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*Danubius Arabians mares,
photo Alessio Azzali*



Danubius Arabians and the arrival of the celebrated El Jahez WH

by Caroline Reid ■ photos by Alessio Azzali, Glenn Jacobs, Javan, Tupa, Renato Sorvilo, Luiz Rocco, Stuart Vesty, Ferdinand Huemer, Kelly, Mateusz Jaworski



At the farm, photo Glenn Jacobs

In a time where thanks to the world wide web the world itself is a relatively smaller place, especially our Arabian bubble, finding that 'stand-out' horse has actually become harder and harder.

Apart from amongst Egyptian breeders, there are few 'straights' anymore -such as Polish, Russian, Spanish- bloodlines have been crossed and crossed and crossed back again and gradually all the Arabians in the world are morphing into each other, and accordingly that stand-out horse has become ever more elusive.

Danubius Arabians, having already quietly accumulated an exotic and very special band of broodmares; having already bought Monther Al Nasser and leased Dominic M; have now raised their own very high bar yet again. Yes, Danubius Arabians have found the stand-out and they've flown him all the way from Brazil to their farm in Romania. El Jahez WH.



*At the farm,
photo Glenn Jacobs*

Danubius Arabians

As a child Sorin Stanescu used to play with the horses at his grandfather's, spending much time with them in the stables and it was here his love for horses started.

Years later Sorin left university as Dr Sorin Stanescu, having qualified as a dentist, which he worked as for 14 years.

When communism ended Sorin recognized he was to take action if he wanted to better himself and in 1996 he quit dentistry. And then where better to go to gain business insight, tools and techniques than America, the land of opportunity.

'I came home with information burning through me, but it still took me another six months of thinking — and smoking!— before I came up with my business plan. After that I was constantly learning, copying and adapting business strategies and practices from other successful countries in a country where there was nothing — and I set out to improve the recipe'. So much so that when he retired last year Sorin was providing over 90% of Romania's pet and livestock supplies.

During this busy time however, Sorin's interest in horses had not diminished and he wanted to channel it into owning and competing with them. 'There was no culture

built around competition horses, but I liked horses and wanted to channel that interest into something I could achieve with them, but I wanted a quality project. During this time, I read a lot about the history of the Arabian horse. I wanted to buy a horse for my soul — and Arabian horses resonated with me'.

In 2001 Sorin heard about some Arabians for sale in Mangalia, a town on the coast of the Black Sea. By the time he reached the farm there were only two left 'a tall one and a small one'. Something connected with Sorin and 'the small one' and he bought the little Arab mare. Her name was Dunarea, and Dunarea is the Romanian name for the River Danube.

Little Dunarea may not have had long legs, but she had a big heart and became a very successful racehorse in Sorin's ownership. After retiring from racing Sorin bred from her, but sadly she died a few years later foaling, causing Sorin to leave horses for a few years to concentrate on his business, but he still dreamt of having his own Arabians and a farm for them.

Finally in 2012 Sorin was able to purchase a 2,500 acre forest near Singureni, around 25 miles South-West of Bucharest. Again he had given himself a huge project. But Sorin thrives on huge projects. To start with he had to source electricity from 5km away and there was no water. He had the whole area fenced, thinned out the forest, built a home, created paddocks for grazing and roadways to them and at last in 2016 the stables were ready. Sorin's dream of owning a farm for Arabian horses had come to fruition and fittingly he called his farm Danubius Arabians in honour of little Dunarea.

During all this time Sorin had continued with his extensive research into the Arabian horse; its history, pedigrees, farms, breeders and competitions. So, in 2016, having seen the catalogue and videos of the horses in the Pride of Poland Sale he sent a friend and a non-horsey employee from one of his companies to the auction with the intention of buying one mare, Formia (Gazal Al Shaqab x Fortuna by Monogramm) in which he was successful, for 120,000 euros. But Formia wasn't his only purchase after all and Sorin ended up buying



*One of the lakes at Danubius Arabians,
photo Mateusz Jaworski*



Fields of Danubius Arabians, photo Mateusz Jaworski



*Mares of Danubius Arabians,
photo Mateusz Jaworski*

*Why Not DA (Emerald J - Wonder Girl by Etnodrons Psyche),
photo Glenn Jacobs*

eight mares, some in foal. He had nothing ready for when they came home and had to turf the work horses out of their stables (they had to use horses to work on the farm as it was a hunting area and they were quiet, and in fact Lipizzaners were used to draw the hunting carriages) so Sorin set-to having the stable block built. At that time his intention was to have 20. There are now around 100!

