

KUWAIT: From a Vision



Bait Al Arab state stud, the gift from the Emir to the Arabian horse world, has become a leading presence and is preserving, improving, and showing the **Arabian horses of the Middle East**

Text and Photos

MONIKA SAVIER

Lay-out:

MARIO BRUNETTI




BAIT AL ARAB
KUWAIT STATE STUD



to Reality!



ARABIAN HORSE BREEDING IN KUWAIT AND THE ALL NATIONS CUP FOR STRAIGHT EGYPTIANS, A FESTIVAL OF SUPERLATIVES

Kuwait reaches out for global leadership in maintaining, improving and promoting the Arabian horse breed all over the world. Bait Al Arab state stud, a gift by HH the Amir of Kuwait, Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, to the community of friends and breeders of the Arabian horse in Kuwait, is the institution that makes this possible. 170 straight Egyptian horses of predominantly good quality, that's what Arabian fans and breeders from all over the world were able to see during the 1st ALL NATIONS CUP-STRAIGHT EGYPTIANS show that took place on the newly designed premises of the Kuwaiti state stud. Up to 2000 spectators brought their passion along when they came, making for a terrific atmosphere, and successful management had attended to every detail and made the event a pleasure throughout for international and national participants. One of the highlights was the show arena, where technological perfection outperformed even the uppermost standards that audience, press, and participants might have expected to find.

There was another highlight for the guests after the show: the stud tour - fabulous by now - to Al Wafra, that oasis in Kuwait where the great studs have created a world-famous international hub of Arabian horse breeding by now. The shows and the ensuing Open House tour make visiting this small but important country a unique experience. During the three-day stud tour, the guests were treated to presentations of almost 400 straight Egyptian and mostly top-notch Arabian horses from twelve different studs. The overall impression was overwhelming – the international audience observed a generally harmonious stock of horses meeting the most demanding standards.

Rooted in History

Historically, the small country of Kuwait was a kind of oasis where the Bedouin tribes went to erect their tents near the sea and escape from the blistering



heat of summer, while in the winter months, they took their horses into the vast desert-pastures of the Arabian Peninsula. What arose from that was not only a very special relationship between humans and horses, but also a very special breed of horse, shaped by the tough conditions in this extremely hot and dry region.

At the same time, the country shaped the people living in it. Caravans on their way from Basra, Mesopotamia, Medina, or Mecca to the Gulf of Persia needed to pass through Kuwait if they intended to load their merchandise onto ships sailing all around the world. It is hard to imagine that scene with the skyline of modern Kuwait City looming over you. But in the harbour, there is a witness of the old times, a museum of Dhows, the ancient ships made of wood.

The State Stud of Kuwait – an Institution Going Back to 1980

Many Kuwaitis treasure the memory and preserve the traditions of their history and particularly, of these two aspects of it: the horses, and the variety of people sharing the country. The descendants of the Bedouins, today's Kuwait's breeders, have rec-



© Richard Bryant

ognized the significance that the desert horses hold for them and their history. The care and devotion they spend on their horses, the passionate discussions they have on horses and their pedigrees – it's impressive to see for the international community of horse breeders. But they do more than just declare their love for Arabian horses. In a common effort in 1980, they founded the first state stud of Kuwait. The most important task of the state stud was to be breeding and keeping Purebred Arabian Horses of Egyptian bloodlines. To further improve the basis for horse breeding, seminars, clinics and ongoing education for breeders were offered and implemented.

When Iraq attacked the country in 1990, it did not only mean shocks and suffering for people. Horse breeding was severely set back as well. However, immediately after the liberation, fresh horses of Egyptian bloodlines were imported from Germany, the US, and from Qatar, laying top-quality foundations for further breeding.

The All Nations Cup (ANC) in Kuwait – What's the Story?



DR. HANS NAGEL, MR. MAHMOUD AL ZUBAID

In Kuwait, we met Dr. Hans Nagel, one of the founders of the Aachen ANC, and got answers to our questions from him.

Savier: The ANC event seems to have gotten a subsidiary in Kuwait: may I ask how this came to be?

Nagel: For five years and more, Kuwait has organized very good shows with much more than 200 horses enrolled for each. I was also impressed by the high level of professionalism in carrying out shows there. And last not least, it's easy to let yourself be gripped by the huge number of enthusiastically passionate spectators in Kuwait. I have been attending to the development

of this country, and I know that the shows are not just used by a few big studs, but that in addition to the 40 or 50 big players, there are at least 500 smaller breeders who successfully take part in this kind of event, even if they own just a few horses each.

