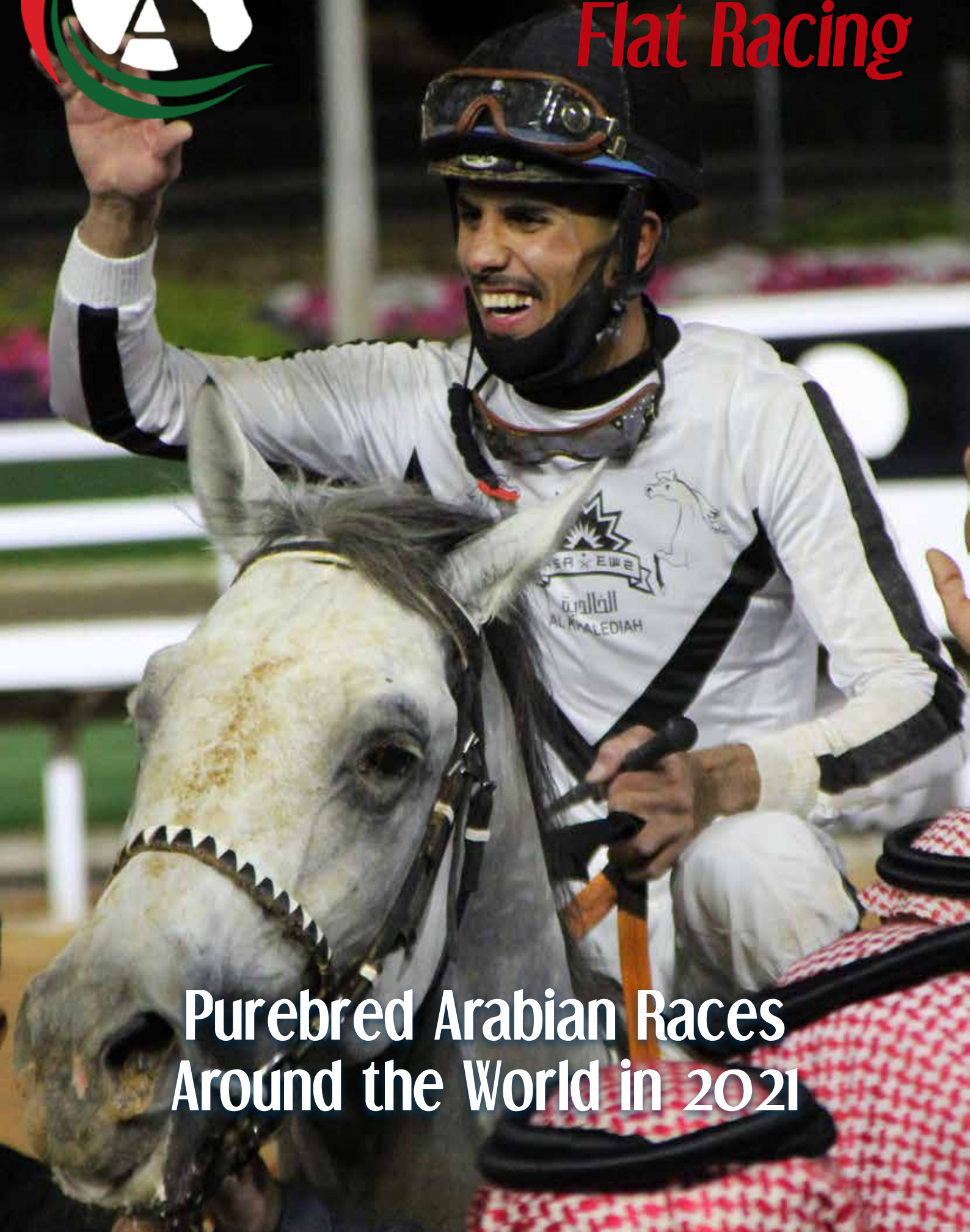




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Mubasher Alkhalediah ridden by Adel Alfouaidi
winner of Obaiya Arabian Classic
Photo: Cidinha Franzão



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Arabian Horse Intl Flat Racing