After the auction in 2016 Sorin met Mateusz Jaworski and since then they have worked together with Mateusz acting as his advisor, and although Mateusz only visits the farm monthly for a couple of days, Sorin says they speak almost daily about breedings and the management of the stud.

Meanwhile, Sorin continued to visit farms in Europe gleaning as much knowledge as possible from owners and breeders and studying many websites, and as ever with horses, the more he learnt the more he realized how much more there was to learn.

He also made other purchases in 2016, which included Wonder Girl (Etnodrons Psyche x Wolynianka by Wolyn) from a private Polish stud. In 2017 Wonder Girl foaled a superb dark bay filly by Emerald J.

Now legend is that whenever Mateusz or someone came up with a good idea for the farm, Sorin's reply was always 'Why not?' and this decided the name of the filly — Why Not DA.



Why Not DA is a super pretty filly with tons of attitude and as such in 2018 was sent to the home of Emerald J, Jadem Arabians, for show production. She was Danubius Arabians first venture into the show scene, and that year, with their only show horse, at their very first show, Danubius Arabians Why Not DA won her class and become Gold Champion Filly in the All Nations Cup Futurity! Sorin told me that Why Not DA would always be retained at the farm as her dam passed away and he wants to keep her lines.

*Dunarea - first Arabian mare owned by Dr. Sorin Stanescu
(on the picture), photo archive*



*Ariella OS (Ajman Moniscione - Swana by Kubinec),
photo Alessio Azzali*

*Rasheed DA (Fa El Rasheem - AV Dohassai by Massai Ibn Marenga),
photo Alessio Azzali*





*Maya OS (Monther Al Nasser - Psytia by Psytadel),
photo Mateusz Jaworski*

In 2018 Rafael Leite became the farm's reproduction vet, having worked in reproduction in Brazil for no less than Lenita Perroy and Murillo Kammer, followed by five years at El Farida in Egypt. The same year Sorin decided to acquire the famous stallion Monther Al Nasser (Ansata Hejazi x Ali Al Nasser by Imperial Mahzeer) as when he had researched the pedigrees of many successful show and breeding horses he noticed that straight Egyptian bloodlines would be in the background, and thought Monther would add the infusion they needed.

Also during his continuous extensive research Sorin decided he liked Versace and DA Valentino lines and wanted to bring them over to Europe to include them in his breeding programme, as an interesting outside genetic away from Marwan and the Russian strains and so as well as purchasing some broodmares he also leased the latest superstar-sire Dominic M (Da Vinci FM x Rosa La Valentina by DA Valentino) for 2019. Dominic



*Savannah OS (RFI Farid - Aijana OS by Ajman Moniscione),
photo Glenn Jacobs*

M has been used extensively this year at Danubius Arabians and they are expecting a good number of foals by him.

Danubius Arabians upcoming star born early this year is the bay Rasheed DA, by FA El Rasheem and his dam is AV Dohassai by Massai Ibn Marenga. Rasheed DA is a tall, mature bay colt with his father's looks and his dam's Russian style and athleticism. Giving a super trot and flagging his tail non-stop this handsome colt won double Gold medal this year at Ströhen, getting the top award at both the European and International B show.

Arriving at Danubius Arabians is akin to arriving at a horsey Jurassic park, in that after miles of flat open countryside you reach huge wooden gateways into a massive forest than encompasses the stud. Although here the deer get to wander leisurely across the tracks, not having to scatter from a dribbling T-Rex. The forest has been somewhat thinned, enabling grass to grow amongst



*Viola Perfecta (Ekstern - Viola Da Gamba by Pesal),
photo Alessio Azzali*

*Monther Al Nasser (Ansata Hejazi - Aliah Al Nasser by Imperial Mahzeer),
photo Glenn Jacobs*





*Expiria OS (El Sid - Amory OS by WH Justice),
photo by Alessio Azzali*

*Pentra (Poganin - Peczora by Emigrant),
photo by Glenn Jacobs*





Wafra (Shanghai EA - Wathaba by Etnodrons Psyche), photo by Alessio Azzali

the trees, making it less dark and more Disneyesque, and the deer can be seen grazing throughout.

Sorin himself took me around the stables when I first arrived and proudly introduced me to each horse. He was obviously extremely fond of them and told me he spends much of his time in their stables, just being with them. Truly, it was nice to find a wealthy owner with numerous horses, who actually knew who they were and knew their names.

It soon became obvious that once Sorin sets his sights on something, whether through research online or talking to other breeders, not much can prevent him from fulfilling his mission. 'Once I like a horse and decide I want it I almost become obsessed about it. I have to have it. I watch its video every day online and I'm unsettled until the deal is done'.