Savier: I have the impression that in Kuwait, the breeders have been looking for a format of their own for their Straight Egyptian Arabians. Is that why the ANC show pattern was imported?

Nagel: Well yes, they were looking for a „title show“, for something with a big name – the horses definitely deserve that. This is why the ANC Committee decided in favor of a cooperation, so there were Mr Mohammed Al Marzouq and Mr Mahmoud Al Zubaid from Kuwait as well as Mr Wolfgang Eberhardt and myself from the ANC Committee all developing a formal frame for this show. As could be observed here, the idea was successful. There were almost 180 Straight Egyptian Arabians from Kuwait and the Gulf States present, most of them of very high quality.



KAREN KASPER BRONZE SCULPTURES

During the Kuwait International Arabian Horse Festival 2016, an art exhibition featuring selected bronze portraits of Arabian horses was opened in the newly built rooms of Bait Al Arab state stud. The works of renowned US lady artist Karen Kasper set new standards for portraying and depicting Arabian horses.



Karen Kasper, *Ansata Hejazi*, 2014





People



Re-Importing the Best Arabian Horses

During the first years of re-importation in the 1990ies, most of the horses were intended for the racetrack. However, some breeders were quick to develop an interest in searching for original noble bloodlines from the Arabian Peninsula and in bringing these back home. After all, it was well known that 150 years ago, the Egyptian pashas had looked for the most beautiful Arabian horses they could find in the Nejd area in today's Saudi-Arabia, importing only the best of them into Egypt. These are the horses they still breed in the Egyptian state stud of El Zahraa. One of the first breeders from the Gulf states to visit El Zahraa, as early as in the 1980ies, was Sheikh Abdul Aziz Bin Khaled Al Thani from Qatar. Apart from finding the horses he was looking for, he also found out that during the 1960ies and 1970ies, breeders Judith Forbis from the US and Dr. Hans Nagel from Germany had exported important foundation horses from El Zahraa and used them to establish Straight Egyptian breeding populations in their own right. Meanwhile, these had earned themselves fame as milestones in Arabian horse breeding. It did not take long for the first horses from Judith Forbis's Ansata Stud, Dr. Nagel's Katharinenhof and Cairo's El Zahraa to reach Qatar and found the Al Rayyan Stud of Sheikh Abdul Aziz Al Thani there. The neighbours from Kuwait were impressed about the imports' quality. In particular, there was a handful of horse fans located at Al Wafrah oasis - in the southern part of Kuwait, on the border to Saudi-Arabia - whom it did not take long to go and visit the studs of origin of those Egyptian Arabians. These were the bloodlines Kuwait was looking for. One of the first breeders of Kuwait to base his stud on this gene pool was Mohammed J. Al Marzouq, building up Ajmal Stud. His foundation sire Ansata Hejazi was a major influence on the new generations of Egyptian horses in Kuwait. In quick succession, several more important studs emerged, concentrating exclusively on breeding Straight Egyptian horses, and most of them settled in the area of Al Wafrah Oasis. The Bait Al Arab state stud, however, is located in Kuwait City, as is the Sheikha Sarah Fahad Al-Sabah's Al Arab Stud. So Kuwait is a distinguished major player in Egyptian Arabian breeding, even if today only around 40% of the whole horse population in Kuwait are straight Egyptians.



The Kuwaiti Success Story is the Result of Friendship and Passion for a Common Goal in Breeding

Breeding in Kuwait – what's striking about that is the friendly cooperation and mutual support that connects breeders there. One reason for that might be that they don't need to finance their studs by selling horses – meaning they don't need to compete for markets and buyers. Another reason is definitely the passion for the common national success, as it's impressive to see how much the Kuwait breeders enjoy their group festivities and how they share their happiness after one of „their“ horses has won. In everyday life, mutual advice, exchange of experiences, and support appear to be just as commonplace. There are collective meetings for ongoing education, open house events, free-of-charge use of sires, group study tours for visiting shows in Europe – to the rest of the world, all of this points out the collective interest there is in Kuwait in elevating Arabian horse breeding to the top-notch level. Another feature that gets apparent: the change of generations seems to be working smoothly there. There are breeders in every age bracket, and younger people listening to their elders, wishing to learn from them, are an inherent part of Kuwaiti culture. For the older breeders to share their knowledge with the younger ones, nurturing them, is taken for granted. All of that, summed up, is definitely an asset as compared to the world of breeding on other continents, and as a result, it can be said that the future of Egyptian Arabian breeding will be found in the Middle East.



