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Girlan-Bey
2011 Polish National Show
Contender
Photo by Anette Mattsson



Odległe kraje, wspólna pasja

Rzut oka na historię i teraźniejszość pozwala dostrzec, że koń arabski w niezwykle sposób stał się łącznikiem pomiędzy dwiema odległymi kulturami. Na przestrzeni wieków obie te kultury zbliżały się do siebie i oddalały, ale niezmiennie koń arabski był okazją do spotkania, jak dowodzą choćby dzieje wypraw po konie na pustynię, kiedy to europejscy podróżnicy decydowali się na pełne trudów i niebezpieczeństw eskapady, by przywieźć drogocenny skarb – oryginalnego araba. Teraz konie pustynne przybywają do nas, a polskie konie, wywodzące się od tamtych historycznych importów, reprezentują polską hodowlę na Bliskim Wschodzie.

O tym właśnie opowiadamy w nowym numerze „Tutto Arabi Poland”. Motywem przewodnim wydania postanowiliśmy uczynić związek Polski ze Wschodem – od czasów sprzed 80 lat, kiedy to Bogdan Ziętarski targował się z beduinami o Kuhailana Haifi, po dziś dzień, gdy na torze służewieckim biegają polscy potomkowie pustynnego ogiera Tiwaiq, ambasador Arabii Saudyjskiej obejmuje swoim patronatem nowy w polskim kalendarzu pokaz w warszawskich Łazienkach, a janowska Pilar jest królową stadniny Al Shaqab. Kto wie, może młodziutka gwiazda tegorocznej aukcji, zwyciężczyni Wiosennego Młodzieżowego Pokazu w Białce – Piacenza, podąży śladami córki Fawora i Pipi na Bliski Wschód?

Cieszymy się, że portal polskiearaby.com po raz kolejny pojawia się w papierowej wersji, do tego w wyjątkowym momencie, bo na czas największego święta polskiego konia arabskiego, czyli Pokazu Narodowego i aukcji Pride of Poland. Mamy nadzieję, że święto to znów stanie się okazją do spotkania dwóch kultur, dzielących wspólną wielką pasję, jaką jest miłość do konia arabskiego.

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Distant countries, common passion

A quick glance at history and the present allows us to see that the Arabian horse has in a unique way become a link between two distant cultures. Over the centuries these cultures have at times grown close and at other times moved away from each other, but the Arabian horse has invariably been a reason to meet, proof of which are the excursions into the desert for the purchase of horses, when European travelers decided to undertake the hard and dangerous escapades in order to bring back a precious treasure – a desert bred Arabian. Today the desert Arabians are coming to us on their own, whereas Polish horses, descending from those historical imports, represent Polish breeding in the Middle East.

And it is these stories that form the new issue of „Tutto Arabi Poland”. We have decided to make the relation of Poland with the East the leitmotif of this issue – from times 80 years back, when Bogdan Ziętarski bargained with the Bedouins over Kuhailan Haifi, until today, when Polish descendants of the desert bred stallion Tiwaiq race on the Służewiec track; a new addition to the Polish show calendar, taking place at the Warsaw Royal Baths Park is held under the patronage of the Ambassador of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in Poland; and Janów Podlaski's Pilar is the queen of Al Shaqab Stud. Who knows, maybe the young starlet of this year's auction, the winner of the Junior Spring Show in Białka – Piacenza – will follow in the footsteps of the Favor and Pipi daughter to the Middle East?

We are extremely pleased that the polskiearaby.com portal is once again appearing in paper form and at such a special moment – during the largest festival of the Polish Arabian horse – the Polish National Championships and the Pride of Poland Sale. We hope that the gala will again become an opportunity for the meeting of two cultures, which share a great common passion – the love for the Arabian horse.

The staff of the polskiearaby.com website and e-magazine



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Piacenza (QR Marc – Primawera/Emigrant) Gold Champion Filly & Best in Show. Handler Mariusz Liškiewicz

The Białka Alphabet

A report from the 21st Junior Spring Arabian Horse Show in Białka (Poland)

Text by: Rafał Czarnecki

Photos by: Wiesława Bałut (unless stated)

B is for Białka

Located among picturesque landscapes and on hilly terrain, surrounded by fields, meadows and forests, the Białka Stallion Depot also serves as a stud breeding pureblood Arabians since 1981. The buildings, constructed from local limestone in 1928-1930, are today a home to more than 150 Arabian horses.

C is for Championship

The first Junior Arabian Horse Show took place in 1983 at Łąck Stallion Depot, while the next in Białka, but not until 1988. After another five year break the show became a permanent feature in the Polish show calendar and its organization was handed over to Michałków Stud, who played host to the young horses during 1993-1996. From 1997 the show annually takes place at Białka Stallion Depot and is unquestionably a unique event on an international scale. Beginning from 2007 spectators can see not only yearlings and two year olds, but also horses three years of age.

D is for Dynasty

The 21st Junior Arabian Horse Show was undisputedly dominated by the dynasty of the Qatari-bred stallion **Gazal Al Shaqab**. Four out of six medals and six out of ten recognitions awarded within both male and female Championship Top Fives made their way to his get, grandsons and great-grandsons, which made for one fourth of his entire crop presented at this year's show. The title of Junior Champion Stallion was awarded to his son, the Janów Podlaski-bred grey **Pomian**. This colt is the last Polish produce of one of the most meritorious mares of that stud, **Pilar**, sold to Qatar during last year's Pride of Poland for 240 thousand Euro. Pomian was recognized with the highest score among the presented males, a total of 42,5 points which included a "10" for type from judge Holger Ismer. The stallion Gazal Al Shaqab, on lease to Poland in 2002-2003 (in later years frozen semen was used), has sired more than a dozen sons in Poland. During the Białka show we could take a look at the get of three of them: the grey **Pegasus** (out of Pepesza / Eukaliptus), the bay **Drabant** (out of Demona / Monogramm) – vice Polish National Reserve Champion Stallion – and **Eryks** (out of Emmona / Monogramm). The latter was represented at the show with six get, among which stood out two yearling fillies: **Diara**





Pomian (Gazal Al Shaqab – Pilar/Fawor), Gold Champion Colt

and **El-Mediara**. The first (out of **Diaspora/Ganges**), bay, with a small star on a very refined and slender head, received the highest marks for type (10-10-9,5, ex aequo with **Zigi Zana** and **Primera**), and achieved a final score of 42,67. She entered the championships from second place in class and gained the title of Reserve Junior Champion. With that she became the second get of Eryks to win a medal (in 2009 the title of Junior Champion went to the dark bay **Chimeryk** out of **Chimera/Emigrant**). The second filly (out of **El Emeera/Ekstern**) was evaluated at 41,33 points, which enabled her to secure a second place in class.

For the first time in the show's history we had a chance to see a daughter of Gazal's most famous offspring, the double World Champion Stallion **Marwan Al Shaqab**. The bay **Markiza of Marwan** (out of **Mina/Monogramm**), bred by Małgorzata and Józef Pietrzak, as befits the progeny of her sire, characterized herself with a beautiful long neck. The filly took home the ribbon of fifth place in class.

The blood of **Marwan Al Shaqab** also flows in the get of his two sons which we had a chance to see at the show in Bialka. The first of them, **QR Marc**, was represented by nine offspring. The best presentation among the **QR Marc** colts was given by the typey **Equator**, who threw in a nice trot. He won his class with a score of 41,67 points and on Sunday afternoon claimed the title of Junior Reserve Champion. His dam, the mare **Ekliptyka** (**Ekstern – Ekspozycja/Eukaliptus**), is a full sister to the highly decorated stallion **Esparto**. A superb pedigree combined with good conformation and

charisma, which **Equator** unmistakably has, is something to definitely look forward to in the future. Standing out among the fillies was **Piacenza** (out of **Primawera/Emigrant**) – which we will return to in a moment – and the beautifully moving, high-set tail carrying, bay **Cheronea** (out of **Chimera/Emigrant**), who won her class with a final score of 42,83 points. Extremely interesting was the competition in the two year old fillies' class of series A, which consisted of true stars. It was unexpectedly won by **Waranga** (out of **Wilga/Ekstern**), besting by 0,34 points the reigning Reserve Champion from Wels, the awarded with two "10s" for type **Zigi Zana** (out of **Zagrobla/Monogramm**).

The second **Marwan** son, with offspring at the Bialka show, was **Marajj**. The two year old bay colt **Mirajj** (out of **Mina/Monogramm**), bred and owned by Małgorzata and Józef Pietrzak, placed third in class, with a final total score of 40,33 points.

E is for **Esparto**

We also had the first time chance to see the progeny of the 9 year old **Esparto** – son of the unbeaten **Ekstern**. This is the **Esparto's** first crop foaled in Poland. Earlier, in the 2007/2008 season, he was on lease at **Ajman Stud**, under whose banners he gained many trophies by winning international shows, including those in **Doha**, **Dubai** and **Sharjah**, as well as the **National Show of the United Arab Emirates** in **Abu Dhabi**. Last year at **Bialka Stud** 19 foals by him were born. He crossed very well with mares out of





photo: Krzysztof Duzynski

**Cheronea (QR Marc – Chimera/Emigrant),
Top Five Filly. Handler Piotr Dwojak**

Gazal Al Shaqab, giving charming colts out of **Perfirka** (out of Perforacja/Ernal) and **Perolia** (out of Pereira/Eldon). The latter foaled the bay colt **Peron**, whose carved, dished head and very good body and topline allowed him to secure a second place in class, with a high final score of 41 points. Some time earlier this Bialka-bred yearling won his class at the Tulip Cup B-ranked show in Deurne (Holland). In turn very pleasant fillies were born out of Emigrant daughters: **Pelgrima** (out of Perfazja/Batyskaf) and **Egira** (out of Emkira/Batyskaf). The delicate chestnut **Pelmira** gained 40 points and the grey **Egema**, blessed with a dished profile, a full point more. Both placed fourth in their classes. As we can see, Esparto has mixed very well with the Bialka herd. Another group of fifteen foals by him was born this year. After a long break, the sun has finally come out (both literally and in metaphor) for Bialka Stud, which has scored success at a show it has acted as host to for years.

