

WALEED AL HADDADI

INTERVIEW

by Fabio Brianzoni ■ photos by TuttoArabi archive



King Abdulaziz International
Arabian Horse Championship Show 2015.
Photo by: Sultan Al Suwailam – alassalah.com.

Tutto Arabi: What do you like the most of being a ringmaster?

Waleed Al Haddadi: When I am at the show ring. I can see all horses from different breeding programs. So I can compare their quality, type and quality of legs plus other things. Evaluate and learn more about new bloodline crossings and breeding decisions. I also like to share the opinions about Arabian horses with the judge panel and discuss with them about it.

Above all, I especially like to meet new people, create new friendships and discover new cultures in different countries.

TuttoArabi: It seems you seriously started the new specialization on Arabian horse show scene – being probably the most popular ringmaster not only across Europe but also in the Middle East. Do you treat this task as a profession?

Waleed Al Haddadi: I would say that I treat this task as an unpaid profession, a “hobby” as I am an Arabian horse lover which is not always the case. I have a professional career to do in a different field from horse activities. Most of the shows are held during the weekends. So I prefer to spend it with the horses and shows when I have free time. Otherwise, I can schedule and organize it during vacation days to be more flexible. And that’s one of the reasons why I am frequent on the pictures. I like to serve the Arabian horse show scene from any position.

TuttoArabi: One may have an impression that usually ringmasters are more or less accidentally picked up within the organizing teams of shows and let’s say – their role is much more discreet than the others appearing in the ring. You have managed to bring the real “style and charisma”



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to being ringmaster - was it planned or it just happened by chance?

Waleed Al Haddadi: Thank you for the compliments. Well actually nothing was planned. All started when our national Arabian horse organization "King Abdulaziz Arabian Horses Center at Dirab (KAAHC)" announced national courses in Arabian Horses Show Majors (Ringmasters - Judges - Disciplinary Committee) with ECAHO instructors on year 2013. I applied for those courses. Apparently I made a good impression in all courses. I was invited for the first time to be as a ringmaster at Prince Sultan Bin Abdulaziz International Arabian Horse Festival 2014 in Saudi Arabia organized by Al Khalediah Stables which was a good start in this career and a lot of experience for me. Then it came our National Show in Al Absa'a. After that, I was invited for all Saudi shows. The first experience abroad as a ringmaster was when I attended to ECAHO ringmaster workshop on October 2014 in Brussels, Belgium, one day before the European Championship in Azelhof Horse Events, Lier, Belgium.

1. National Judge Certificate. Photo by: Abdulaziz Al Mugbel.

2. With HRH Prince Faisal Bin Bander Al Saud - Governor of Riyadh Region - King Abdulaziz International Arabian Horse Championship Show "KAAHCS" 2015. Photo by: Majed Al Bugami.

3. Thanks to Eng. Sami Al Nohait for his full support and cooperation. Photo by: Obadah Zabadi.

4. With ECAHO President Mr. Jaroslav Lacina - International Ringmaster Certificate - World Arabian Horse Championship - Paris. Photo by: Mohammed Abuhaimed.

5. National Ringmaster Certificate. Photo by: Obadah Zabadi.

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Photo by: Mohammed Abuhaimeed.



National Arabian Horse Show for Local Breeders - Taif 2014.
Photo by: Adel Motrafi.



Prince Sultan Bin Abdulaziz International Arabian Horse Festival "PSAIAHF 2017". Photo by: Sultan Al Suwailam - alassalah.com.



Kuwait International Arabian Horse Festival "KIAHF 2017". Photo by: Sultan Al Suwailam alassalah.com.



KIAHF 2017. Photo by: Mosa Al Momen.

The show organizer requested me to help in the collecting-ring with the officials. Later, I get approved on the ECAHO list of Ringmasters which of course opened a lot of doors afterwards.

I really have to thank all the people who gave me the chance to do this lovely task and who believed in me. And I promise them I will always do all my best to exceed their expectations.

Tutto Arabi: *Do you have your own vision of performing as a ringmaster? Were there any special issue you brought to this profession to make yourself "lord of the ring"? Would you change anything in the rules that ringmasters should follow in their work?*

Waleed Al Haddadi: *Well, it comes naturally. Just I have to be me. However, I would mention and point out about being a ringmaster is very easy when you have a superb team in the collecting ring and stables. Those people are the ones who deserve all the credit. If horses are not on time and ready to start the next class the show gets quickly boring. So they have to be sure those handlers and horses are ready to enter the main ring. When the handlers and horses are in the main ring I give them all more or less the same time to show and offer what they have there to all.*

We have the trot, the stand up and the walk. Preferably a long steady walk not a short dancing style. I and a lot of judges with me prefer to see horses trotting forward smoothly in one direction like "good old polish trot" not running around and do a lot of circling. Of course, I understand most of the handlers trying to hide the faults in their horses which is a part of the game. But this really has nothing to do with showing a horse. Above all, ringmasters are there for supporting, helping and coordinating the show in a safe way, within a given time schedule. I would like to request all show organizers to strictly minimize the number of photographers in the ring and have a "security zone" for them during prize giving ceremonies. In addition to that, the number of the people in the collecting

ring should be one groom and one handler with each horse. Also the number of the people gathering the trophy should be limited. Prize giving ceremonies can be dangerous. We do not have to wait till a severe accident happens in the ring to decide about this in general. I try to avoid that as much as I can in the show ground.