Purebred Arabian Races Around the World 2021



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Khalid Khalifa Al Nabooda and AF Farms
Deryan wins Kahayla Classic for France
Mubasher Alkhalediah wins the Obaiya Arabian
Classic
Injaaz Stud's Lekhraib shines in Fuweiret Cup
victory
Shaweesh, Divine Princess and Madaya shine
in Mesaimmer Cup
H.H. Sheikh Abdullah Bin Khalifa Al Thani's
Amel impresses on debut
Somoud stars in Mullen's Abu Dhabi treble
Arabian Horseracing Tools: One World – One
Race Calendar
Pinheiro and Hareer Al Reef winners of Al Ain
Marathon Finale
After winning the first race of the year, RG El
Bak won again
Rach Stud wins 1-2-3 places in Prêmio
Maurício Fonseca Sad
Double for O'Shea bettered by Al Nabooda and
Oertel trebles
Antonio Fresu wins three races in Al Ain
Aaley Al Magam wins Rodat Al Maida Cup
Hakeemat Muscat and Ottoman shine in Abu
Dhabi
Maqam wins the final PA race of the Jebel Ali
campaign
Jawaal lands Ruler's Cup in hard fought Shar-
jah feature race
Al Nabooda, Oertel & O'Shea Al Ain doubles
highlighted by Derby Success
Brraq gains Al Maktoum Challenge Round 3 (GR1
PA
2021 People's Choice Award Nominees An-
nounced
Notable President Cup double for Mullen again
Exciting H.H. The Amir Sword Festival con-
cludes with Mon'Nia victory
Ajajj lands Al Ain featured Marathon in deter-
mined fashion
Ghannam wins Gulf Cup at H.H. The Amir
Sword Festival
AWaley Al Magam lands Al Zubara Trophy in
perfect start of H.H. The Amir Sword Festival
O'Shea shines in Abu Dhabi with four consecu-
tive wins
Improving Munfared Lands Al Ain Feature After
Early Veron Double
De Vries helps Al Hammadi score in Arabian
Triple Crown R1 with the unbeaten Hameem
Al Nabooda and Oertel secure 1-2-3 places in
Jebel Ali

Latam wins for the first time in the 31st Race
Meeting – Al Wajba Cup
AJS Berline wins Al Shaqab Racing Purebred
Arabian Cup
Safi Al Zaman is a new winner for Sh Moham-
med Bin Faleh Al Thani
Umm Bab shines in the opening race meet at Al
Uqda
De Roüalle and Mullen with Ajajj win First Leg
of The Al Ain Marathon Series for Yas Racing
Mon'nia and Tarek Du Soleil land the big ones
on H.E. Sheikh Joaan Bin Hamad Al Thani Rifle
Day
Yas Racing and de Roüalle celebrate a quick
double and Al Nabooda the main race
Applause for Jara after winning three races in
Al Ain
Sensational victory for José Severo and RG El
Bak in the first race of the year in São Paulo
Ebraz, Barra and AJS Al Moheeb winners of
28th race meet Al Areeq & Khor Al Adaid Cup
\$2m Obaiya Arabian Classic Upgraded to Listed
Status for The Saudi Cup 2021
Again Al Nabooda, Oertel and O'Shea win dou-
ble victory
Arif lowers track record with easy in Al Ain fea-
ture race victory to star in Al Hadhrami double
Jamaiel, Goldamer, Ginkeau, AJS Al Aredh,
Hilona D'id and Ghanayem shine in Doha
Double win for Injaaz Stud with Lekhraib and
Muthhil
High Class Entries Revealed for The Saudi Cup
2021
Double victory for Nabooda, Oertel and O'Shea
in Abu Dhabi
Oman claim GCC Cup success with Al Roba'A Al
Khali
Debutant Al Suhooj wins in Jebel Ali
Arabian Jockey Club Announces Sponsorship
of AJC TV by Paul & Kathy Smoke
Brraq won in determined fashion the Group 1
Al Maktoum Challenge R1
Aahil, Tayf, Eaz Qatar and Ateej shine on HH Sh
Abdullah Bin Khalifa Al Thani Trophy Day

Photo: Qrec/Juhaim CP



AF Farms - House of Champions

owned by Khalid Khalifa Al Nabooda



AF Maher (AF Al Buraq x AF Raad by Madour) winner of the 2019 G1 Dubai Kahayla Classic

Photo: Noëlle Derre/CCA



Champion owner Khalid Khalifa Al Naboodah's highlight of the season is AF Alwajel ((AF Al Buraq x Samira De Carrere by Djouras Tu) winning the Al Ruwais and Liwa Oasis in Abu Dhabi; the Crown Prince of Sharjah Cup and the Sheikh Zayed Bin an Al Nahyan National Day Cup in Abu Dhabi.