I is for Inbreeding

The B series of the yearling fillies was won by dark bay **Gataka** (Ekstern – Gwarka/Monogramm), bred and owned by Bełżyce Stud. Beside a wide forehead and large black eyes, the filly exhibited flying movement and gained a total of 42,33 points, including a triple “9,5” for type. After analyzing her pedigree we find a high inbred to Monogramm, which amounts to 12,5%. An interesting and bold breeding concept resulted in the birth of an exceptional foal. Inbreeding is becoming more and more common in the world, especially among

fashionable show horses descending from the Saklavi I sire line. Horses which are eagerly linebred to are, among others, **Padrons Psyche** and **Gazal Al Shaqab**. Whereas Polish breeding has benefitted from the American stallion **Monogramm**, whose influence on today’s national herd is nothing short of spectacular.

Attesting to this are for instance the numbers from this year’s show, during which we saw: sixteen get of **Ekstern**, seven of **Ganges**, and eight of **Esparto** – main sires from the line of **Kuhailan Haifi d.b.**, which **Monogramm** originates from. So it is not surprising that our breeders are readily mating his descendants with each other. An example of crossing a **Monogramm** granddaughter to his son is the filly **Gizelda** (Ekstern – Ginerva/Werbum), bred and owned by Czeple Arabians, who placed fourth in the A series of the yearling fillies’ class, with a good final score of 40,8 points. The inbred in this case is moderate and amounts to 6,25%. A lower inbred factor (3,125%) can be found in a horse resulting from the mating of two grandchildren of a given specimen, in this case **Monogramm**. Examples of such are, among others, the mentioned earlier daughters of **Eryks** (**Gazal Al Shaqab** – **Emmona/Monogramm**): **El Mediara** and **Diara**, whose dams are **Monogramm** granddaughters. Another example of the same amount of inbred used at Bialka is the crossing of a **Monogramm** son (Ekstern) with his great-granddaughters, the result of which are fillies **Calatea** (out of Calineczka/Metropolis NA), owned by Marek Kondrasiuk and **Cella** (out of Celina/Metropolis NA). The latter, flying across the arena with a highly set tail, bewitched the judges, who awarded her with high marks, thanks to which her final score of 41,83 points earned her a third spot in the three year old fillies’ class.

**Simon Bey (Psytadel – Sarahbi Bay JC/Kubinec),
Top Five Colt**





photo: Krzysztof Duzynski

Equator (QR Marc – Eklipyka/Ekstern), Silver Champion Colt
Maran (FS Bengali – Missouri/Wachlarz), Bronze Champion Colt

N is for Number (of entries)

Clearly visible is a decrease in the number of horses shown. The reason for that are the increasing costs of breeding, as well as training of show horses. A stronger and stronger competition and high quality each year resulted in only truly outstanding youngsters being brought to the Bialka show. In 2007 there were 126 horses competing in ten classes out of the 150 yearlings, two and three year olds entered. The large number of horses was associated with the introduction of three year old classes in that year. Moreover at that time the Polish National Junior Stallion Championship was transferred to August and the National Show in Janów Podlaski. And so for the first time fillies and colts competed in Bialka on the same terms of a regular C national show. A year later 149 horses were entered, out of which 133 were evaluated. In 2009 a number of 147 horses were entered and 131 were presented. Last year only 123 horses were entered, out of which spectators saw 110. This year their number fell below the magical hundred and we saw only 94 horses (including 47 privately owned) out of 108 entered.

P is for Private

The year 2000 marks the first time that a private-bred horse qualified for the finals – that horse was **Mango** (bred by K. and M. Bogajewicz). In 2003 the number of private horses

competing in the show exceeded the number of horses from the State Studs and for the first time the championship (including the title of Best in Show) was won a private bred and owned horse **Girlan-Bey**. Since that time the number of successful private bred horses has been growing. This year the “privates” reached for two medals (bronze). The first went to the Gold Medalist from the May Tulip Cup in Holland, **El Piatzolla** (WH Justice – Enya/Ekstern), bred and owned by Podlesie Arabians. The filly exhibited a sweeping trot, awarded by the judges with two “10s”, which enabled her to win the class with a high score of 43 points. This time however she had to settle for the bronze. As history shows, it is often harder to win in one’s own backyard than abroad. The owner of a beautiful, thick mane, **Maran** (FS Bengali – Missouri/Wachlarz), bred and owned by Kielnarowa Stud, has become fond of collecting medals resembling his coat color, because he repeated his feat from last year and gained a bronze, similar to his performance at the Tulip Cup three weeks earlier. A successful debut was made by **Simon Bey** (Psytadel – Sarahbi Bay JC/Kubinec), bred and owned by Wojciech Parczewski. The bay colt began the competition as Lot. 1 and immediately raised the standard with three “9,5” marks for movement, which translated to a final score of 41 points and second place in class. In the end he left Bialka with the title of Junior Spring Show Top Five (4th spot). We had a chance to see a total of seven horses by Psytadel, most of them in the three year old





**El Piatzolla (WH Justice – Enya/Ekstern),
Bronze Champion Filly, with her owners,
Mr.&Mrs. Błaszkiwicz and handler Gerald Kurtz**

colts' class, which with a score of 41,33 points was won by his son **Epifan** (out of Epimeria/Pesal), bred and owned by Piotr Helka.

We also had the pleasure of viewing the first Polish-born daughter of World Champion Stallion Eternity Ibn Navarrone-D. The very feminine and exotic **Echo Aurora** (out of Echo Afrodyta / Piaff), bred and owned by Chrcynno-Palace Stud, placed third with a score of 41,17 points in a strong class of the yearling fillies (series A). And there is clearly a lot more potential to her.

V is for *Va banque*

The entering into the Białka show two of the youngest fillies of this year's Pride of Poland offer was a bold and risky move. Michalów Stud decided to play for the highest stakes and presented the auction's star – the grey **Piacenza** (QR Marc – Primawera/Emigrant), who last year placed near the top at the most prestigious shows, becoming a European Top Five Filly and World Top Ten Filly, among others. But lacking among her numerous titles was at least one gold. Piacenza won her class at Białka in great style with a score of 43,67 points, after which she took home the championship title and Best in Show award. Her class did not include her main rivals, to whom she lost in the championships last year (Zigi Zana,

Primera). In turn she competed with her auction mate, the typey, long swan-necked **Camilia** (Piaff – Calineczka/Metropolis NA), who in accordance with her Lot number gave 100% and ended the event with a high score of 42,83 points, including one "10" for movement.

W is for *Winners*

This year's show was extremely successful for Michalów Stud. Horses bred by director Jerzy Białobok gained three out of four main championship titles, while Piacenza was additionally chosen as Best in Show. This result should not be surprising to anyone, as over the last ten years this stud has secured 19 out of 40 of the most significant titles. The second place in the winners' classification belonged to Janów Podlaski Stud with 16 titles to its credit and the remaining 5 have been won by private breeders. In 2003 it was the Niewierz-bred **Girlan-Bey** (Pesal – Gracja-Bis/Monogramm). Four years later, in 2007, the Reserve Championship was awarded to Falborek Arabians thanks to the exotic filly **Wasa** (WH Justice – Waresa/Empres). In the following year another Reserve Championship went to the bay **Boreas** (Metropolis NA – Bombina/Bomarc), bred by the late Wojciech Kowalik. Definitely the most fortunate year for private breeders was the 2009 season, in which **Psyche Kreuzza** (Ekstern – Pallas-Atena/Ecaho) from Chrcynno-Palace Stud claimed the title of Junior Champion and Best in Show, while the delicate colt **Eternal** (FS Bengali – Ewitacja/Ganges), bred by Jan Glowacki, became Reserve Champion. This year private breeding can be proud of adding two bronze medals to this collection. 🐾

**Echo Aurora
(Eternity Ibn Navarrone-D – Echo Afrodyta/Piaff),
with her breeder Alicja Poszepczyńska**



photo: Krzysztof Dużyński



Back to Poland!

Girolan-Bey

Pesal - Gracja-Bis/Monogramm

**POLISH
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Gataka (Ekstern - Gwarka/Monogramm), Gold Champion Filly & Best in Show

Arabia – Poland

Text by: Monika Luft

Photos by: Sylwia Ilenda (unless stated)

What seemed impossible just ten years ago – namely the organizing of a show at a pretty good European standard in Poland without the participation of State Stud horses – has become a fact at the Royal Baths Park in Warsaw.

If anyone questioned whether an Arabian horse show in Warsaw's city center is needed, then today after the

"Arabia – Polska" ["Arabia – Poland"] event the answer is known. The 1st Arabian Horse Festival in Warsaw (June 18-19th), under the patronage of the Ambassador of Saudi Arabia, H.E. Waleed Taher Rawan, turned out to be successful in many aspects. First of all, the organizers were able to gather many horses, because as much as 65 (out of 73 of those entered), despite the fact that the State Studs did not participate in this venue. Secondly, the quality of the exhibited horses was surprisingly high and among the competitors were several "stars". And thirdly, during the championships on Sunday the audience and





Daisy FF (Da Vinci FM – AP Shezz Sassy/Bey Shah),
Gold Champion Mare

media turned up in great numbers. The Royal Baths Park, where the event was held, is an ideal place for the promotion of Arabian horses. The beautiful surroundings, easy access and the proximity of other attractions which Warsaw's city center has plenty of, are all additionally enticing features.