This is exemplified in his love of the Swana (Kubinec x the Spanish mare Belissa by Mel Nebli) lines.

Sorin's first Swana purchase was the stunning Ariella OS, a 2009 Ajman Moniscione daughter. And what a mare! Snow white, with huge dark Moniscione eyes, in the arena the following day Ariella OS obviously enjoyed the attention and showed and showed, much to our delight. A massive mover with tons of snort and blow, it was easy to see why Sorin fell for her. So after acquiring Ariella OS Sorin then sourced and brought in three more Swana daughters from around the world, the four year olds Montana Sailaway (Al Ayal AA) and Odette SBA (Shanghai EA) from the US and finally three year old Shayhanna DM (Baha AA) from Saudi Arabia.

The following morning I was treated to a presentation of some of Sorin's favorite mares. Here at Danubius Arabians there are over fifty eye catching mares, most of them happily living out in the fields with ad-lib hay and field shelters. It's a credit to the farm that some of the mares presented to me had only been brought in from the fields the previous day, yet all looked really well —



*Formia (Gazal Al Shaqab - Fortuna by Monogramm),
photo by Alessio Azzali*

not just well-covered, but with super glossy coats too and all happily showed off to us, bright eyed and with tails aloft.

The beautiful bay Amerikhe (TF Psymreekhe x Jakartas Jewel by A-Jakarta) was a perfect example of this, living out until the day before, yet her shiny-conker coat almost as bright as her eyes as she hovered her way around the arena, and a very dramatic look she gives too, with great expression, dark mane and tail flying and head held high. Sorin chose Amerikhe when he visited David Boggs at Midwest. Interestingly, this mare is only just coming into her own, something I have noticed with imports from different continents or climates, some adapt almost immediately and some can take at least a year. Whatever, Amerikhe, a pretty mare with tremendous eye-banking, obviously now feels fully at home.



*Mouna DA (Naseem Al Rashedah - Mystica Maghi
by Marwan Al Shaqab), photo by Alessio Azzali*

Sorin's first purchase walked regally into the arena, the very dark bay Formia (Gazal Al Shaqab x Fortuna by Monogramm), now sixteen, bred by world famous Michalow Stud in Poland, she carries herself with tremendous grandeur and has that fantastic Polish majesty about her, barely bothering to break into her big trot — she knew she didn't need to impress any further.

Sixteen year old Donna Diva (Laman HVP x Dhalila VCM by RSC Carhif) had a lovely Excalibur EA colt at foot, but this didn't stop her showing off for us in the school. However, most remarkable about this mare is that front on she has to be almost perfection. She has the biggest, deepest dark pools for eyes, perfectly placed on her flea-bitten face, giving her the softest, kindest expression ever. Every time I walked down the barn aisle I had to stop to get another look at her. Sorin had already told me that he finds the connection through the



*Amerikhe (TF Psymreekhe - Jakartas Jewel by A-Jakarta),
photo Glenn Jacobs*

*Mystica Maghi (Marwan Al Shaqab - ZT Maghan by AB Magnum)
with her 2020 filly Marama DA (by Fa El Rasheem), photo Alessio Azzali*



*Ozana DA
(Excalibur EA - Odette SBA by Shanghai EA),
photo Alessio Azzali*

eyes of horse and human most profound and you could lose yourself for an eternity in this mare's eyes.

On a trip around Italy visiting various farms, one of the stops was to Giacomo Capacci's farm and here Sorin selected the eight year old Mystica Maghi (Marwan Al Shaqab x ZT Maghan by AB Magnum) and says he immediately had a feeling about her. Mystica Maghi was in foal to none other than FA El Rasheem and this year rewarded Sorin's faith in her by producing a superb chestnut filly, Marama DA. Marama DA is such a cool baby with an extraordinary amount of bravado and look at me. Of course she strutted her stuff, but actually spent more time with head held high giving us an imperious stare and daring us not to be impressed with her. Another Danubius queen in the making.



Warditna MA (Moudar BKV - MA Wardi by Nader Al Jamal), photo Alessio Azzali





Odette SBA (Shanghai EA - Swana by Kubinec), photo Alessio Azzali

Another with a super FA El Rasheem filly at foot was the bay Savannah OS, a five year old RFI Farid daughter out of Aijana OS by Ajman Moniscione. Aijana OS was Gold Champion at Menton in 2016 and not only does Savannah ooze the quality and class of her illustrious parents, she obviously passes it on to her offspring, as this filly has a beautiful face, great eyes and plenty of movement and attitude.

