cup, I met him up close in his box again and I knew I absolutely had to have him! His kind gentle personality and amazingly beauty touched me to the core. Not only with his incredible face, but with this type that I think we miss a bit today... Long croup, good body, alluring eyes – he is classic and modern at the same time with a different pedigree from his Straight Egyptian sire and very proven dam. For me he is the embodiment of true Arabian type!” Here Kathleen stops, most probably already thinking which mare she will use him on in the days to come.

***LM Benita (Medan Al Shaqab - Binta El Jyar by Jyar Meia Lua)
Gold Champion Yearling Filly Ströhen 2024
Gold Champion Filly Yearling Bergamo 2024***





***Rayyana Mudhar (Medan Al Shaqab - Mezen Al Zobair by Marajj)
Gold Champion Filly Foal International Show 2024***

For he's a jolly good fellow

News like that which Kathleen dropped on the purebred Arabian horse world shortly before the European Championship travels fast, almost approaching the speed of light. A twice-Gold Junior Colt Champion from the Qatar International Arabian Horse Show and Gold

Senior Stallions Champion from Bergamo is not a horse that's easy to overlook. With offspring that's promising to say the least, it's even harder. No wonder then that congratulations to the entire Ohlsson family came from far and wide. Here's what some of our friends told us...

"I'm proud I had the chance to share a part of my career with this gorgeous horse and to have him at my farm. We had a very successful time together in the show ring internationally when he was a junior and later a grown-up stallion. It is rewarding that many breeders acknowledge what he can offer to the breed, just like I visioned it. I'm happy to know that he will have an amazing life with a family who loves him."

Giacomo Capacci, Italy

“It was a privilege and I personally take pride in contributing to the acquisition of Medan Al Shaqab by such an esteemed breeder as Kathleen Ohlsson. Representing Al Shaqab Stud over the years has been an honour, especially with a stallion like Medan who hails from a remarkable pedigree. As a son of Abha Myra, Medan shares his lineage with world champions Fadi Al Shaqab and Siwar Al Shaqab, making him a part of one of the breed’s most distinguished families. We are thrilled that after several successful seasons producing outstanding offspring in Europe, Medan has found a new home. We wish Kathleen, Joakim, and their family all the best with Medan. We know he will be loved and cherished at Sweden Arabian Horse Stud.”

Raphael Curti, Belgium



“Everybody looks to Medan because of Abha Myra who of course is an icon of the breed, but many miss the fact that Medan's paternal granddam is Johara Al Shaqab. Johara has been an outstanding matriarch that has produced countless champions and amazing broodmares for the Al Shaqab's Straight Egyptian programme. While she remains less known than some other Shaqab-stars, she is most certainly equally valuable to the breed. I must admit I had a fixation with Medan as a colt, and I actually had an agreement to send him to Argentina for the first season. Unfortunately, we couldn't make him go. What I love about him the most are his blessed contradictions: he is tall, yet very typey, classic, yet more stretchy than usual. Qualities like that are rare to find.”

Santiago Fornieles, Argentina

All's been said and just one more thing is missing.
Dear Kathleen, congratulations and good luck!