Even though the show took place for the first time, its organization was faultless. The classes were conducted efficiently, according to the program, without greater delays and in an amicable atmosphere created by the organizers: the association of Hipika Polska and Polish Prestige. Acting as announcer was the initiator of the event, Marek Grzybowski. Whereas the director of the show, Pawel Olbrych, did his best to make the guests feel at home. Even the weather was favorable.

Almost all of the most active Polish private breeders turned up with their graduates at the Royal Baths. The most numerous representation was put forth by Chrcynno-Palace Stud – a total of ten horses, including two stallions in the costume classes. Second in terms of quantity was Falborek Arabians with six horses. But the most equines arrived with Gerard Kurtz, who has gathered the best private bred horses in his new training center situated in Konik Stary. He prepared as much as 13 horses for this show. This "aggressive" entrance of the experienced Austrian trainer and handler onto the Polish scene clearly shook the hitherto "balance of forces". It appears that there was still room on the domestic market for one more training stable and the Polish breeders were waiting for someone to cause a stir in the current arrangement. Horse owners readily handed their graduates over to the new player and the Royal Baths, for the lack of State Stud of

foreign horses, became an arena for a match between Polish trainers versus their new rival.

Both the halter and costume classes were evaluated by: Cedes Bakker (Holland), Richard Pihlström (France), Irina Stigler (Russia) and Anna Stojanowska (Poland). The first day of the show – Saturday – brought significant success for the much observed by the competition Gerard Kurtz and his charges, although it surprisingly began with a victory of the colt **Bir Ali Es** (Porto – Bircza/Aslan), bred and owned by Daniel Kwiatkowski and Bartłomiej Jankowski. The bay yearling won with a score of 41,17, besting the favorite and recent Junior

Spring Show Top Five from Bialka **Simon Bey** (Psytadel – Sarahbi Bay JC/Kubinec), bred and owned by Wojciech Parczewski (40,17) and seven other rivals. However the class of 2-3 year old colts belonged to Kurtz and the shown by him **Maran** (FS Bengali – Missouri/Wachlarz), bred and owned by Kielnarowa Stud. The triple Bronze Medalist (from Bialka and the Tulip Cup) outdistanced six rivals, winning before **Emarc** (QR Marc – Eksterna/Ekstern) from Falborek Arabians.

The yearling fillies' class was of an extremely high quality. It was here that the spectators saw the first "10" of the show, which was awarded for type to **Gataka** (Ekstern – Gwarka/Monogramm), bred and owned by Beżyce Stud, a class winner from Bialka. Her final score of 42,33 points allowed her to also win the class at the Royal Baths. Presented by Piotr Żuber, the filly left behind a dozen competitors behind her, including **Echo Aurora** (Eternity Ibn Navarrone-D – Echo Afrodyta/Piaff), bred and owned



Egzyna (Eldon – Elganda/Monogramm),
Silver Champion Mare



by Chrcynno-Palace Stud (2nd place, 41,5 points). Among the 2 year old fillies as many as three achieved an identical score of 40,83 points. Their final classification was determined by marks for type and movement. Victorious was **Lady Serenada** (Ekstern – Lady Aphrodite DD/Padrons Psyche), bred and owned by Malgorzata and Józef Pietrzak, trained at Gerald Kurtz's facility, for whom it was the second class win that day. Second placed **Fortycja** (Pegasus – Florencja/Oset) from Belżyce, who had to yield to the grey-coated winner. The class amounted to ten horses in all. Half less were entered into the 3 year old fillies' class. Victorious, again in the hands of Kurtz, was the favorite, the experienced and frequent Polish and foreign show attendee, multiple medalist **El Piatzolla** (WH Justice – Enya/Ekstern), bred and owned by Podlesie Arabians. She was recognized with a total score of 42,5, including two "10s" for type. Behind her placed **Calatea** (Ekstern – Calineczka/Metropolis NA), bred by Bialka and owned by Marek Kondrasiuk, who gave the impression of being slightly lame. Despite that, after a consultation with vet Piotr Szczepański, she was evaluated and pretty high at that (40,5). However she did not compete in the finals the next day.

In the senior stallions' category (consisting of one combined class) was one decisive favorite and it was him that won this competition: the exhibited by Gerald Kurtz, highly decorated **Elmaran** (Al Maraam – Ekstera/Ekstern), bred and owned by Wojciech Parczewski (with a final score of 41,33). Second, from the same training stable, was the US-bred offspring of Gazal Al Shaqab, imported to Poland by Czesław Witko – **Ali Gazal LA** (out of Yermeh Sangayla/Gayladdin), who also has starts in racing and endurance to his credit. His total score amounted to 40,33. Third place (equivalent to a bronze medal) was secured by the popular in Poland chief sire **Etnodrons Psyche** (Padrons Psyche – Etnografia/Aloes), bred by Stanisław Redestowicz and owned by Paweł Redestowicz.

The senior mares were divided into two groups: mares aged 4-6 years and 7 year olds & up. The first class showcased six competitors, among which victorious was the American-bred and Belżyce-trained **Daisy FF** (Da Vinci FM – AP Shezz Sassy/Bey Shah), owned by Tomasz Tarczyński, with a score of 42,33, before **Wasa** (WH Justice – Waresa/Empres) from Falborek (41,67). The situation was especially interesting in the oldest mares' class, which featured the offered at the nearest Pride of Poland Sale and boasting more than one show success Belżyce-owned **Kashira** (Magnum Psyche – Kahila IV/Ibn Bint Inas), bred by Stanisław Redestowicz, as well as the Autumn Show Champion **Valeriana** (Werter – Vachta/Aspekt), bred and owned by Agricola Farm and the Michalów-bred **Egzyna** (Eldon – Elganda/Monogramm), owned by Janusz Ryżkowski. Although Valeriana received a "10" for type and a high final score of 41,83, she still had to give

precedence to the 10 year old charge of Gerald Kurtz, **Egzyna**, who was recognized with as much as 42,33 points.

Prior to the Sunday championships all signs showed that the training stable of Gerald Kurtz could "grab a hold" of four gold medals, considering that the senior stallion championship was already resolved during the class competition, as there was just one. The position of El Piatzolla as candidate for the title seemed unthreatened, as did Maran's, while the victory of Egzyna also seemed very probable.

But shows can be unpredictable and Sunday brought surprising results, though only in the mares' classes. The colts' championship, as expected, was won by **Maran** before **Emarc** and **Bir Ali Es**. The order of stallions in the championship was already determined, with **Elmaran** as the winner, after which came time for the choosing of the junior champion mare. The bronze medal went to **Echo Aurora**, while **El Piatzolla** went home with the silver... The sure favorite lost to the delicate, proudly carrying her beautiful head **Gataka!** Whereas triumphing among the senior mares was **Daisy FF** before **Egzyna** and **Wasa**.

And so the „trainer's match" for gold medals ended with a result of 2:2. Gerald Kurtz's stable additionally won 3 silvers (for Ali Gazal, El Piatzolla and Egzyna), but the last word belonged to Belżyce Stud, as it was **Gataka** who was awarded with the Best in Show trophy. Once again life showed that there are no "sure bets" and that until the competition is over, nothing is ever certain.

From here on things will only get more interesting. Ten years ago the organizing of a show with European standards without the participation of State Stud horses would've been impossible. Now I would be greatly surprised if such an absence would take place next year. 🐾



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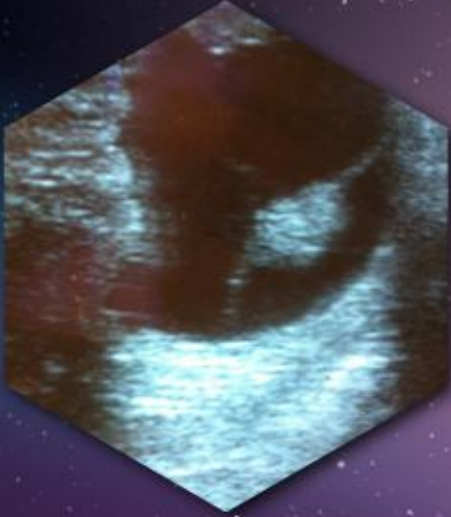
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Behind the Gates of Al Shaqab



text by: Anna Stojanowska | photos by: Irina Filsinger

I remember my first trip to Qatar; some dozen years ago. The show organized within the hospitable walls of the Royal Equestrian Club and later a visit to several studs: Al Rayyan, Al Shaqab... At time it were the horses from Al Rayyan who were most often decorated at shows. The get of the stallion Safir was particularly successful. Up to a certain moment. The situation changed greatly when two epochal stallions entered the scene: **Al Adeed Al Shaqab** and **Gazal Al Shaqab**. Both foaled in 1995, they made their "social debut" almost simultaneously. The grey Al Adeed Al Shaqab, by Ansata Halim Shah out of Sundar Alisayyah by Ruminaja Ali is one of the most beautiful horses of the last decades. But it was the petite in size, dry, of almost unreal beauty, dark bay Gazal who changed the stud's image and placed it on completely new breeding tracks. Gazal Al Shaqab marked the beginning of a new era. Or rather this era began with the import of his dam **Kajora** from the US, a granddaughter of the Polish **Edessa**.

