



Arabian Show and Sheikh Mansoor Bin Zayed Al Nahyan World Arabian Horse Racing Forum in Romania 2019

by Deirdre Hyde ■ photos by Roger Lothaire and Deirdre Hyde

ROMANIA! When I said to friends I was going to judge at a show and see Arabian racing in Romania they were very surprised as although it is a country in the EU none of them had visited and it has not been associated with the Arabian horse for many years. The show was held just outside, the beautiful city of Sibiu, the 2007 European Capital of Culture, which is also rated 8th on Forbes list of the most idyllic places to live in Europe! The racing was part of the HH Mansour Bin Zayed Al Nahyan World Arabian Horse Racing Forum held in Bucharest

Marius Dumitrescu, our very generous host for the show, is a relatively new owner and breeder but he is aiming high and leading the way by organising this a second Arabian show. He hopes eventually to hand over to others if Romania becomes a member of ECAHO with a fully affiliated show. Thomas Stobler, Nelly Philipott, who has been behind so much of Romania's march forward, and myself were the judging team, whilst Gudrun Waiditschka was DC Roger Lothaire Score Keeper. An enthusiastic audience were kept involved between classes by equestrian displays which had educational as well as visual appeal. Something which stimulated the interest of the general spectators, especially the many children.

The classes were small but the enthusiasm of everyone involved was obvious, owners presenting their own horses and having fun. The horses were nearly all of very familiar bloodlines from imported sires and dams with a strong influence from Poland. The Junior champions both went to Christian Molar with Shanti Selenia (H Tobago x Szello Jewellery by Prim) a chestnut three year old filly and Zair (Cefin Jewellery – Essi by Eryks) a yearling colt. The mare champion, Nasira, was a beautiful bay Polish daughter of Al Maram out of Nana by Fawor for Zorabia Stud, whilst the stallion champion was Babolna bred nineteen year old Hamad B by El Nabila B out of Hafiza B by Teyszir B now owned by Nagy Tibor, an attractive little horse with an excellent body and topline.

One of the joys of judging in a new country can be the opportunity to do some sight-seeing and Marius, knowing our interest, had offered to take us to the famous Shagya Stud at Radautz instead of going directly back to Bucharest. This involved an almost 700km drive, Romania is a big country with few motorways, and like Poland some years ago it is normal to meet horse drawn carts on the main highways. The long drive was broken with a stop at the salt mines of



Presentation to the winner of the Sheikha Fatima Bint Mubarak Ladies World Championship race, Alyson Deniel.

Winner of the Sheikha Fatima Bint Mubarak Apprentices World Championship race Ferment ridden by Valentin Atamaszov



Salina Turda where table salt was produced from Medieval times until 1932! It now incorporates a spa which gives respiratory therapy in the salt laden air. The main mine chamber which we visited is 112m deep with a boating lake at the bottom. The first level is reached either by a lift or 150 stairs; we chose the stairs and then took the further steep, narrow flights to reach the lake, probably another 150 steps! Of course, what goes down must come up, and seeing the length of the queue for the lifts, the consensus was to go for the stairs, a very thorough workout, not for the unfit or faint hearted!

Radautz Stud has a long and illustrious history. It was formed at the beginning of the 19th Century along with Babolna and other studs of the Austro-Hungarian empire to provide much needed horses for

its Imperial Hussars and the Hapsburg wars. They required horses that possessed the endurance and intelligence of the Arabian but with greater size and weight carrying capacity. The highly successful recipe that was developed used predominantly Arabian blood, crossed with Thoroughbred and Lippizaner. In due course the studbook was closed and the breed became known as the Shagya Arabian which is recognised as an Associate of WAHO. Shagya's are considered very good for sport and endurance, Hungares, a Shagya gelding won the 2006 FEI Endurance World Championships in Aachen for Spanish rider Miguel Vila Ubach.

The name Shagya, is taken from an Arabian stallion of that name imported from Syria in 1836 who is considered the main founding sire, his name appears

Breeding Session Panel members





in virtually all Shagya pedigrees. Due to his unusual size 159cm there has been some debate as to his purity, but his size must have been seen as a benefit at the time as he fitted the bill in so many ways.

The Manager Olarian Gheorghe of Radautz gave us a wonderful tour of the stud and a presentation of the stallions, these were very handsome horses and they showed many Arabian characteristics; lovely large eyes and nostrils, level strong toplines good free movement and a sweet temperament.

