

Złoty Medal

the Story of a Golden Boy

by Kamila Kozłowska

Photos: Erwin Escher, Sylwia Ilenda, Ewa Imielska-Hebda, Glenn Jacobs,
Karolina Misztal, Patrycja Makowska, Stuart Vesty

Names are more than just words or labels. They become our identity and our constant companion throughout life. However, it is claimed by many that our names are much more powerful than that and that they in fact have the capability to shape our characters and determine our destiny. Even if it is not a universal truth, it was certainly the case of the classy grey colt who came into the world on 21st May 2012 in the foaling barn at the world-famous Michałów State Stud of Poland. His incontestable charm and

charisma combined with his attention-demanding demeanour demonstrated his readiness to win the hearts of Arabian horse aficionados and to conquer the show arenas all over the world. This young colt was clearly destined for greatness and thus his breeders, Urszula and Jerzy Białobok, decided to name him ZŁOTY MEDAL (QR Marc – Złota Orda / Pesal). Given that this name means ‘gold medal’ in English, the expectations towards the colt were extremely high from the very beginning.

Nothing less than winning the highest honours was expected of Złoty Medal but it was more than his attractive appearance and powerful personality that gave grounds for high hopes of his breeders. His precious pedigree is packed with many remarkable representatives of the breed, including some acclaimed show superstars, who appear in large numbers in both his significant sire line and in his famous female family. As a proud member of the Saklawi I male line, Złoty Medal belongs to the most prominent and prevalent sire line in the modern Arabian horse breeding. Sired by the multiple World Championships medallist QR Marc (Marwan Al Shaqab – Swete

Dreams / Magic Dream CAHR), the twelve-year-old Michałów-bred stallion represents the royal dynasty commenced by his paternal great-grandsire, 2017 Platinum World Champion Male, Gazal Al Shaqab (Anaza El Farid – Kajora / Kaborr) and continued further by his equally esteemed paternal grandsire Marwan Al Shaqab (out of Little Liza Fame / Fame VF), three times World Champion and a highly influential individual in his own right. Not many Arabian stallions can boast about having three multiple World Champion winners as their direct male ancestors but the more impressive fact is that the number of the most prestigious titles that these three stallions managed to gather over the years is directly proportional to the influence they had on the breed as sires. It is close to impossible to name all the halter show champions sired by these superb stallions but the fact that the three of them produced nine Platinum World title winners is an impressive and inspiring accomplishment which shows the great genetic prepotency of Gazal's family. Gazal himself sired three Platinum World Champion Mares: Pianissima (out of Pianosa / Eukaliptus), Pinga (out of Pilar / Fawor) and Emandoria



Złota Orda - Stuart Vesty



Złoty Medal (QR Marc x Złota Orda / Pesal) - Glenn Jacobs



Złoty Medal - Karolina Misztal

(out of Emanda / Ecaho). Marwan, his most significant successor, produced another five Platinum World Champion winners; four stallions: Baanderos (out of HB Bessolea / Besson Carol), Marquis CAHR (out of Rohara Magnifica / Echo Magnifico), Kahil Al Shaqab (out of OFW Mishaahl / Mishaah) and Hariry Al Shaqab (out of White Silkk / Dakar El Jamaal) as well as the 2021 Platinum World Champion Mare Baviera HVP, a full sister to Baanderos, while QR Marc is the sire of 2021 Platinum World Champion Stallion Equator (out of Ekliptyka / Ekstern). As one would expect, Equator is not the only precious progeny that QR Marc sired in Poland. At Janów Podlaski State Stud, he has left the US Triple Crown Winner Pogrom (out of Pęta / Visbaden) however it was Michałów-bred mares that seemed to be match made in heaven for QR Marc. Apart from Equator and Złoty Medal, the outstanding offspring of QR Marc born at Michałów include 2012 European and World Gold Champion Junior Filly Wieża Mocy (out of Wieża Marzeń / Ekstern), Piacenza (out of Primawera / Emigrant), who as a two-year-old filly fetched the record price of € 475 000 at the 2011 Pride of Poland sale and Złoty Medal's close cousin Zigi Zana (out of Zagrobla / Monogramm), many times national and international winner as well as a highly appreciated broodmare at Michałów. Additionally, the cross between QR Marc and the present-day Queen of Michałów Stud, 2018 Platinum World Champion Mare Emandoria, produced excellent results in the form of two bay full siblings, the international show sensation and super successful sire Emerald J, bred and owned by Jadem Arabians of Belgium, and the brilliant broodmare Esmeralda,



Zagrobla - Erwin Escher



best known as the dam of the ethereal El Esmera (by Sahm El Arab), 2021 European Champion Junior Filly and the highest sold horse of the most recent Pride of Poland auction, purchased by Al Zobair Stud of the UAE for €810 000.