The stud was established in 1992 by Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al Thani, carrying the title of Emir. Some dozen years ago, looking at the broodmares accumulated in the stud, it was hard

to shake the impression of a certain randomness or a lack of vision of the future. The things you could find there! Egyptian, Russian, American and Polish bloodlines. Standing out in this genetic patchwork was **Kajora**. A real, correct mare, she was a "solid ground" among the tangle of pedigrees and champion-breeding concepts. Crossed with **Anaza El Farid** she produced the mentioned **Gazal**. After spectacular wins in the most significant world shows of first Al Adeed and then Gazal, the stud's position greatly changed. It became a serious breeding partner. Without a doubt the lease of Gazal to Poland and the successes of his get had a lot to do with the change of the stud's image. Gazal's bullet to fame was also his son, the phenomenal **Marwan Al Shaqab**. Al Shaqab Stud was talked about, whispered about and much discussed. The stud became the flagship of pureblood breeding in Qatar. After all, it produced three world champions within a short time period. And then for several years all went silent... There was a change of the stud's manager, the breeding plans were "hushed up" or reduced. Of course the name of the stud still surfaced in conversations, when talking about subsequent successes of Marwan or the lease of Gazal to the US, but since the beginning of the new millennium the activity of Al Shaqab was as if hibernated. It was not until several years ago that news on new, gigantic investments undertaken in the stud began to appear. In 2004 the board and



[design: arabhorsepromotion.com]

Photo: Irina Filsinger - www.filsinger-photography.de & www.arabiamashlights.com



Pilar. Open Day at Al Shaqab Stud

status of the place changed. Al Shaqab became a member of the Qatar Foundation. A new breeding program was set in motion.

*The greatest star of last year's Pride of Poland Sale was without a doubt the grey Janów Podlaski bred **Pilar**, by Fawor out of Pipi by Banat. Meritorious, highly decorated, well respected. A true celebrity and a genuine broodmatron, who has nothing left to prove. Wonderfully Polish in expression, leaving no doubt about her origins. Pilar, despite her 14 years of age, achieved the sale's highest price. For the amount of 240,000 Euro she was purchased by the new managers of Al Shaqab Stud. In August Pilar ended her mission in Poland and a new chapter in her life had begun.*

In 2011 the Royal Equestrian Club celebrated the 20th edition of the international championships, held in the first months of the year. The show was to be special. And special it was, in part thanks to the participation of the world's best show horses.

After the end of the championship guests and participants were invited for an open day to Al Shaqab Stud. But those who were on the lookout for old, well-known corners and walls were greatly disappointed. Today's Al Shaqab is nothing like the Al Shaqab of the 90s.

A rather characteristic trait of the wealthy Arab countries, especially those where oil flows in an interrupted, rapid stream, are investments undertaken on a grand scale, even to a point of grandiosity. Large metropolises resemble a large construction site, housing estates grow like cities, new skyscrapers, mosques and hotels are built and all this happens on a macro scale. Moderation is an unknown term in these parts. Al Shaqab also did not steer clear of this generally adopted trend. The scale of investments done in the facility is unimaginable. The old part of the stud appears as a small backyard attached to a modern playground. The newly built infrastructure is created for horses and people. From the training grounds to race tracks, a clinic furnished in the newest hi-tech equipment, several in-door training arenas and finally a four-hectare, roofed riding arena and stable with large stalls and automated feeding and watering systems. Because in the countries of the Middle East water is extremely valuable. When in the summer the temperature rises to 60 degrees Celsius and the water flowing to the troughs heats up in the pipes instantly, even a several hour long break in hydrating may result in tragic consequences at these temperatures. Annual deaths of horses during the summer heat waves reach 20%. That's why at Al Shaqab a modern, hi-tech system monitoring the intake of water was installed. Each boarder has a trough with its own counter informing the staff





However the evening's true attraction was the appearance of Pilar. Led out at the end of a short breeding parade, announced as the stud's most valuable purchase, her entrance was worthy of any queen. And it did not matter that a long journey from Europe, a recent flight from Italy and a change of climate took a toll on her condition. The small, grassy paddock onto which she was let loose did not allow her to present her full moving abilities, but one still had the impression that it's not a

how much water was drunk. There's no fooling around. Held among these overwhelming buildings and facilities, gravel paths, fountains and waterworks was a breeding parade and the first auction of Al Shaqab horses.

flea-bitten mare, but a ball of dynamite that's moving over the ground. What unimaginable charisma! That was something that neither the hardships of the journey, the heat, nor the change of place could take away from Pilar. The gathered around people were of no importance to her, all that mattered was the sheer pleasure of movement on soft grass. When Janów Podlaski's director Marek Trela visited her a moment later in her stall and called Pilar by her name, she slowly turned her wonderful head, as though stunned. She seemed like a priceless firebird, placed in a golden cage by delighted people. The situation felt uneasy. The director of Al Shaqab immediately assured: "She is an absolute queen here. And nothing will change that. You will see, she will have a good life."

An elegantly published catalog invited to purchase each and every one of the 25 offered horses. From youngsters to breeding mares, performance horses, stallions, geldings – everyone could find something for themselves. High prices were achieved, the bidding was swift. The highest sold horse was a daughter of the Michałów bred Dębowiec, the 9 year old bay **Jassyra de Wiec**, out of Jysselle El Jamaal. Sold with a filly by Marwan Al Shaqab and in foal to Gazal, she achieved a price of 300,000 riyals (about 59 thousand Euro). In turn the great-granddaughter of Michałów's Emfaza, daughter of Efezja and Gazal, the very typey **Enshoda Al Shaqab** found a new owner for the price of 280,000 riyals (about 55.5 thousand Euro). The just 2 year old **Samar Al Shaqab** by Sinan Al Rayyan out of Jafra Al Shaqab was sold for 150,000 riyals (about 29.7 thousand Euro). Only a few horses did not find buyers. The first auction turned out to be not just a social event, but also quite a financial success, bringing in a total of 1,657,000 Qatari riyals – about 328 thousand Euro.

Perhaps Pilar, like once Kajora, will lead Al Shaqab in a new direction. 🐾



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POLSKA AKF

UNDER A LEGENDARY BANNER

Text by: Monika Luft | Photos by: Krzysztof Dużyński

Warsaw, the Służewiec racetrack, May 28th, 2011, a 2nd group race for three year olds. Among horses making their debut showing at the track is **Kasir Al Khalediah** by the desert bred stallion **Tiwaq** and out of the mare **Katch Me** by **Dormane**. In turn **Katch Me** is a daughter of **FMR Kartagina** by **Dunajec**, a mare bearing a pure Polish pedigree. **Kasir** had already made headlines as soon as he was born. He is the first horse to be foaled at **POLSKA AKF [AL KHALEDIAH FARM – POLAND]**, several hours after a group of 16 horses from Saudi Arabia (13 mares, 2 stallions and a foal born during an unscheduled stop in Brussels) arrived at their new home in Poland, where in freshly built, impressively elegant stables, awaiting them was the stallion **Galba**. It was January 30th, 2008.

It was this group of horses that gave a beginning to the Polish division of the Saudi stud **Al Khalediah Stables**. The stud was established in **Nowe Wroniska** near **Płońsk**, amidst typical Mazovian landscapes on an area of 40 hectares, surrounded by beautiful meadows and orchards, through which flows the **Naruszewka** stream. Their arrival had stirred great excitement at the time also due to the fact that **Al Khalediah Stables** is a superpower in Arabian horse breeding, the owner of such stars as World Champion **Baanderos**, World Bronze Medalist **Marquis CAHR** and World Champion **Layan Al Khalediah**. It is also one of the most decorated studs in the history of the World Championships as the winner of eight titles and the organizer of the **Al Khalediah Festival**. Today **Polska AKF** consists of 51 horses, including this year's foals, with three more being expected. This year is the first in which horses foaled at **Polska AKF** have stepped out of the friendly stables to show themselves to the world. Nine of them, being the entire crop of 2008, together with the **Michalów**-bred son of **Galba** and **Georgia** by **Monogramm**, the stallion **Gordion**, who found his way to **Polska AKF** as part of financial settlements for the lease of the stallion **Galba**, are in training at the **Służewiec** track at the **TRAF Racing Stable**, managed by trainer **Małgorzata Łojek**. This group also includes the unplanned passenger of the "founding" flight from three years back, the colt **Shaham Al**

Khalediah by **Aja Sangali** out of the **Galba** daughter **Shams Al Khalediah**.

Meanwhile in just a moment **Kasir** will compete against eight rivals. Some of the competitors appear restless, but not him. Without a doubt the chestnut stallion stands out with his athletic conformation. "Kasir is a horse with a deep, capacious chest and long, slightly flat rib cage, he will nicely cut through the air", **Władysław Guziuk**, the director of **Polska AKF**, comments on the phenotype of his graduate, humorously quoting the saying of the late **Tadeusz Milanowski**, a many year director of the Selection Department at the **Służewiec Racetrack**. Will **Kasir** prove to be a talented athlete, similar to his half-siblings by **Tiwaq**, which were foaled at **Al Khalediah Stables** in the desert?

The answer is soon revealed. **Kasir**, under jockey **Miroslaw Pilich**, exhibits great acceleration on the final straight and wins easily with an advantage of three lengths. "It brings great pleasure and satisfaction, when efforts put into the rearing and conditioning of a young horse, from the first days of his life up to his departure to the track, together with competent racing training, are crowned with such an enjoyable success", **Władysław Guziuk** beams with satisfaction. "But of course this is just the beginning of his career and there are many unknowns ahead of us." Trainer **Małgorzata Łojek** adds: "This is not yet **Kasir's** top form, but he is already able to compete with good horses. Stamina in a race is important, but victory is determined by the ability to accelerate on the final meters and **Kasir** is capable of doing so. Moreover he is a horse bearing an evident Arabian type, unlike many foreign Arabians with French or Russian blood, which show little resemblance to the Arabian breed. Additionally he has a gentle nature, everyone in the stable loves him." Director **Guziuk** recalls orders that young horses from **Polska AKF** were to be sent to training in France. Fortunately they remained in their home country. "We were able to defend their stay here", he smiles.

Among the group of mares which arrived to **Wroniska** from Arabia was also the **Janów**-bred **Saba** 1990 (**Etat – Saszetka/Engano**), who at **Polska AKF** first foaled the colt





Sariah Al Khalediah by *Padrons Image* – also at the track this season – and a year later the promising filly *Sahar Al Khalediah* by *ZT Maghossny*. The oldest foal of 2011, born on March 31st, is a very charming filly by *Galba* out of an extraordinarily typey mare *Nadrat Al Khalediah* by *Aja Sangali*. “We wanted to give *Galba* the chance to prove himself with this mare”, says director *Guziuk*.

