



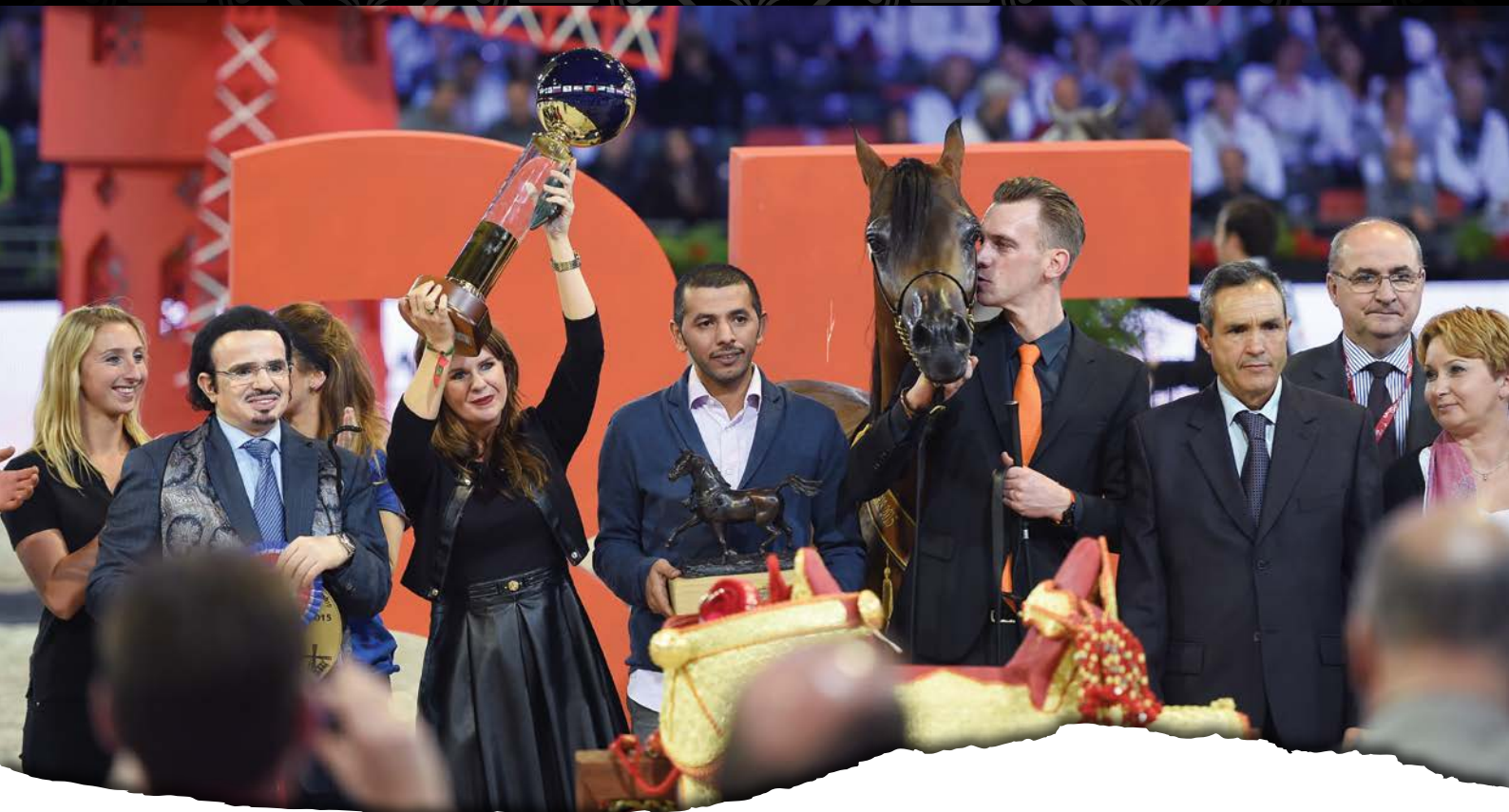
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AL THUMAMA STUD

An Interview with Hilke De Bruycker
Manager of Al Thumama Stud, Qatar

by Talitha Bakker ■ photos by Al Thumama Stud archive



Hilke De Bruycker has been the “talk of Paris” since her great success at the World Championships. A woman still young, managing the newly founded Al Thumama Stud of Dana Al-Meslemani, Qatar and already winning a Gold Medal in Paris with the young stallion Morion, who is on lease to Al Thumama Stud from Michalow.

