



Judge Profile

THE TALK WITH Joanne Lowe

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International A-level judge and
new Chairman of
Arabian Horse Society in UK

By Urszula Leczycka



Tutto Arabi: *Joanne, you are internationally known as well respected A-show judge but some of new comers may not know about long, fairy tale-like backgrounds of your family traditions in breeding horses, not only Arabian ones. Can you briefly tell us how and when your family got involved in horses and how did you met your first Arabian ones?*

Joanne Lowe: *My parents started the stud over 55 years ago. Today my son Chris and I run the farm. At the beginning my parents bred mainly English lines. They later imported a colt, Kais I (Mohawed / Bint Om El Saad) and a filly Ikbal (Seef / Adeweya) from the E.A.O. This was the stud's Egyptian base. Kais I is a half brother to Serenity Sonobolah. We still have a son Al Aswad (Kais / Ikbal) on the farm. He is 31 years old and belonged to the late King Hussein of Jordan. The stud has 2 grand daughters and 1 great grand daughter and a stallion Isharah by Salaa el Dine. We find that if we breed any fillies they are sold abroad very quickly. We are very fortunate to have standing at stud the very pretty stallion Kamal (Authentic Kharaz i /Shaula). He has for the second time won and took reserve champion at the Egyptian Event in Belgium. Over the last few years we have brought some new mares to widen our non SE lines. These include Ess -First Lady (Ess-El Shakran / Ass-Jickii), Shazadika (Libanon Azadik / Sharon-El-Kendal), a half sister*

to Bess Faizah, FS Cinderella (Esteem / Galva) and OFW Psyductive (Padrons Psyche / Hafati Elegance). All these mares will bring something new to our existing brood mare herd, although OFW Psyductive's sire Padrons Psyche goes back on the tail female line to a mare called Serinda who was bred here.

TA: *You have currently a strong core of Straight Egyptian horses at your Claverdon Stud where some of world famous individuals were born. How and why did you focus on these bloodlines? Who were your favorites at the beginning and who are they now and why?*

JL: *The joy of having SE horses is that they cross so well with most lines. They introduce type, great stamina. In the past they have crossed particularly well with English/Russian lines. We bred many race winners with SE and half Egyptian horses. In the early years of racing the farm was the leading breeders of racehorses in the UK and Europe and the same horses also won in the show ring. Everything changed when the French and American racing lines were imported and since I was not prepared to breed this type of horse the stud reverted back to producing show and riding horses. As well as my own horses I have been very fortunate to look after some wonderful Arabians owned by equally delightful owners. The farm has been responsible for*



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Ess First Lady

(Ess El Shakran x Ass Jicki by Esta Ghalil)



Foal Born At Claverdon



Chris with FL Sayawan

producing M A Bint Azadik, Khansa al Shaqab, Kamal, Siram Athbah, Leyla, Macho Des Alpes and FL Sayawan just to name a few.

TA: In the article about your farm made for Tutto Arabi some time ago we find an interesting sentence that in your opinion to be successful you have to always try something new and not avoid experimenting. Its clever business rule but how do you use it practically in Arabian horse breeding – can you give some examples?

JL: Chris and I are fortunate enough to travel around Europe a lot and this is a very good opportunity to look out for new young colts that can make an influence for the future. This year we have been able to use the 2 year old Mascot Des Alpes (Marwan Al Shaqab / E.A.M.T. Marihuana) on selected mares. We feel that this young colt will introduce more type, size and movement. Breeding horses has its fashion and trends and the younger and lesser known stallions can be ignored in favour of the big show winners. With the use of chilled and frozen semen these horses are used more easily but breeders should be aware that the Arabian horse gene pool is slowly being reduced by using just the popular stallions.

TA: You have been the performance competitor and a judge

of performance classes for many years. How did it influence your halter judgment?

JL: Because I have ridden Arab horses all my life in nearly every discipline I find I automatically look for the aspects of a functional horse whether it is quietly grazing in the field or being shown in hand. In the final reckoning horses are meant to be ridden. If they proved themselves then you would breed from them. I think the Polish studs have the right idea of testing their horses on the race track for ability and soundness before they go to stud.

TA: As we all know many breeders nowadays focus mostly on breeding for pretty heads and, unfortunately, also a lot of judges seem to look for this feature at first. As we are now on the stage of changes in ECAHO boards and probably this may influence some organization and rules changes as well – if you may decide yourself what to change in the European judging and/or judge education system would there be anything that you would like to change?

JL: In the system of judging in Europe i.e. the points system, there is not enough emphasis placed upon the horse's walk and in reality only the trot is marked. The walk can tell me more about the horse's conformation than the stand up or



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Isharah

(Salaa el Dine x Icomb by Kais 1)
Straight Egyptian

Joanne riding in the
AHS Marathon



Joanne riding Galeon

trot. It is very difficult for a handler to hide a weak back or straight shoulder at this gait.

I would like to see a separate mark for the walk. Perhaps 10 points each for walk and trot. In an ideal world it would be wonderful if the judges could assess these movements on a hard surface as well as the trot in the arena and it would also be easier to check feet and soundness. Judges training - it is quiet simple for a judge to hide his or her knowledge, or lack of, behind the points system when they only are using such a small range of marks. What is the difference between 17 and 18 points? How can an examiner of judges really discover if the trainee judge has a full understanding of the horse's conformation? The points could be used to educate people by using them with a wider scale and to demonstrate that the judges know what they are doing. Every judge should be asked to judge a class without points and rank them i.e. the comparative system and give valid reasons behind their decision making. There is rather too much credit given to the shape of the Arabian head. The worst thing that could happen to our beautiful breed is that the horses are bred for extremes as has happened in the dog world. We could end up with horses with such dished heads that they cannot breathe or eat!

TA: Looking closer at your working field - you have recently become the Chairman of Arabian Horse Society in UK where your family was and is actively involved since many years. Why have you decided to undertake this role?

JL: I have recently been elected as chairman of the Arab Horse Society in the UK which is a great privilege and honour. In these very difficult economic times it is a challenge to run the society. I think our problems are very similar to other breed organisations. We need to encourage new breeders, the small stud owners and people to ride their horses. This is not so much of a problem in the UK as most colts are gelded and used for riding. I do have some plans for the future of our society but they are still in the very early stages of planning.

TA: Thank you for sharing the thoughts and we wish you to realize all your plans both in private breeding and on the public field.



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Judging at Salerno in June 2011

Joanne's mother - Joan with Manich