There are three chief sires stationed at *Polska AKF*: the afore mentioned *Galba* (*Plakat – Gza-Gza/Negatraz*), bred by *Gerd Janssen* of Germany, *Forteynas Magic* by *Magnum Psyche* out of *Bint Forteyna* by *Bey Shah* (bred by *Mike Nichols* of the US) and *ZT Maghossny* by *AB Magnum* out of *ZT Horubi* by *Hossny* (bred by *Count Federico Zichy-Thyssen* of Argentina). The king of the herd is of course *Galba*, *World Champion* from the *Salon du Cheval* in Paris in 1999. He controls everything that happens in the stable, behaves imperiously and impatiently. He doesn't like not being paid attention to, but is also not pleased when he is being interrupted. As we previously

mentioned, he was the first horse to enter the still virgin stable on the morning of January 6th, 2008, after a strenuous journey from Belgium in hard winter conditions. But it is not only these three stallions which have foals by them at *Polska AKF*. “We also purchased the semen of *Poganin*, *Ganges* and *Ontario HF*”, director *Guziuk* informs. In the future *Polska AKF* is also counting on semen from stallions from its mother-stud in Saudi Arabia. Whereas the stallions stationed here are widely available to Polish breeders, though this season many owners have limited the number of bred mares due to a harder and harder market.

As the newcomers arrived from a different climate, the stables have been specially prepared – the stalls have been equipped with electric radiators, set in the first period at about 12 degrees Celsius and gradually lowered over time. Today the horses do not require such over-protective conditions, though because of the drinking troughs the temperature inside the stable must remain above zero. The

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Kasir Al Khalediah before the race



Kasir Al Khalediah debuts on the Służewiec racetrack

system turns itself on when the temperature falls below 5 degrees. "So far we had no health problems with the horses", emphasizes director Guziuk. "Though with time this environment will not be as safe in terms of health as it is now. For example all of our three year olds at the track, despite regular vaccinations at the stud, have gone through mild infections."

Located on the grounds of the stable complex is a spacious indoor arena, which, as director Guziuk explains, is extremely useful in everyday work with the horses: „A lack of weather or the foals' first walks... here we can provide the horses with necessary movement", he says. In order to see the horses we take seats in a comfortable gallery situated on a higher level right above the arena. A cozy interior, leather chairs, air conditioning or heating – all this allows for the admiring of the horses in truly luxurious conditions. Inquisitive mares and foals walk up to take a look at the spectators. And so both parties observe each other... We feel honored, as this is where the owner of the stud sits, Prince Khaled Bin Sultan Bin Abdul Aziz Al Saud, together with accompanying persons, when he arrives for a breeding inspection. This does not happen often, the last in September. Sometimes there is a visit from Mr. Mutlaq Bin Mushriff, the main breeder of Al Khalediah Stables. "The prince is very busy", explains director Guziuk. "But when he is here, he can't conceal his excitement – he is very pleased with both the horses and the stable."

No wonder. Horses at Polska AKF impress with a splendid condition – clearly they enjoy the ecological oats from Kielnarowa Stud and hay harvested from the meadows along the Vistula River, the delivery of which is taken care of by director Guziuk. A shiny coat, a vivid, bright eye and plenty of energy – the horses exhibit an abundance of these traits. But even the best pasture condition is not enough on its own – the further lot of the three year olds will be determined by their racing results. Kasir had a wonderful debut, Gordion – who already raced last season, ending with two wins and many money-earning finishes – is also doing great. "He has earned his keep", smiles the stud's director, who this year also expects the stallion to do well. He has personally taken care of the horse's condition during the winter, riding him regularly in the indoor arena. The stallion worked for 50 minutes each day. Gordion's first race of this season showed that this work paid off – already on May 1st he won his first race in great style. "Together with the saddle I currently weigh 90 kg, so the horse has had a decent strength training", jokes director Guziuk and explains: "I'm a believer of the breeding program for Arabian horses developed by the State Studs, where racing trials are one of the most important selection factors. A racing trial gives us information on the horse's health, his heart, lungs and muscle efficiency, on the development of the skeletal and muscle system, bone tissue, tendons, as well as his psyche." As director Guziuk admits, placing a horse in racing training today is associated with great expenses. "When we sent horses to the track back in the day" – he says, referring to the State Studs in Poland

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Władysław Guziuk,
the director of Polska AKF



Polska AKF, Nowe Wrońska near Płońsk

(he himself was a director of one of them, namely Kurozwęki Stud, for 22 years) – “the arrangement was incredibly beneficial. In a way the track leased the horses, not paying us anything for the lease, but then we also didn't pay for anything. We only had a right to 2,25% of the prize money won, which we divided between our staff as a bonus. Horses which did not pass a racing trial, especially stallions, were not used in the breeding program.” Horses exported to the US surprised the Americans with their excellent athletic predispositions. “Horses from Poland had usually completed two, sometimes more racing seasons”, stresses director Guziuk. “They excelled not only at halter shows, but also in riding competitions, including the very spectacular and difficult for the horse Park Horse class.”

Breeding and training work require the creation of a proper foundation and systematic, patient and competent work. This will still take a while in the case of Polska AKF, but already director Guziuk announces that in the near future he will begin presenting his horses at shows – not only the youngsters, but also older horses. But a rush is not advisable and the “slow and steady” concept is consistent with the philosophy of the Middle Eastern owners of the studs. In the meantime the guests are impressed by the attention to detail both in the stables and on the outside. There are four people working in the stables, while the greenery is taken care of by a gardener and his three co-workers. A part of the oats and hay comes from their own crops. The farm also sells fruit from their orchards. They

were to partially find their way onto the princes' tables, but their transport proved too complicated and definitely unfavorable to the fruit's quality.

Does the fact that at Polska AKF everything runs like clockwork result from the many year experience of Władysław Guziuk in breeding and stud managing? He himself is not convinced. “I don't think that an extensive experience in horse breeding determines success”, he says and points out that sometimes a hobby type of approach gives a greater chance for spectacular achievements. “For example, a professional breeder will never put together a pair of parents with similar flaws or conformation defects. He sees and knows those elements, as he has been working with the herd for many generations. An amateur breeder, for whom breeding is most often an escape from everyday work, will be driven by modern trends or intuition, which can sometimes prove right. Whereas the task of the professional breeder is to refine the breed and shape the herd with which he works. Strict breeding criteria are applied in such work – for example the late director Andrzej Krzyształowicz [from the Janów Podlaski State Stud] would never use a stallion which did not have a successful racing career from the track. In the State Studs we paid great attention to the preservation and strengthening of sire and dam lines, because the richness of a population lies in its diversity, not in making it uniform.”

POLSKA
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Nowe Wrońska

Although the director of Polska AKF does not attach significance to experience, it is hard to omit the fact that he has been dealing with Arabian horse breeding for over 40 years. When asked about the breeding goal of Polska AKF, he answers: "My experience lingers on – I have been working in this field since 1970. For decades we have been realizing a breeding program mutually worked out by breeders from the State Studs and inspectors of the Department of Horse Breeding of the Breeding of Reproductive Animals Federation, based on experiences of breeders from the interwar and earlier periods. Polish breeders, after World War II, had a small population of surviving Arabian horses at their disposal. Abiding by the rules of this program they achieved great successes on a world scale. For that reason I regard this program as a very good one and I try to realize it here, with this herd. When after the change of the political system in Poland private Arabian horse studs received a green light, for me it was a guarantee that this breed will be preserved in our country and that it will flourish. Because a State Stud, if it can't care for itself financially, will be liquidated – today there are no subsidies for this sort of commercial activity from the state. Whereas a private breeder, if he can afford so, can run his business at a loss during a slump in the economy – it is only a matter of good will. Small breeding operations, typical for private studs, have an easier time coping with crises."

The idea to locate a division of the Al Khalediah Stables in Poland first came up at the beginning of the new millennium, just 10 years ago. This was probably inspired by the position of Polish breeding in the world. "The successes of Polish Arabians have a great propaganda impact", explains director Guziuk. "Arabian horse enthusiasts who visit Poland find it to be a country of hospitable, skillful and kind people to foreigners. Poland is regarded as a good place to make investments and for businessmen from hot climate zones it is very attractive due to green springs, summers and autumns and white, snowy winters."

„The presence of horses from a country considered to be the cradle of the Arabian breed should be treated as an acknowledgement of the achievements of Polish breeders”, adds the director of Polska AKF. “The Polish division of Al Khalediah Stables gives hope for a mutually beneficial cooperation.”

The location of the stud was chosen from among several offers placed in paper publications. The peculiarity of this choice was discovered during the realization of the investment. It turned out that the 20 ha area, purchased in the first stage, was part of an about 400 ha pre-war estate of Antoni Jaworowski, the father of the merited

director of Michalów State Stud, Ignacy Jaworowski. It was here, in Wrońska, that Ignacy Jaworowski was born in 1924 and lived with his parents until the end of World War II. He came to Michalów in 1953 with a group of Arabian horses and built the stud for 44 years, until 1997. “We decided to continue the initiative of the late Ignacy Jaworowski's family and fund a commemorative plaque”, says the director of Polska AKF. The unveiling ceremony took place on July 3rd, 2009, in a circle of the closest family and friends of director Jaworowski.