The dark grey three year old D Nawasy (FA El Rasheem x D Nawal by Royal Colours) snorted and blew her way around the arena. This filly has a crazy pretty face with the tiniest teacup muzzle, and attitude to match, so it was no wonder that she achieved over 92 points and was awarded second in a very strong class at the All Nations Cup last year, shown by Tony Bauwens from Elba Training Center.

And next came my new favorite, the white-grey 14 year old Pentra (Poganin x Peczora by Emigrant) who has

already proved herself a great broodmare and dam of champions Poganinka (by El Omari) and Protekcja (by Ekstern). But for now I didn't care about her progeny, I simply fell in love with this Polish gem. Pentra may not have an extreme modern head, but it's short and typey, and anyway she arched her neck, lifted herself and powered around the area again and again, tail over back, snort mode on full, she gave me those same goosebumps that made me fall in love with Arabians in the very first place. And when she was brought back out to ply again later in the evening, she happily gave us the same display all over again. Needless to say, Pentra garnered three hearts against her name in my catalogue.

There were many others of course, including the greys Justina (WH Justice x Virginia by Vympel) a stunning fourteen year old and seventeen year old Piekna Pani (Ekstern x Pasja by Wojslaw) are two other favorites of Sorin and one could see why, both beautiful mares, oozing quality and style.



*El Jahez
WH (Juliusz De Wiec - Chili Pepper V by Jullye El Jamaal),
photo Sorvillo*

EL Jahez WH

El Jahez WH, photo Tupa

In 1999 at the Pride of Poland Sale Lenita Perroy bought the grey stallion Debowiec (Monogramm x Debowka by Eternit) from Michalow Stud. Monogramm of course was becoming a phenomenon as a sire and his stock were winning titles throughout Europe. At only four years old, Debowiec had recently returned from lease in another country and so only had a few foals on the ground in Poland. Lenita bought him with the intention of incorporating longer necks into her Haras Meia Lua breeding programme and to combine his pedigree with her Ali Jamaal stock.

Seven years later, in 2006, Debowiec was crowned Brazilian National Champion stallion. Also that year he was the sire of a very promising colt born at Haras Meia Lua. The dam of this colt was Jiullya El Jamaal, one of five full sisters that were the cross of Ali Jamaal and the beautiful Jullye El Ludjin (Ludjin El Jamaal)

This special colt was named Jiuliusz De Wiec and was exported as a yearling to Pomeroy Arabians International (USA).

Five years on, in 2011, Lenita, a frequent Scottsdale visitor, arrived a week earlier than usual for the show, to give her plenty of time to view horses, both for sale and competing. One of Lenita's first visits was to the training center of Ricardo Rivero and Riyan Holte where she found a grey colt that stood out for its extremely long neck. Despite being only eight months old, Lenita felt he had the qualities that would fit into her breeding programme. The colt was bred by Fred and Mary Widman of Widman Hill Arabians and his name was El Jahez WH. And to Lenita's surprise he was a son of her homebred Jiuliusz De Wiec and not only this, but his dam, Chili Pepper V, was sired by another stallion bred by her, Jullyen El Jamaal, an Ali Jamaal son out of Jullye El Ludjin. Lenita bought the colt.

In 2012, having already left a great impression amongst the Brazilian breeders, El Jahez WH was crowned Brazilian National Junior Champion under Lenita's



name. After Lenita's passing he was acquired by a syndicate formed by Haras Panorama, Wolf, Haras FT and Serondella and gave a spectacular show at the Brazilian Nationals in 2019, where this time as a senior stallion, he was once again crowned Brazilian National Champion.

Amongst the judges that year was Koenraad Detailleur, who spoke of his admiration for this horse:

'Before the Brazilian Nationals I had only seen pictures of El Jahez WH, but in reality he overwhelmed me. Standing in front of me during the Championships he gave me goosebumps. A horse well in balance with an extremely well laid shoulder and amazing neck. I think we can use a stallion of this quality in Europe.

I consider to use him on very typey mares to improve body, stretch and neck'.



*Juliusz De Wiec (Debowiec - Jullie El Jamaal by Ali Jamal),
photo Kelly*



*Debowiec (Monogramm - Debowka by Eternit),
photo Luiz Rocco*

Also to see him was professional handler Tom Oben, who said: 'It's not often you come across a horse that leaves you with that special feeling. Undoubtedly, El Jahez did when I saw him at the Brazilian nationals last

year. Beautiful and powerful! His look and expression captured me the moment they took him out of the stable. His style, elegance, stretch, athleticism and presence are hard to find nowadays. I truly believe that El Jahez WH

Elzunya Meia Lua (El Jahez WH - Elle Dorada by Enzo), photo Javan





Jullye El Ludjin (Ludjin El Jamaal x NV Justa Dream), probably one of the most special mare bred by Lenita Perroy. She is appearing twice in El Jahez WH pedigree, what makes him even more valuable. Photo: Luiz Rocco

will be a game changer in the breeding industry and I am looking forward to his impact on the breed’.