The ALL NATIONS CUP for Straight Egyptians 2016 in Kuwait

“And the winner is...” is an announcement you hear often in the arena during a show. Here in Kuwait, every time this text was heard, at least a hundred people would come running from the stands into the arena to celebrate the winners and the next-placed horses. This show, featuring lots of elegance, a noble guest-area design and excellent catering, also conveyed a merry funfair character. Many of the breeders had brought their best horses and were happy about the publicity they received. Most of the classes were big enough to need to be divided, despite the fact that participants in the ANC Straight Egyptians in Kuwait were required to meet the the same standards of qualification as for the ANC in Aachen. The overall quality of the 170 horses enrolled was correspondingly high.

Fillies: The 1A class of Yearlings Fillies was confidently won by a small guest from Qatar: Ghazalah Al Waab (Barraq El Aliya x Nabeela Saqr). She received 93.14 points for her adorable presentation. In the 2A class of Yearlings Fillies, the winner was Nadeerah Al Maale of Al Maale Arabians stud in Kuwait. In the 3A class, Alsafa Aljazira won in front of SH Ibtihal – both from Kuwait – owing to her even higher score for type.

The 2A Fillies class was won by the beautiful Shaikha Al Danat, a daughter of Shamek Al Danat, home-bred by Al Danat stud in Kuwait. In the 2B class, the winner was Khoulod Al Khashab, a pretty two-year-



old owned by Hamdan Stud in Kuwait. Among the 3-year-old fillies, Delielah Al Waab (Barraq El Aliya x Nabeela Saqr) from Qatar got herself the victory with a clear lead. She is the full sister to one of the class winners of the Yearlings Fillies. The 2nd class for 3yo fillies was won by Tabasheer Al Wafy (Sofyan Al Mobarky x Hasna Madheeen) owned by Al Wafi Stud in Kuwait.



GHAZALAH AL WAAB



ALSAFA ALJAZIRA



NADERAH AL MAALE



DELIELAH AL WAAB



FOTNA AL BAIDAA

Colts: For the Yearlings Colts in class 4A, the winner was Al Ameer Al Maale, outperforming his stablemate NK Qaswarah son Al Bahei Al Maale from Kuwait. In the 4B class, Montasir Alsalam (Montasir x Salma Omar) owned by Al Salam Arabians in Kuwait was made winner. The two-year-old Ezz Al Danat scored the top marks for the 5A class. He is born and bred by Al Danat stud in Kuwait. The winner of the 5B class was a horse bred in Dubai Stud, a son of Royal Colours out of DA Aniqah. By now, he is owned by Al Wawan Arabians in Kuwait. Among the three-year-old colts, the winner was the Jamil Al Rayyan son Fady Al Baidaa, who was imported from Egypt by Al Mai Stud.

Mares: M.Sarah (Ezz Ezzain x Ansata Suleyma), a young mare of fascinating type owned by Al Mai stud in Kuwait, won class 7 (mares 4-6 years old) due to her better score for type, outshining her half sibling Al Kahara Asayel (Ezz Ezzain x Adjeeba El Dahab) in that. The class 8+9 of mares 7y and older was a presentation of superlatives. 12 brilliantly beautiful mares, almost every one a potential winner, were



IKHNATOON ALJAZIRA



AL AMEER

THE CHAMPIONS

CHAMPIONS: YEARLING FILLIES

GOLD	GHAZALAH AL WAAB (BARRAQ EL ALIYA x NABEELA SAQR) Owner: SHEIKH ABDULLA BIN KHALID AL THANI (QA)
SILVER	ALSABA ALJAZIRA (WASEEM ELKUWAIT x JALILA ALJAZIRA) Owner: ALJAZIRA STUD (KW)
BRONZE	NADERAH AL MAALE (THETTWA EZZAIN x NAJMAH EZZAIN) Owner: AL MAALE ARABIANS (KW)

CHAMPIONS: JUNIOR FILLIES

GOLD	DELIELAH AL WAAB (BARRAQ EL ALIYA x NABEELA SAQR) Owner: SH. ABDULLA BIN KHALID, AL THANI (QA)
SILVER	FOTNA AL BAIDAA (AL SHEIKH OBAIED AL MOGHAZY x DHS SURIAH) Owner: AL BABBAIN STUD (KW)
BRONZE	SHAIKHA AL DANAT (SHAMEKH AL DANAT x BADRAH AL DANAT) Owner: AL DANAT STUD (KW)