„I was very fortunate to be able to cooperate for several decades with the late Ignacy Jaworowski”, says Władysław Guziuk. “We also spent a lot of time at social gatherings, which usually oscillated around horse issues. For me they were an opportunity to mix and meddle with true authorities in a respectable, pleasant and educational kind of way. I have always admired the life optimism of Ignacy, his great passion for horse breeding, animal breeding and a general fondness for farm management. And now my professional and equine life has developed in such a way, unintentionally, that I found myself with Arabian horses from the Middle East in Wrońska, a place where the great breeder Ignacy Jaworowski was born. To me this series of events is an omen heralding fortune for this here breeding.” 🐾

The commemorative plaque to honour the late director Ignacy Jaworowski from Michalów State Stud



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Camels' milk for the stallion, armored vests for the Bedouins

A sensational discovery: Unknown letters of Bogdan ZiętarSKI and Carl Raswan from their expedition to Arabia!

Text by: Monika Luft

Photos by: Krzysztof Dużyński

Archive photos: National Digital Archives (NAC) and private collection of Mrs. Agnieszka Mikulska

Letters: Private collection of Mr. Marek Tomaszewski

Polskiearaby.com have unearthed documents which cast a new light on the famous horse-buying expedition for the stud of Prince Roman Sanguszko in Gumniska near Tarnów in Poland. Several letters, discovered 80 years after being written, bring surprising details on one of the most extraordinary expeditions of the 20th century.

The course of the nearly six-month-long expedition (from November 20th, 1930 to May 12th, 1931) is well known to Polish enthusiasts of the Arabian horse thanks to ZiętarSKI's memoirs dated August 24th, 1931 ^[1]. This account of events, although written down while all was still fresh in the author's memory, significantly differs from what the 80-year-old letters ^[2] reveal, sent by the travelers to Prince Sanguszko. The "book" version has as much in common with its epistolary counterpart, as a Hollywood movie with true events on which the script was based. Therefore the characters are more handsome and more noble, defeats less painful and adventures more colorful, with an obligatory happy end. While in reality that half year period was a true ordeal! Only someone with an exceptionally strong personality and great mental hardiness could not only endure such a thing, but return home victorious.

At the moment of undertaking the expedition, the 46-year-old BOGDAN ZIĘTARSKI (1884–1958), an acclaimed expert on horse breeding and racing training, had been managing a racing stable and horse stud of the Sanguszko family in Gumniska near Tarnów for three years. Accompanying him on this journey was the 9 year younger, but already internationally recognized German expert on Arabian horses, CARL RASWAN ^[3] (1893–1966), who at that time was

already living in the US. The purpose of this escapade was to restore breeding its splendor, greatly deteriorated due to the cataclysms of World War I and the Bolshevik Revolution. The journey was funded (although with a certain reluctance, as we find out) by Prince Roman Władysław Sanguszko (1901–1984), at that time 29 years old, in whom ambitions to continue the family tradition of Arabian horse breeding had been awakened – to a large extent under the influence of ZiętarSKI. It should be remembered that the Sanguszko's stud in Sławuta, established about 1506 in Volhynia, was "chronologically the second and undoubtedly the first in terms of quality stud in the Republic of Poland" ^[4]. However on the November 1st, 1917 it was completely destroyed. The 85-year-old Prince Roman Damian Sanguszko, an uncle of Roman from Gumniska, was killed by the Bolsheviks. All that remained after the war in Gumniska, which took their roots from Sławuta and kept their own stud book from 1836, were 8 broodmares and 3 stallions. Beginning from 1927 ZiętarSKI carried out many imports from France, Yugoslavia and Hungary, but the expedition to Arabia was to be the crowning event of all the previous efforts. It should be noted that this was not the first time that the Sanguszko family imported desert horses: during 1804–1917 73 stallions and 9 mares were imported to Sławuta from the East. So although ZiętarSKI's expedition was but another, it was also the last of the "romantic" and adventurous journeys East to purchase horses, undertaken by Europeans in the 19th and 20th century. Soon both worlds of the Sanguszkos, as well as of the nomadic Bedouin tribes breeding pure blood horses would cease to exist.

The expedition led through Constantinople-Alexandria-Cairo-Beirut-Damascus-Baghdad-Bahrain-Nejd. The return route was planned via Baghdad-Damascus-Beirut-Istanbul and from there by sea to Constanta. The men scheduled a meet on November 16th, 1930 in Budapest. They set off from Hungary to Constantinople on the 20th of November, after visiting together the stud in Babolna. At one time in his



Bogdan Ziętarski (with a walking-stick) near Cairo, 9.12.1930.



Photo from the collection of Mrs. Agnieszka Wilkulska

report Ziętarski gives an exact number of horses inspected during the journey (for example about 1,250 in Egypt, 43 in Bahrain) and at other times writes about “several”, “dozens” or “hundreds”. Rough estimates show that the total number must’ve neared about two thousand. The travelers journeyed over 12,000 km, during which they struggled with malaria, hunger, car failure, surprises courtesy of the weather and countless other adversities. “I bid farewell to the East from aboard [a ship]”, wrote Ziętarski, ending his memoirs and referring to the “Abazia” ship of the Lloyd Triestino company, setting sail on April 30th, 1931 from Istanbul to Constanta. “With a strong resolution never to return to these parts again.” Ziętarski arrived in Gumniska on May 12th and already the next day set off with two stallions to the race track in Lvov!

The time spent in the East left its toll on Ziętarski, but the expedition ended in overall success. Among other horses which Ziętarski was bringing to Gumniska was a stallion which turned out to be epoch-making – **Kuhailan Haifi** d.b. 1923, found among the Ruala Bedouins. He started a sireline whose each subsequent generation was better than the previous one. Kuhailan Haifi is considered the best desert bred Arabian ever imported to Poland! His son Ofir (in turn regarded as Kuhailan Haifi’s best get) gave the so-called “great four”: **Wielki Szlem**, **Witraż**, **Witeż II** and **Wyrwidąb**. Whereas Wielki Szlem gave **Czort**, the sire of **El Paso**. Witraż became famous as the sire of **Celebes** and **Bask**. The second import, **Kuhailan Afas** d.b. 1930, made a name for himself as the forefather of **Comet** 1953.

On how Kuhailan Haifi was exchanged for armored vests

And it is exactly the circumstance in which Kuhailan Haifi was purchased that is described differently in „Under the tents of the Bedouins” than in the letter sent to Prince Sanguszko in March from Damascus. In his memoirs Ziętarski describes the reception thrown in honor of both him and Raswan by the hospitable Ruala Bedouins in the following way: “The sheikh scoops out the brain from the skull of a lamb with his fingers, mashes it with rice and serves it directly to my mouth for me to eat.” When the conversation finally touches the topic of stallions: “The sheikh humbly states that he has never heard to have good horses. That indeed there is a stallion, but small and meager and that he will show him to us with shame, but he is sure that the horse cannot appeal to such “great lords” (huraga) from Europe who know the entire world.” When this “meager” stallion was finally brought before them, Ziętarski and Raswan realize that they have found exactly what they wanted: “I felt weak in the knees, it was a horse that I was looking for. (...) For the first time in my life when buying horses I felt close to fainting (...) The stallion was purchased late in the night and his delivery discussed. We slept through the night and at dawn, after paying the price, left.”

Meanwhile in his letter to the prince dated March 23rd we read not about „paying the price” and a calm departure at dawn, but about a sneaking escape! The mentioned below Fuaz was a grandson and at the same time titular successor of the ruler of Syria, the then 96-year-old Emir of Damascus



Nuri Schalan (Amir Nuri as-Shaalan) – Faouaz Schalan (or Fawaz as-Schaalan, according to a different spelling). The corporal, also mentioned in this letter, is Corporal Hammad of the Akedat tribe from a camel cavalry division, appointed to the travelers by the French High Commissioner, a Frenchman named De Ponsot, as a guide and translator. And so here is a completely different, unknown up to now version of how Kuhailan Haifi was purchased:

Having received permission, I set off with the corporal and Raswan to the desert. I found nothing among the Sâaba, Fid'An or Wuold'ali Bedouins, while among the Ruala who come under the authority of Emir Fuaz (whom I offered the vests), 800 km from Damascus I found a bay Kuhailan stallion, with a small, handsome head, good tail carriage, long, deep-chested, with legs and hooves in a terrible state like they all have. However I saw such good young mares by him, that I decided to obtain the horse by all means. The stallion belonged to 40 owners and was used as a breeding sire. They said that he is absolutely not for sale. So I told Fuaz that I have his word, that in exchange for the armored vests I could choose any horses I wish. I am modest, I don't want horses, but just that one horse. Fuaz made a face as though he just ate a raw frog, but said: I gave my word, you will get that horse. Then they started babbling among each other, how many camels and sheep Fuaz gave for the stallion, I don't know. However in the evening Fuaz's slave told us that it'd be best if we escaped from the camp early morning at sunrise and headed straight for Damascus. That's exactly what we did, covering 400 km that first day, which considering a drive across the steppe without roads was a pretty good result. We spent the first night among Bedouins from an unfamiliar tribe, the second in a small French fort, while on the third night we were arrived in Damascus. Until today I do not know whether it was a comedy arranged in my honor, or the truth. Either way Raswan rattled his teeth the entire way and damned me to the tenth generation; I finally threatened that I would throw him out of the car and he calmed down.

So it turns out that the horse was exchanged for armored vests! How on earth did ZiętarSKI and Raswan acquire military equipment? And what exactly could the term "armored vests" mean in 1931? "Everything!", says Wojciech Potrzebnicki, a historian from the Museum of the Polish Army, who looks after a group of collections, including protective weaponry. "There were many models, made from various materials. They were cheaply obtainable from military surplus. During World War I assault troops used many prototypes of clothing which protected soldiers from shrapnels and bullets. The body was protected by smaller or larger steel plates or small plates attached to a leather undercoat, so it was a type of armor." The Polish army did not use that kind of equipment at the time, however a bullet-proof plate armor was officially introduced for the State Police in 1930. Its prototype was made public in 1929. Two hundred of these were produced, but the number of

prototypes is not known. It is very probable that it was those vests that ZiętarSKI brought with him – although their military origin cannot be ruled out. "Armors, which were produced in small batches, did not catch on in Europe. They were not valued, because they did not prove useful in European combat conditions. After the war people began getting rid of them", explains Potrzebnicki. "One could purchase them from the Turks, as well as the French, Germans or Italians. Whether the travelers purchased them not before arriving in the Middle East or earlier in Europe, had no greater significance. If what we're dealing with were simple protective covers from a reinforced material, then they did not take up as much space as those out of metal. Tens of them could've been packed into one trunk." The vests, as the historian tells us, fitted into the Eastern military traditions, because they were a more modern version of chain mail or plated mail, which were in common use in the Middle East as late as the 20th century. "For tribes who were at constant war they were attractive goods", he adds, "and they could have problems with obtaining them in another way."