Tell us Hilke, what is the key to your success?

HDB: Is there a key? Haha.

No, the reason why this year has been successful in my opinion, is because it involved a lot of team work and friendship. From my boss to me – to Obi training center, that

and of course the support of the right people, combined with a good portion of luck and the right horses at the right time. The individuals in our team are dedicated and have a burning and an intense passionate desire to grow.

TA: Before starting your adventure in the middle east, you worked quite some years at Schoukens Training Center. Do you think your experience there helped to this success?

HDB: Of course. I owe a lot to STC. When I first arrived there, I was shy and introverted with no experience whatsoever. I was already involved with Arabian Horses because of Mayana (BJ Thee Mustafa \ Maharani III) who I owned at the time and I was occasionally helping Philip



Looyens at the shows, but the big turn came with Schoukens Training Center. Again it was the circumstances and the right time when I started there. It was the year of their first World Champion—Najdah Al Zobair. At that time, they still had a very small team and a hell of a lot of work. Because of this, I had to learn fast and push myself – there was no other way, it was the only way. They took me out of my shell and supported me in so many different ways and gave me the opportunity to grow. So yes, my experience at Schoukens plays a big part in the person I am today.

TA: *Morion was shown by Tom Oben of Obi Training Center. Can you tell us why you choose Tom Oben to do the*

job?

HDB: I believe in him. Tom Oben and me have been friends since I worked at Schoukens. When I left Schoukens, he always remained by my side and the other way around. Being the friends we are, I knew of his dedication and desire to become what he is becoming today. Tom is one of the sincerest, hardworking and committed– not to forget talented, people I know. This and our mutual burning will to succeed is why I chose him. Friendship, loyalty and devotion is why.

TA: *For both you and Tom Oben, this was your first Gold World Champion. What went through your mind when they announced Morion as the winner?*





HDB: The crownless again shall be king. It was like a movie scene. Everything blurred out and it felt like an unreal out of body experience. I ran like a little child to Jerzy Bialabok to congratulate him. I felt gratitude and the highest form of happiness. Denial and an over flood of emotions. How do you feel? Indescribable. When I entered the ring, Tom was holding Morion not looking at the public, I actually had to tell him to turn around as his emotions had taken over. It was a salt watery mess of happiness! I can only imagine how it must have been to see this from the outside. It's amazing to share this moment with people you care so much about such as Tom & Eline and their team.

TA: Besides Morion, you had another success in Paris. This was with the young mare Jayda al Rabi. Where did you find Jayda?

HDB: Eiad Safady sent a video to Tom during the Jericho/Palestine show. We sent Tom immediately to go see her and there starts the story.

TA: Jayda won her class but stayed out of the medals. Still her name was announced on the screen, making it quite confusing. What went wrong?

HDB: Her name came on the screen twice. They said Qatar, but then another filly came out. It was very confusing. For a second there I was really happy and then I saw it was a mistake. Same thing was in the collecting ring. Obviously we were disappointed and confused. You are sitting there stressed and nervous. Then her name appears.. And it is a technical error. Oh well, that's how it is – I am sure her time will come. She is a fantastic filly.

TA: Now that you have reached such great success with Morion and Jayda. What are your plans for next year? Do you have any hidden gems for the Middle East show season?

We have some nice 2015 babies we are excited about, let's see how they grow when 2016 arrives.

Either way we will be around. ☐



مربط الأمامة
AL THUMAMA STUD

Doha, Qatar

ph: (+974) 3316 5139 - e-mail: hilke@althumama.com

WWW.ALTHUMAMA.COM