Meanwhile, Sorin had sent Mateusz to the Brazilian Nationals to look out for a colt or stallion. Sorin had decided he wanted a horse with different lines to those currently always used extensively in Europe. Plus there were specific qualities he wanted this colt or stallion to have such as attitude, good length of neck which was well set (which is where Sorin had noted the US were ahead of Europe) and good ears.

The plan was just to view the horses that had made it to the championships. Says Sorin: ‘The horse needn’t have been crowned Champion, the horse itself was more important than the award, we wanted to look for what we liked and not what perhaps fashion or others had dictated’, but then in came the white wonder that was El Jahez WH and of course the search was over.

El Jahez WH had every quality that Sorin had been seeking and more. His height for one —an impressive 1.62m— with long legs and a great body and movement. Added to these his incredible neck, typey ears and —importantly for Sorin— large black eyes. El Jahez WH had what Sorin wanted in abundance and the icing on the cake was his alluring star appeal.

Now he ‘just’ had to buy the horse! Sorin soon heard that



Italya Meia Lua (El Jahez WH - Ivana El Johann by Johann El Jamaal), photo Stuart Vesty

a substantial offer had been made and rejected for this magnificent stallion, so he says he just waited quietly in the background to see what unfolded, although in the interim he bought a Jahez embryo (and made a substantial offer for Sophie El Maktub which was rejected!).

In the meantime Sorin carried on with what he loves to do —research and learn— finding as many El Jahez WH offspring as possible and was pleased to note that he reproduced well, passing on that great neck and attitude, and importantly for the breeders, his semen was of very good quality.

Six months later unfortunately there was no embryo, but Sorin managed to go one better than that, his perseverance and faith had paid off — he was able to buy El Jahez WH.

Sorin says: ‘Not only did this stallion have to have the qualities I was searching for, he also had to have bloodlines that were not so available to European breeders, and importantly too his semen had to be of good quality for



Filly sired by El Jahez WH, out of Sultana, photo Tupa



Filly sire by El Jahez WH, out of Stinna W, photo: Tupa

*Ellusive Meia Lua
(El Jahez WH - Elluzia Meia Lua by Enzo), photo Luiz Rocco*

others to be able to use. I was fortunate enough to be able to invest in this horse and bring him to Europe and I wish to share that fortune and share the satisfaction and success that I get with other breeders, not for commercial reasons but for the soul. I hope Jahez will influence the future of breeding like Padrons Psyche and change the face of Arabian breeding in Europe, but even if he doesn't make the change I expect of him he represents an experience that I have tried and I want to believe'.

European breeders such as James Swaenepoel also have high hopes for him: 'When we bought Psytadel from the US, we knew this was a horse who might improve the breed and take it to another level. Probably now Danubius Arabians has a similar feeling bringing El Jahez WH, a horse which might bring our breeding to a

different stage. Christel and I love to see bloodlines other than Psytadel (Padrons Psyche) and Marwan Al Shaqab. This makes our breeding choices more exciting and more interesting. His neck is unreal, we would love to use him'.

And from Willie Brown, EKS Arabians, "I saw El Jahez WH last year in Brazil and I really liked him — he made quite an impression. I look forward to seeing the impact he will have in Europe'.

Despite looking a little light after his tremendous journey and long quarantines it was impossible not to gaze at this stallion as soon as he walked out of the stable. El Jahez WH is certainly a spell-binding horse and his aura simply commands attention. When he was powering around the arena he looked magnificent. Majestically white, tall, with



*filly sired by El Jahez WH, out of FT Sephora,
photo: Tupa*



*Eifell Meia Lua (El Jahez WH x Ezeyda Meia Lua),
owned by La Movida Arabians, photo: Ferdinand Huemer*

a great body and an unbelievable neck, big dark eyes and a kind nature too, as he gently took carrots from my hands.

Continues Sorin: 'I evolve by trying new things. If you flow with the current you feel all is right and you just float, but I think to be successful sometimes you need to go against the flow and try something else.'

I have a feeling that some of our mares will outcross very well with El Jahez'.

Thanks to Sorin's passion and research Danubius Arabians have certainly hit the ground running and the acquisition of El Jahez WH epitomizes Sorin's bold commitment and the ongoing realization of his dream. □



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