While in Damascus ZiętarSKI spent sleepless nights, feeling anxious about whether the Ruala would deliver the promised stallion. Although among Bedouins hospitality was sacred and it was known that "an offended host can seek revenge on a guest no sooner than after three days and three hours after the guest's departure", the travelers, leaving the camp at dawn, showed their hosts little trust. And the feeling did not grow after arriving in Damascus. When writing on the 23rd of March to the prince, ZiętarSKI had no news on Kuhailan Haifi:

I have estimated that a walking stallion, accompanied by armed riders on camels and milk camels, in order to give him drink on the journey, is not able to cover more than 25 km per day, if he is to get here alive. So he will not get to Damascus by the 5th, not to mention Beirut. Therefore I must wait for him and for the mares, who are also not here yet.

On April 1st he reported to the prince:

Today my concerns have slightly diminished. The bay stallion has come from the desert. For a week I could not sleep out of fear that I would not get the horse. The French have sent out a punitive expedition and are disarming the Bedouins. There is no way to get to the desert. I was afraid that in the face of these circumstances they might not be able to deliver the horse, but I have already given the vests and how could I return to Gumniska without the stallion. Your Highness will laugh, but I would never in my life want to go through a second week of this sort again.

The letter from March shows ZiętarSKI's literary temperament in the style of Henryk Sienkiewicz himself ^[5]. Why didn't he mention the escape from the Ruala camp in his further account? It is not hard to guess that he wanted to





Bogdan Ziętański in an Arabian attire, with Prince Roman Sanguszkowski and the stallion Achmet, Gumniska 1931

Kuhailan Haifi, Gumniska 1931



remain silent about a deed that could be qualified as arms trade, though at the time the regulations were not as strict as they are today and the transport of armored vests across half the world (if they were purchased in Europe) did not have to pose a great problem. "If someone with such connections as Prince Sanguszkowski wanted to transport even a cannon via that route", laughs Wojciech Potrzebnicki, "I suspect that he would've have also manage to do that." However delivering military equipment to the desert could've been acknowledged as favoring one side of the conflict, which is something that the prince's emissaries surely wanted to avoid. The nomadic tribes were at war with King Ibn Saud, who, as Ziętański explained, "crushed the Bedouins completely and destroyed their breeding, taking their horses which he incorporated into his cavalry, while some were given out to sedentary Arabs, his relatives and followers." Indeed, Abd al-Aziz ibn Saud (1880–1953), from 1902 the ruler of Riyadh, conquered independent principdoms of the Arabian Peninsula and in 1932 announced a new kingdom – Saudi Arabia. The nomadic tribes also revolted against wealthy colonial superpowers which at that time administered in that region (something which Ziętański mentions in his letter of April 1st – *The French have sent out a punitive expedition and are disarming the Bedouins*) – France in Syria and Lebanon, Great Britain in Iraq, Palestine and the Emirate of Transjordan (the so-called League of Nations mandate territories). So it was rather obvious that the travelers, making use of French hospitality, did not want to admit to rearming the Bedouins, although they would most probably explain the content of the trunks (assuming that that's how the vests were

packed) in case of an inspection as plain gifts for the hosts.

Money, or rather the lack thereof

In „Under the tents of the Bedouins” Ziętański also gives no mention about his financial problems, with which he struggled during the expedition. He probably did not want to present his employer, Prince Sanguszkowski, in a bad light, as one who grudges his fully devoted emissaries resources. He also did not want to present himself in that bad light, as the expedition's leader who poorly planned his expenses and excessively prolonged his stay in the East. Either way, we will not find anything about money in the book, whereas the letters really included that one and only issue and the described adventures seem to just deftly “camouflage” the financial problem. On March 23rd Ziętański complained:

The greatest problem is with the funds, for I have not foreseen all these obstacles and was not prepared to receive only the stallion in exchange for the vests and that I would have to buy the rest. I also did not assume that I would have to sit in Damascus with the horses and two people until April and also a transport to Beirut, and I have only 100 pounds in funds. First of all I must pay Raswan his allowance for 15 days, I have to live myself and also pay for the horses' keep and finally pay for transport and our tickets to Constanta (...) It is not pleasant for me to once again knock on Your Highness' pocket, but I must ask to be bought out from Syrian captivity and to be sent \$2000.





The entrance to the former Sanguszko palace in Gumniska.
Today: The Economic and Horticulture School Complex in Tarnów



The entrance to the palace chapel

Other horses

Ziętarski's eight page long letter from March (with an additional map) also contains interesting details on other horses purchased by him. It turns out that the mare **Sheikha** d.b. 1923 was bred to a desert stallion prior to the journey. Unfortunately she arrived in Gumniska barren. Ziętarski wrote a lot about the "known today in all of lower Arabia" mare in "Under the tents of the Bedouins". "This mare was the property of the chief sheikh of the Muthea Bedouins, Damisch-Hadji-Bega. Damisch, fighting against Ibn Saud, led a large force of 800 people on camels and 300 on mares (...) After a fierce defense Damisch's entire detachment was routed." Damisch's secretary, who rode Sheikha, was able to flee, leaving behind the pursuit, and made for the nearest well, located 80 km away. However that particular one was seized by Ibn Saud's patrol. So he turned around, in gallop, back to the desert and fled for another 100 km, all the way to Kuwait. Sheikha covered this entire route without food, drink or rest!

The yearling **Kuhailan Ajouz** d.b. 1930, found among the Would'ali Bedouins, who later gave the stallion **Wezyr** 1936 (sold to Babolna), was according to Ziętarski a candidate to replace the merited and prince's favorite mount, **Achmet**. Achmet was on such friendly terms with the Sanguszko family that after having his hooves oiled he was led inside the palace halls, across the parquet floors. Today he and six dogs lay under a large boulder near the former Sanguszko palace. And so Achmet has his tombstone and the local tradition claims that sitting on that rock supposedly brings luck.

On what Carl Raswan wrote to the prince

Carl Raswan wrote to the prince in English and... he also wrote mainly about money. The German asked for additional funds to purchase a superb, according to him, mare:

From among several hundred (perhaps 600) horses which we have seen this one mare is outstanding. She is the type which, when brought to Poland, people will point to her & say: "What an Arab!" and neither Mr. Z. nor I would be ashamed to buy her or show her to anybody in Europe. She is 3 years, a chestnut, has been on the racetrack and won. She is exactly what we want: type, breeding, head, legs, tail carriage, broodmare & race mare "rolled" into one. – She has only one fault: she costs eight hundred & eighty pounds, including the commission of the owner's manager.

Well, the mare, which name we don't even know, ultimately did not find her way to Gumniska. Most probably the prince did not send the required sum. As we read in the letters, the "boss" often left his emissaries to themselves...

Who awaited Ziętarski after his return to Gumniska

A half-year long expedition, despite the constant piling up of problems and disappointed hopes, as in the case of the mentioned Egyptian mare, undoubtedly brought wonderful results. Apart from the most valuable in this group bay Kuhailan Haifi, chestnuts Kuhailan Ajouz and Sheikha, Ziętarski and Raswan brought to Gumniska the stallions





A view from Gumniska palace



A branchy, 200 years old plane tree, growing in front of the palace entrance

Kuhailan Kruszan d.b. 1927 (chestnut), **Kuhailan Afas** d.b. 1930 (bay) and three chestnut mares: **Hadba Inzihi** d.b. 1930, **Rabda Khuszaiba** d.b. 1927 and **Hamdani Semrie** d.b. 1930; and additionally to Babolna the bay stallion **Kuhailan Zaid** d.b. (1923 or 1925). On April 1st ZiętarSKI wrote: *"Never in my life would I want to go through something similar to this for a second time. The one thing that lifts me up is that now Gumniska will have the best herd in the world."*

Thanks to the next letter, sent from Gumniska the day after his return, May 13th, 1931, we know that ZiętarSKI received neither the eagerly awaited funds, nor the escorts which he also asked for. He had to get a loan to pay for the remaining horses and return journey. And by no means did his financial problems end.

The Hungarians lent me \$1000 and that saved me partially. (...) I kindly ask to sent me \$2600 to Lvov, as I must pay back the debts I have made. (...) I have arrived in Gumniska without money. Your plenipotentiary refused to pay me my back allowance and only gave me 1000 zlotys for the trip to Lvov.

ZiętarSKI must've been dejected by the unending financial problems. His letters show a tone of desperation more than once, and hiding behind the polite words was undoubtedly a grudge against his principal, that he exposed him to additional stress, as though the super-difficult expedition did not deliver enough of that. He probably also wanted Prince

Sanguszko to show more interest in the results of this extraordinary expedition. Whereas the prince was not present in Gumniska when the horses from the desert finally arrived there. Even the mentioned plenipotentiary did not want to spare ZiętarSKI his time. *"I did not receive a private audience"*, complained the breeder, clearly greatly annoyed, in the quoted letter. So it appears that no one in Gumniska awaited his return with eagerness. The prince's somewhat indifference resulted from the fact that at that time he was greatly preoccupied by other matters. First of all, in Autumn of 1930 he met his great love, a many year mistress and later wife Wanda Krynicka. They met mainly in Vienna, so the prince often remained abroad. Second, he was more interested in motorization than horses. "Roman Sanguszko at first did not show a greater enthusiasm for horses, whereas had a great passion for cars, which he had many of and of various brands and was a superb driver", admitted Professor Pruski. Third, during the economical collapse, which (as a result of a world crisis) affected Poland in 1930, the financial outlays could not have been as high as they previously planned with ZiętarSKI.