CHAMPIONS: YEARLING COLTS

GOLD	AL AMEER (AL MAALE THETTWA EZZAIN x OMILMAALI EZZAIN) Owner: AL MAALE ARABIANS (KW)
SILVER	MONTASIR ALSALAM (MONTASIR x SALMA OMAR) Owner: AL SALAM ARABIANS (KW)
BRONZE	IKHNATOON ALJAZIRA (ALEETH AL NAIF x ROWDHAH ALJAZIRA) Owner: ALJAZIRA STUD (KW)

CHAMPIONS: JUNIOR COLTS

GOLD	FADY AL BAIDAA (JAMIL AL RAYYAN x MAGDA SAQR) Owner: AL MAI STUD (KW)
SILVER	D MONAF (ROYAL COLOURS x D A ANIQA) Owner: AL WAWAN ARABIANS (KW)
BRONZE	EZZ AL DANAT (SHAMEKH AL DANAT x SHALWAH) Owner: AL DANAT STUD (KW)

CHAMPIONS: SENIOR MARES

GOLD	CF SHAMILA (MOROC x AG SAMSARAH) Owner: SHEIKH MOHAMMED ALI AL SABAH (IT)
SILVER	JOUNA AL NAIF (ASHHAL AL RAYYAN x ANSATA MOUNA) Owner: SHEIKH ABDULLA BIN KHALID AL THANI (QA)
BRONZE	M. SARAH (EZZ EZZAIN x ANSATA SULEYMA) Owner: AL MAI STUD (KW) Owner: HRHP KHALED BIN SULTAN BIN ABDULAZIZ AL SAUD (KSA)

CHAMPIONS: SENIOR STALLIONS

GOLD	ADHAM SAQR (IMPERIAL MADORI x AMEERA SAQR) Owner: AL MAI STUD (KW)
SILVER	F SHAMAAL (MAYSOUN x SARAMEENA) Owner: HRHP KHALED BIN SULTAN BIN ABDULAZIZ AL SAUD (KSA)
BRONZE	AL LAHAB (LAHEEB x THE VISION HG) Owner: AL BABBAIN STUD & AL SHAYA STUD (KW)



MONTASIR ALSALAM



FADY AL BAIDAA

brought into the arena. For the winner CF Shamila, the judges held up the 20 sign eleven times. The mare, who was born in Italy and is a daughter of Moroc out of AG Samsarah, today owned by Sheikh Mohammed Ali Al-Sabah, received an overall score of 94.21 points. However, the whole group displayed maximum quality and even the mare placed as no. 12 received 91.71 Points, saying goodbye with excellent type and floating gaits that brought applause from the audience. The second-placed of the class, Jouna Al Naif (Ashhal Al Rayyan x Ansata Mouna) had taken the trip from Qatar and is owned by Al Waab Stud. Many spectators would have given the victory to her, but there were just 0.28 points between them anyway, just as the third-placed of the class, extremely typey Nashwah AA (Al Ayad x Insha Shah Latifa), bred by Ariela Arabians and owned by Al Mai Stud, left the



M. SARAH



JOUNA AL NAIF



D MONAF



EZZ AL DANAT



CF SHAMILA





ADHAM SAQR



F SHAMAAL



AL LAHAB



ring with 93.36 points to her credit and was correspondingly well applauded.

Stallions: Again, a class needed to be divided, class 10 for the junior stallions. In the 10A class, the winner was typey grey Motair Al Bidaa, a son of Tarres Rasheek Al Qusar out of Ansata Bint Sharezad. He was bred in Egypt and is owned by Hamdan Stud, Kuwait. The 10B class was won by Bahhei Ezzain, a son of NK Qaswarah out of Dhuha Al Nakeep. Bred by Ezzain Arabians, he is now owned by Alaa Hamad Al Roumi in Kuwait. The 11 class had just four participants enrolled, and it was the highly elegant stallion Adham Saqr (Imperial Madori x Ameera Saqr) who left the arena as the winner, scoring 94 points overall. He is owned by Al Mai Stud in Kuwait.

The senior stallion class 12 was won impressively, by beautiful chestnut stallion F Shamaal (Maysoun x Sarameena), Junior World Champion and European Champion, bred by the Friedmann family in Germany and owned by HRHP Khaled Bin Sultan Al Saud of the UKSA. The second place went to gold stallion and World Champion Al Lahaab, owned by the Friedmann family in Germany, who is currently leased to Kuwait, to Al Babtain & Al Shaha studs.