It seems almost impossible to match the accomplishments of Złoty Medal's

paternal ancestors, however his distinguished dam line of Selma DB is no less special. Tail female, he traces back to 1981 European Reserve Champion Senior Mare and 1984 All Nations Cup Champion Senior Mare Zazula (Negatiw – Złota Iwa / Arax) through her highly decorated granddaughter Zagrobla (Monogramm – Zguba /



Złoty Medal - Sylwia Ilenda

Enrilo). Throughout her long and lustrous show career, Zagrobla won numerous prestigious prizes and her most amazing achievements include the titles of 2000 All Nations Cup Champion Senior Mare, 2000 and 2007 European Reserve Champion Senior Mare, 2000 World Champion Senior Mare and 2003 US National Champion Senior Mare. After promoting the Polish Arabian horse in various corners of the world, Zagrobla became a broodmare at Michałów and blessed her breeders with two fantastic fillies, the aforementioned highly acclaimed Zigi Zana as well as Złoty Medal's gorgeous grey dam Złota Orda. The latter was sired by the best stallion ever bred in the 40-year-long history of

Białka Stud, Pesal (Partner – Perforacja / Ernal), 1996 Polish National and All Nations Cup Reserve Champion Senior Stallion, 1997 Polish National Champion Senior Stallion and 2003 Dutch National Champion Senior Stallion.

With the exotic type and refinement of QR Marc and the unique beauty, correctness of built and powerful movement of his Polish dam line, Złoty Medal appears to combine the best of both worlds. His show career commenced at the 2013 Junior Spring Show in Białka, the first important test for all young Arabian show horses in Poland, shortly after he turned one. His breeders could not have come up with a more suitable

name for the young colt as he easily won a large class of 13 contenders as well as a richly deserved gold medal at the very first show he attended. It was a really good omen for the rest of his show career. Just a few months after the show in Białka, Złoty Medal was presented at the Polish Nationals in Janów Podlaski where he became Silver Champion Junior Colt, an amazing accomplishment given that the gold medal went to a year older and more developed Janów-bred Barok (Om El Bellissimo – Baida / Balon). As a two-year-old colt, Złoty Medal added one more silver champion title to his collection at Białka Junior Spring Show as well as won his class at the Polish Nationals, which concluded his show



Złoty Medal - Karolina Misztal



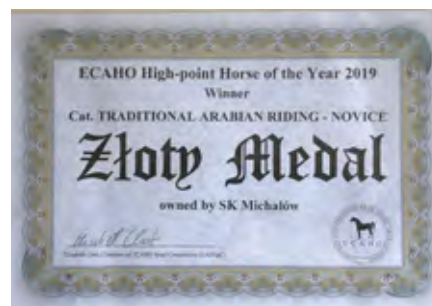
Złoty Medal - Dominika Jaros

career in the junior colt section. All these accomplishments demonstrated Medal's potential for a future breeding stallion and thus as a three-year-old colt he underwent racetrack training, an element of the Polish programme that determines performance capabilities of horses that are further used for breeding. Therefore, Złoty Medal did not return to the show ring until he turned five in 2017.

His career in the senior stallions' section started with a warm-up show in Radom, where Złoty Medal placed third in his class with a good total score of 91.33 points. The same final mark at the more challenging and competitive Polish Nationals gave Medal second

place in his class and a great result in the championship. After a tie for silver with Calateon (Vitorio TO – Calatea / Ekstern), who had a slightly higher class score, Złoty Medal eventually became Bronze Champion but it was clear that the young dapple grey stallion did not show his best side at this point, especially when it comes to movement. As is often the case with young horses, he needed time not only to mature and develop but also to feel completely at ease in the show arena. Also, his newly acquired role of chief sire at his home stud limited the number of shows that he attended. Nevertheless, the following three years of competition resulted in two bronze medals at the 2018 and 2019 All Polish

Arabian Horse Championship in Radom and two Top Five Senior Stallion titles at the 2019 and 2020 Polish Nationals in Janów Podlaski, where Medal just missed out on the podium. The situation seemed no different at the 2022 Polish National Show where he won his class and again placed fourth in the senior stallions' championship but this time





Złoty Medal - Sylwia Ilenda



Złoty Medal, Eryks, Forman - Tomasz Emil

he triumphed as a sire with the Silver Champion Senior Stallion title being awarded to his then four-year-old grey son Ptolemeusz (out of Parmana / Al Maraam) who also finished the class competition in first place. There is no better testimony of success for a stallion than his own son defeating him in the show ring as it demonstrates progress in breeding and strong genetic prepotency of Złoty Medal as a sire.

From then on, the tides have turned in favour of Złoty Medal and the series of his successes seems to have no end even though, due to his chief sire duties, he still participates in a limited number of shows. Not only has he matured into this silver-grey masculine Arabian with marvellous movement but he also established a

strong bond based on mutual trust with his current trainer and handler Artur Łojowski who has accompanied Złoty Medal in the show arena since 2018. It is interesting to observe how they have grown as partners, gaining more and more confidence in the ring and reaching for high honours at some very significant shows. Just a week after the 2022 Polish Nationals, Złoty Medal won his class at Prague Intercup with a superb score of 92.69 points, including a 20 for type and a 20 for movement, which further led to two silver medals in both the international championship and EuroCup, a separate competition only reserved for horses bred and owned by European citizens. Slightly intimidated by competition at the 2022 European Championships in Lier, Medal placed third in his class with a good total score of 91.80 points and qualified for the championships. Such a good result at an important title show might have been an indication of Medal's readiness to shine in the European show arenas.