ZiętarSKI was aware that these were probably the last imports from the East. He was an intelligent man and understood that this world is becoming a thing of the past. This is how he summed up his journey in "Under the tents of the Bedouins": „I departed with an impression that this breeding is rapidly coming to an end (...) The Bedouins are settling and for a sedentary way of life a camel, sheep and donkey reflect a greater practical value than a pure bred horse". However



Ziętarski hoped that the best type of Arabian horse could be preserved thanks to imports, a proper breeding within "pure lines" and racing selection: "Perhaps in a short while breeders of Arabian horses will have to search not in the East, but in Poland for such horses that I have searched for this year." An impressive far-sightedness!

Later lots of people and horses

Meanwhile history – not for the first time – cruelly dealt with both people and horses. The enormous effort, both logistical and financial, often requiring heroic persistence and immeasurable patience, was squandered to a great extent, due to the cataclysm of the World War II. Roman Pankiewicz^[6] tracked down the lots of the imported horses:

Kuhailan Haifi died as early as 1934 (when he fell ill, a doctor from Vienna was brought, but even he was unable to save the horse), having been bred to just four mares. Three out of the four born (and sold) foals were exported. However the stallion was also available to mares from outside the stud. It was Janów Podlaski's **Dziwa** by Abu Mlech who produced the epochal Ofir.

Kuhailan Kruszan, from whom 23 foals were obtained (he was bred to Sheikha, among others), was lost in 1939 and the majority of his get went missing in 1945.

Kuhailan Afas was bred to only one mare in Gumniska; the mare that was born from this cross, **Birma** 1939 was lost in 1945. His son **Bad Afas**, grandsire of Comet, was foaled in Zabawa. Whereas the desert stallion went missing in 1939.

The valiant Szeikha, similar to her numerous daughters, was lost in 1945. The only survivor was her granddaughter, the black **Ferha** 1943, the later dam of the stallion **Faher**.

Hadba Inzihl shared the lot of Sheikha.

Rabda Khuszaiba died in 1946. Prior to that she was bred twice to Kuhailan Kruszan. A result of these matings, the mare **Arosa** 1938, went missing in 1945 and the get of her full brother, the stallion **Urkub** 1935, was also lost.

The lots of Hamdani Semrie are unknown.

Whereas Kuhailan Zaid rendered great service in Babolna. His last get was born in 1946.

In 1945 came the end of the stud in Gumniska, which during the German occupation of Poland was still managed by Bogdan Ziętarski. The horses were lost during the evacuation near Nowy Tomyśl; they most probably were seized by Soviet soldiers.

After the war Ziętarski himself worked as a manager of a foal barn of work horses in PGR [State Agricultural Farm] Milicz. The fact that his huge experience and knowledge were never taken advantage of in the new system was probably determined by his previous work for Prince Sanguszko. As Pankiewicz recalls, Ziętarski lived in extremely primitive conditions. He had a small room with a privy in the yard and had to bring water from the barn. His merits were forgotten. "History has a tendency to place some people on the pedestal

and to bury others", Pankiewicz sadly concludes. "He was buried, though he was an outstanding person."

Roman Sanguszko in 1939 managed to get to France through Hungary. After a period of exile he settled in Sao Paulo in Brazil. He never visited Poland again.

The estate and possessions of the Sanguszkos were nationalized. In 1947 the palace in Gumniska was transformed into a school (today it is the Economic and Horticulture School Complex in Tarnów) and probably for that reason it has been preserved. The school continues the tradition of the horticulture society founded by Eustachy Sanguszko in 1881. After the war the extensive Sanguszko library was dispersed. The quoted letters are located today in the collection of Tarnów resident Marek Tomaszewski, who collects old postcards of Tarnów and other memorabilia associated with his home town.

Now the letters serve as testimony to days from not so long ago, yet at the same time from a distant era and a memento of a remarkable man, who did not receive the treatment he deserved during his lifetime. 📖

Read more at www.polskicaraby.com, "People and horses" section

[1] They were first published in the "Jeździec i Hodowca" magazine ["Rider and Breeder"] (1931, no 37-44) and later in the "Pod namiotami Beduinów" booklet ["Under the tents of the Bedouins"], issued by the Arabian Horse Breeding Society (1931).

[2] These include: a letter from Carl Raswan dated December 8th, 1930 and letters from Ziętarski sent from Damascus, one dated March 23rd and two dated April 1st, 1931. Additional information is brought by a letter written on May 13th, 1931, after Ziętarski's return to Gumniska.

[3] Real name: Carl Reinhard Schmidt.

[4] As Professor Witold Pruski wrote in his book „Dwa wieki polskiej hodowli koni arabskich (1778–1978) i jej sukcesy na świecie” [“Two centuries of Polish Arabian horse breeding (1778–1978) and its successes abroad”] (1983).

[5] A Polish journalist and Noble-prize winning author (1905), best known for his patriotic epic novels and for the translated into more than 50 languages novel "Quo vadis" (1896).

[6] Roman Pankiewicz „Polska hodowla koni czystej krwi arabskiej 1918–1939” [“Polish Arabian horse breeding 1918–1939”].



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Long story of huge influence

"Path to Glory – the Rise & Rise of the Polish Arabian Horse" by Horsefly Films

text by: Urszula Łęczycka

"You look at those mares in that film, and they could go into a show ring today. That's how modern and how far ahead of the curve the Poles were, even in 1937.

The Arabian industry in America has been on the shoulders of Poland for the last several decades. It's so important for me to say, look at this footage, people! This is where it all started", says Jen Miller (Horsefly Films) in an interview for The Cosmopolitan Review website. It explains a lot about the idea of one of very few if not even the first full length movie production dedicated to pure bred Arabian horse – **"Path to Glory - The Rise & Rise of the Polish Arabian Horse"**. Its world premiere took place during 2011 Arabian Breeders World Cup in Las Vegas, unquestionably one of the best places to gather the full cinema theater of international spectators.



The Las Vegas premiere

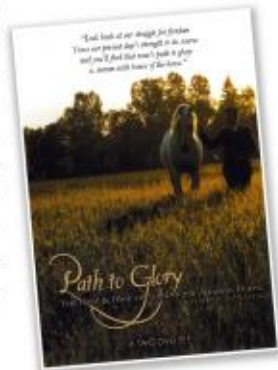
photo by: Anette Mattsson

„A lot of the backend of the film is about the huge worldwide influence the Polish Arabian has had on nations everywhere, in particular the US. In the last decade, the US shows have been Polish horse after Polish horse. We wanted to show people where this comes from”, continued Jen in the same interview and in my opinion this is what best describes the final product. Its goal was to explain history of breeding the Arabian horse in Poland on the background of Polish history. History during which the Polish Arabian horse miraculously survived wars turmoil and has now become the desirable point of interest for buyers from around the world – also the Middle East where it originates from. Although the length of the film reminds of Academy Award-winner “Titanic”, I got an impression that it concentrates mostly on the influence of Polish Arabian horse to the USA breeding and the rest of the world seems a little underestimated. Unquestionable advantages of “Path to Glory” are unique video and photo footages, some never shown to the big audience before, like those of **Skowronek, Wizja, Nabor, Bask and El Paso** (both in Poland and after their spectacular purchases to the US) or first Polish mares imported to the USA. Valuable additions are the videos taken during Janów Podlaski or early Michałów

Stud reviews with moving pictures of the big creators of Polish post war breeding – directors Andrzej Krzyształowicz and Ignacy Jaworowski enjoying their pupils. On the other hand, the number of details make “Path to Glory” a production for rather dedicated and patient auditor.

The appreciation of (mostly American) audience during the Las Vegas premiere was expressed in happy cheers with every appearance of popular personas of nowadays show and breeding scene and those who made their tributes to pure Polish breeding in the past. The film includes many interviews, among others with current directors and breeding managers of Polish State Studs, also with Roman Pankiewicz – breeder at past Albigowa Stud, Izabella Zawadzka – honorary President of Polish Arabian Horse Society, George Z and foreigners impressed and influenced by Polish Arabian: Patricia Lindsay, Sheila Varian, Gene LaCroix, Wayne Newton, Mike Nichols, Scott Benjamin, Greg Gallun. They are all known not only for their big knowledge of Arabian horse industry but also for their perspective look on the past and present of the breeding scene. It would be great if the authors had asked them for some more difficult or wider range interpretation of the current most up-to-date problems and dilemmas. On the other hand I must admit that Jen Miller and Sophie Dia Pegrum quite bravely went through some controversial sentences about the fashion for pretty heads contrary to the versatility that – in the idea of the film – the ideal Polish Arab horse is a quintessence of. It also cleverly treats the difficult point of Polish against US versions of the history of Witeź II. The horse was taken as a war trophy (in Poles version meaning rather war robbery) by General Patton's army to the US where, how the film points out, Witeź II made the very first tribute as a great ambassador of Polish breeding. “I think I can still learn a lot from this movie”, said Murilo Kammer, a well known breeder enjoying respect in Brazil, visiting the US premiere.

I think it is regrettable that the film does not show the current Polish breeding scene completely – today Polish private breeders (neglected in the film) no longer stay in the shade of their big state stud's master source and their horses successfully compete in Poland and abroad being sold for high amounts also at annual Pride of Poland auction. Even if I'd rather call “Path to Glory” a cup for connoisseurs rather than marketing way to get the new potential clients for Polish Arabian horse in the world of seeking for “product ready to go and win”, this movie is an important lesson about our beloved breed evolving and roots. 🐾



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