EIGHT NATIONS TOOK PART IN THE RACE FOR THE TITLE:
"ALL NATIONS CUP- STRAIGHT EGYPTIANS"

BAIT AL ARAB, THE ENGINE BEHIND THE SUCCESS OF ARABIAN HORSE SHOWS AND BREEDING IN KUWAIT

The mission that's the backbone and impetus of the state stud of Bait Al Arab is clear: it is "a sanctuary, a place of serenity dedicated to the perpetuation of beauty and excellence, where the natural splendor of the Arabian Horses can thrive in peace and pass on its perfection for future generations" (The Arabian Horse Letter 1/2013). After the newly designed premises have been opened to the public, the statement can be made that Kuwait definitely succeeds in meeting these requirements – after all, "Bait Al Arab is more than just an Arabian horse stud. It is the only state stud in the Gulf region, and a place created not just with the aim to breed fine horses, but to recreate and preserve the historic legacy of the country and its people." (ibid.) Until 1997, Bait Al Arab stud (then called Kuwait Arabian Horse Center) was under the umbrella of the Public Authority for Agriculture and Fisheries Resources (PAAFR). From 1997 to 2007, it was under the wings of the Hunting & Equestrian Club with an advising body existing, the Arabian Horse Committee. In 2007, the stud got a private management and was called Arabian Horse Center - Bait Al Arab. In 2012, HH the Amir of Kuwait decided to incorporate Bait Al Arab into the Al Diwan Al Amiri and have the stud managed by a Board of Trustees with Mr Mohammed Al Marzouq as Chairman and Mr Mahmood al Zubaid responsible for the management of Bait Al Arab. Lots of ideas have become reality during the time up to 2012, but in order to become a "special place", new facilities had to be built. His Highness the Amir of Kuwait personally donated the construction costs of the new project. The modern facilities on a peninsula along an artificial lake manage the connection between classic Arabian building style and maximum functionality as required by practicability and the state stud's need for buildings. With the overall design for the Bait Al Arab complex, Mr Mohammed Al Marzouq with his team had been entrusted. The premises cover a total of 20 hectares. In addition to the buildings of Main Office, Diwaniya, Mosque, big arena, smaller presentation units, a library and a state-of-the-art animal hospital, there are



© Richard Bryant



© Richard Bryant



© Richard Bryant

a number of stabling barns surrounded by shaded paddocks which are intended to make horse-friendly horsekeeping possible in spite of the risks that the summer heat poses in a desert state. At present, 35 broodmares have found their homes in the state stud. Every year, 25 to 30 foals increase the number of horses kept. The stud's sires will also service mares from other studs, free of charge. To make all these goals become reality, the head of the Arabian Horse committee, HH Sheikha Sarah Fahad Al-Sabah, the granddaughter of HH the Amir of Kuwait – passionately engaged in Arabian horses, just as her grandfather – made long-term and generous support for the horses possible by means of meetings in the family. The horses of her „Al Arab“ stud are also kept on the premises of the state stud.

AL ARAB STUD OF HH SHEIKHA SARAH & BAIT AL ARAB STATE STUD



AFTER THE SHOWS, THE HIGHLIGHT FOR THE GUESTS: THE STUDY TOUR COVERING MANY STUDS OF AL WAFRAH

Every year in February, Arabian breeders should allot eight days to taking part in Kuwait's Arabian shows and by no means miss the ensuing highlight: the stud presentations in Al Wafrah, which are a unique thing to see. There is no other country with a similar structure to horse breeding: the high-quality stock is carried by a whole number of well-experienced and successful breeders, and all of that on a stretch of land of just a few miles square, the oasis of Al Wafrah. Wandering through the different studs, it is easy to see to what extent the breeders cooperate, partly collecting their experiences together. The foal crops can be read just like a serial novel, you can recognize the sires and dams who form the background to these foals, and you can tail them back to the breeders who introduced the corresponding foundation horses into the gene pool. Usually, the presentations are well made from the point of view

of didactics, and an informed spectator will easily recognize the family structures. In addition, the events were moderated with lots of competence, featuring Klaus Beste just like every year, who has known the studs and their owners for many years, serving as the interface between visitors, state stud, and private studs.

Many guests from the Gulf states, but also from Europe, the US, Asia, and Australia, mainly come into the country for this tour of the studs: to see the present state of breeding in Kuwait, and maybe buy a foal or lease a stallion. During this year's study tour, visitors were able to see almost 400 Arabian horses overall and state their generally good to very good quality. The perfectly organized program does not only give the visitors an outline, but also informs them about the inner workings of a successful horse breeding structure which can be stated to have arrived in the future already.

AL RAYAH STUD & AL SHARQ FARM



AL REHAB STUD



AL WARD STUD



AL MAA'LE STUD



EL ADIYAT STUD





AJMAL STUD



AL MUBARAK STUD



AL DANAT STUD



AL SAFINAT STUD



ALJAZIRA STUD