2023 was definitely the year of Złoty Medal as he only took part in three shows and brought home four champion titles. After missing out on the podium of Polish Nationals several times in his show career, the eleven-year-old stallion was determined to claim the crown in the 2023 senior stallions' championship. And he did it in style! After winning his class with an impressive score of 92.70, including a 20 for type, Złoty Medal hypnotised all six judges with his captivating performance in the finals and was named Unanimous Gold Champion Senior Stallion. His good fortune followed him to Prague, where he took part in the ECAHO A-class event and also placed first in his division, receiving



Złoty Medal - Karolina Misztal

92.05 points and two 20s for movement. This great result contributed to his silver medal in the Intercup championship and to a gold one in the European Cup. The European Championships in Bedizzole, Italy was the final show of the 2023

season for Złoty Medal and, being the prestigious title show, also the toughest test for the stallion. Nevertheless, Medal managed to meet everyone's expectations and returned to Michałów with a European Bronze Champion Senior



Porto Rico - Ewa Imielska-Hebda

Stallion title and a matching medal on his chest.

Halter show trophies, however important for a breeding stallion, are not the only factors taken into consideration while choosing a future sire. The leading idea to produce beautiful and correct Arabians that will not only shine in the show rings but will also exhibit performance capabilities has prevailed in the Polish breeding programme for hundreds of years. For this reason, Złoty Medal spent one season at the racetrack where he took part in eight races, seven of which he finished in the money. As if it was not enough to establish his great health and stamina, Medal has also been successful

in Arabian horse sports competitions alongside Marta Jaros, a breeding specialist at Michałów Stud, with whom the stallion has also developed a unique relationship based on mutual love, trust and respect. Nowadays, it is often forgotten that mental stability mixed with the ability to make strong bonds with humans has always been one of the main factors when selecting Arabian horses for breeding.

All the desirable traits like type, beauty, correctness of built, good health, stamina or mental stability do not mean much in a breeding stallion if he is unable to pass them onto next generations. Fortunately,

Złoty Medal has repeatedly stamped his offspring with his most sought-after attributes. He has already produced not one but two heirs that currently occupy the chief sire stalls at Michałów Stud, the older grey Ptolemeusz 2018 (out of Parmana / Al Maraam) and the younger bay Porto Rico 2020 (out of Parmania / Kahil Al Shaqab). For such close cousins (Parmana is the dam of Parmania, so they share 75% of ancestors), the two young stallions exhibit many differences but they have both followed in their sire's footsteps when it comes to halter show career. Ptolemeusz has so far been named 2020 Białka Junior Spring Show Silver Champion Junior Colt, 2020 European



Ptolemeusz - Sylwia Ilenda



Ptolemeusz - Ewa Imielska-Hebda



Ptolemeusz - Patrycja Makowska



Pustynna Lilia - Ewa Imielska-Hebda

Silver Champion Junior Colt and, as mentioned before, 2022 Polish National Silver Champion Senior Stallion, while Porto Rico won the titles of 2021 Białka Junior Spring Show Silver Champion Yearling Colt and 2021 Prague EuroCup Bronze Champion Yearling Colt. Additionally, Porto Rico is an acclaimed athlete with a successful racing career. In 2023, he won two races, including the prestigious National Support Centre for Agriculture Cup for three-year-old Arabian horses of the second group.

When it comes to female progeny, the 2019 bay Pustynna Lilia (out of

Pustynna Kalia / Esparto) is another athletic Michałów-bred beauty sired by Złoty Medal. This young mare is both 2020 Białka Junior Spring Show Bronze Champion Yearling Filly as well as the winner of international race for three-year-old Arabian horses of second group over a distance of 1907 meters. Medal is also the sire of the 2018 grey mare Emilia Złota (out of Emily / Poganin), who recently became Gold Champion Senior Mare at the 2023 Kurdistan Pure Breed Arabian Horse Show. As far as private breeding is concerned, Medal produced the 2019 grey Wirat (out of Wentaja / Gaspar), Silver Champion Yearling Colt

at the 2020 Arabian Horse Event in Bruges.

It is difficult to say for sure whether Złoty Medal's name foreshadowed his fate but one thing is certain; he fulfilled the high expectations of his breeders that believed in him since the day he was born. A successful show champion, an acclaimed athlete, a superb sire with a great character, Złoty Medal is the epitome of a classic and complete horse that fully fits into the Polish breeding vision of a brave and beautiful Arabian. His classic style and completeness together with correctness of built and kind disposition



Pustynna Lilia - Karolina Misztal

he repeatedly passes onto his progeny, proudly continuing the priceless heritage of his prominent Saklawi I sire line, his esteemed dam line of Selma DB and his world-renowned breeding programme of Michałów State Stud. ■



Pustynna Lilia - Karolina Misztal