Tutto Arabi: The show attendants who know you from the middle of the showing may not know that you are also passionate breeder. Can you tell us how your story with breeding has started?

Waleed Al Haddadi: First of all, Arabian horses are our treasures, legacy and heritage that we got from our great grandparents. Our responsibility will be to return them to their homeland and keep them for next generations.

Some of my horses were used to compete in several activities like endurance, show jumping and racing which are not existing anymore at the farm. Due to that, I reduced slowly the number of horses in the last years. I did not used to breed a lot in the past. So I am still not reaching my breeding passion. But I am getting closer every time. I made a lot of change to develop and improve the farm breeding programs. I have a new breeding vision which will going to be implemented for this breeding season. We have few mixed bloodlines horses at the farm in this time.

Tutto Arabi: Are there any particular bloodlines you especially admire at your farm and why?

Waleed Al Haddadi: No, there are not any particular bloodlines that I especially admire at the farm. We used to have and breed horses from different bloodlines like Desert Bred, Straight Egyptian, Polish and Russian in the past. Plus the mixed bloodlines we have now. We have a look for each horse individually before selecting a partner. Find the strong and weak points and see what needs to improve the breeding.



Makkah International Arabian Horse Championship 2014.
Photo by: Obadah Zabadi.



Photo by: Mohammed Abuhaimeed.



KAIAHCS 2015.
Photo by: Saleh Mostafa.



Riyadh Arabian Horse Show 2017. Photo by: Mohammed Abuhaimeed.



KAIAHCS 2015. Photo by: Saleh Mostafa.

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Saudi National Arabian Horse Championship 2015.
Photo by: Sultan Al Suwailam – alassalah.com.



AHO Breeders Cup - Egypt 2016. Photos by: Claude Stemmelin.



With Saudi National Judges.



Makkah International Arabian Horse Championship 2014.
Photos by: Obadah Zabadi.

Tutto Arabi: Do you feel more popular abroad or in the Middle East?

Waleed Al Haddadi: As I previously mentioned, I like to spend most of my free time with this lovely hobby "Arabian horses" and shows. Also I am interesting in Farms Open Tour which is organized in different countries. That's means I am traveling a lot not only in the Middle East but even abroad. And I am a social person who likes to meet new people sharing the same love for this hobby. Maybe because of that I am frequent on the pictures here and there.

Tutto Arabi: What are your main plans for 2017 season - regarding breeding program, your job and ringmastering career and other that we had the opportunity to ask about...?

Waleed Al Haddadi: I made a lot of change to develop and improve the farm breeding programs. I have a new breeding vision and plans which will be implemented for this breeding season. So I am expecting new foals for 2017 breeding season. The first foal will be born within two weeks by the farm stallion that passed away in 2016 and other foals by another stallions. I will bring new foundation mares and add them to the breeding programs especially I have to start once again the Desert Bred breeding program this season. For Ringmastering Career in 2017, I was invited for 1st Riyadh Arabian Horse Show "C National Show" and Prince Sultan Bin Abdulaziz International Arabian Horse Festival "PSALAHF" "Title Show" on January in Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Also I was invited to Kuwait International Arabian Horse Festival which included two shows (6th International Championship and All Nations Cup - Straight Egyptian) on February in Kuwait. Plus I am invited to National Arabian Horse Championship Show on March in Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and National Arabian Horse Show on August in Poland, both of them are "ECAHO National Show". That's it up to now never know what is still to come after that.

Finally, I would like to thank you and all Tutto Arabi team for this interview. And I am wishing you, Tutto Arabi team, Arabian horses' breeders and your families all the best, joyful and success. □



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Qatar National
Arabian Horse
Show for Individual
Breeders 2016.
Photo by:
Juhaimudheen
Parambil.



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Photo by:
Saad Al Saadi.

1-2-3. PSAIAHF 2016. Photos by: Obadah Zabadi.

4-6. AHO Breeders Cup - Egypt 2016. Photos by: Claude Stemmelin.

5. All Nations Cup - Aachen 2015 with friends. Photo by: Mohammed Abuhaimeid.

7. AHO Breeders Cup - Kuwait 2016.