After a walk out into a large paddock to see the mares and foals happily grazing under wide blue skies, it was time to move on to Bucharest and The World Arabian Horse Racing Forum. This was the 11th annual event, organised on behalf of HH Sheikh

Mansour Bin Zayed Al Nahyan of Abu Dhabi by the unique Lara Sawaya, bringing together people from more than 30 different nations dedicated to Arabian racing. The initiatives of Sheikh Mansour to expand Arabian racing around the World cannot be underestimated as he follows in his father Sheikh Zayed's footsteps. This year 124 races will be sponsored and the Racing Forum, held over three days, provides a wonderful opportunity to educate and exchange ideas as well as ways to develop the sport further. It culminated on the fourth day with racing at the modern hippodrome of Ploiesti just outside Bucharest.

Each day of the Forum panel discussions took place, covering all aspects of racing, but before these started Dr Abdulla Al Raisi, Director General of the UAE National Archives in Abu Dhabi, and a tremendous

Lara Sawaya gives instructions to Nicola Ivan before the Sheikhha Lateefa Bint Mansour Al Nahyan International Pony Race.

Sarah Al Jahouri with Calypso.

The workshop with Derek Thompson and Lara Sawaya.





Corcovel winner of the Sheikha Lateefa Bint Mansour Al Nahyan International Pony Race.

Shagya LXV 2012 stallion.

Cefir Jewellery Reserve Champion Stallion.

Nasira, winner Mare Championship and Best in Show.

Shanti Selenia Champion Filly.

supporter of these Forums gave a presentation on The Year of Tolerance in UAE, stressing the importance of good relations between us all, as he pointed out "it takes two hands to clap"

One of the most interesting sessions was on Media, PR and Social Media with a take home message that it is essential to draw young people into the sport, and that social media is the language of youth with which to reach them. Also, the need to find and promote celebrity horses and individuals, whilst syndicates can introduce people to racing in an affordable way. Nevertheless it was obvious that racing faces many of the same problems as the show world; a reliance on Middle Eastern sponsorship, cuts in that sponsorship and the difficulty of getting new sponsors from outside the actual sport, how to reach a new market and a

serious decline in the number of breeders outside the Middle East!

The Gala dinner signalled the end of the Forum, tokens of thanks and appreciation were presented to all the ambassadors and speakers, with many photo opportunities recording the spectacular transformation of everyone into evening dress. We were also treated to some wonderful displays of Romanian folk dancing and music.

Regardless of the late night celebrations, racing started at 10 am the next morning. The Ploiesti Hippodrome is primarily used for trotters and this was their Derby Day. For many in the packed grandstand this would be a first sight of Arabian racing, however I think it is safe to say that it was the Sheikha Lateefa





Bint Mansour Al Nahyan International Pony Race that stole the show. These were proper small ponies with young jockeys average age between 8 and 10, racing over 300m. The mad dash was over in seconds and the winning pony Morcovel, was ridden in very determined style by Nicola Ivan of Romania. She will join the other qualifiers for the grand finale of the Pony Races at the Jewel Crown Race meeting in Abu Dhabi in November. Surely this is an experience these young jockeys will remember for ever and hopefully bring them into the sport in for the long term.

The other qualifying races with an invitation to Abu Dhabi were for Apprentices and Ladies, The HH Sheikha Fatima Bint Mubarak Apprentice World Championship (IFHRA) Race was won by Valentin Atanaszov of Romania on Ferment (Fawzan –

Mazenda by Majpol) a very attractive Belgian bred horse of HARC recognised Polish/Russian bloodlines, whilst the winner of the HH Sheikha Fatima Bint Mubarak Ladies World Championship (IFHRA) was Alyson Deniel from UK on another Belgian bred horse, Nordika (No Risk Al Maury – Darika by Darika). Well done to all.

The last race brought to an end a week of friendship and hospitality in a country looking forward to the future, and farewells were made to friends old and new in the knowledge that the next Conference will return to Abu Dhabi in 2020. Huge Thanks must go to Lara Sawaya and the organising team for all they do on behalf of HH Sheikh Mansour Bin Zayed Al Nahyan and racing. Best wishes must also go to Marius Dumitrescu for all his plans for the future. Good luck to Romania. □

Peter Pond
President of WAHO
attended The Forum.

Hamad B
Stallion Champion.

Koheilan XLIII
1998 stallion.

Zair Champion Colt.

Cefir Jewellery
Reserve Champion
Stallion.