Shamela Hanley Photos

Photo: Shamela Hanley



AF Majalis (AF Albahar x Khute by Djouras Tu)

Photo: Shamela Hanley



AF Mathmoon (AF Albahar x Temptayshunn by Arawak D'Aroco) owned by HH Sh Hamdan bin Rashid Al Maktoum and bred by Mr Khalid Khalifa Al Nabooda wins the 2016 Dubai Kahayla Classic

Photo: Courtesy ERA



AF Majalis (AF Albahar x Khute by Djouras Tu)

Photo: Shamela Hanley

Khalid Khalifa Al Nabooda and AF Farms

**“The wind of heaven is that which blows
between a horse’s ears.”
Arabian Proverb**



“As always from the beginning my aim has been to breed a Winner despite such challenging conditions of the area like excessive heat, humidity, poor ground. Under these circumstances, it has taken me more than 20 years to reach my goal to which I was committed and AF Maher proved that he can compete at Group level.”

For over thirty years Khalid Khalifa Al Nabooda has been racing Arabian horses, whilst he has been breeding them for almost as long. Passionate about the Arabian racehorse, he is just as passionate about his own bloodlines which represent his country, the United Arab Emirates.

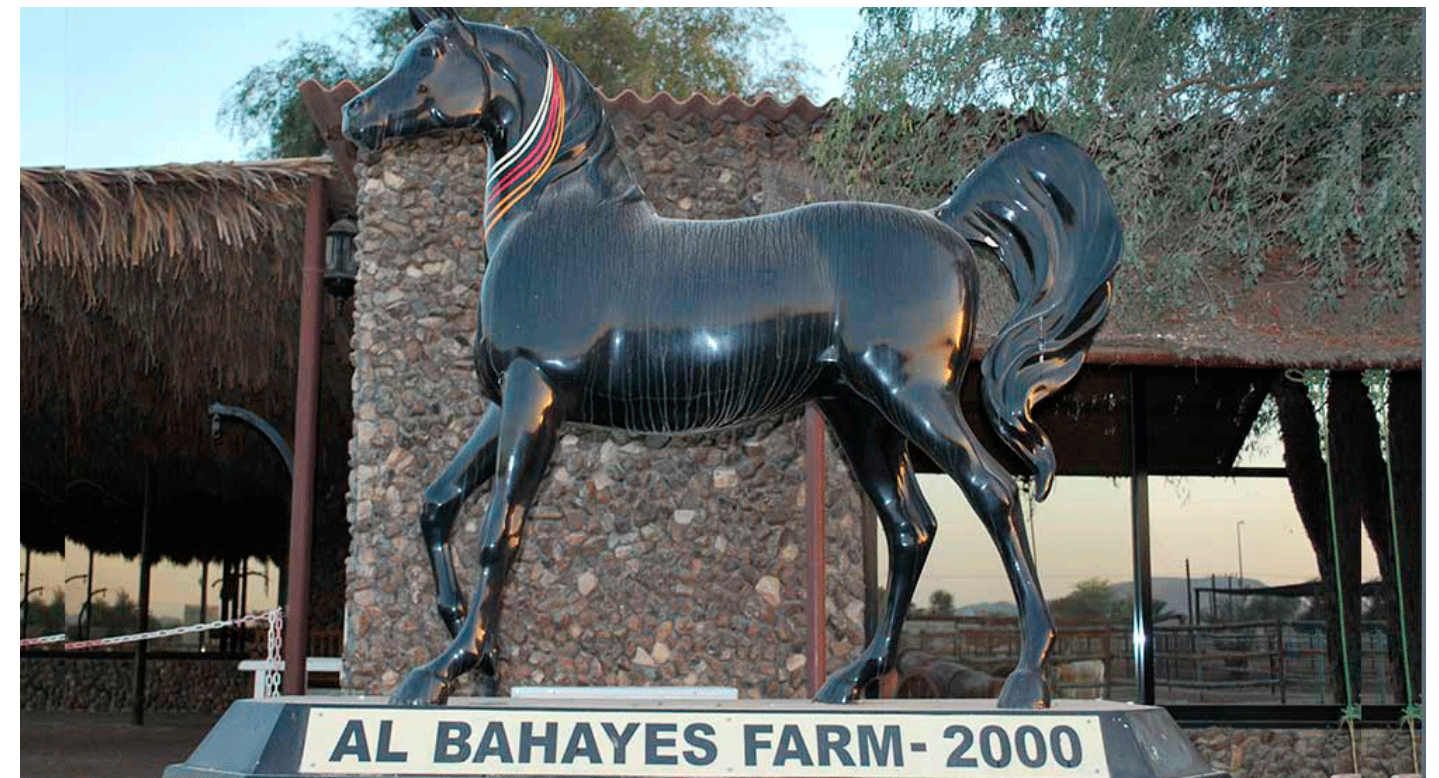
“We would like to introduce you to AF Farms and the exciting journey we have taken over the last 30 years to establish ourselves as one of the World Leaders in the Breeding of Arabian Racehorses with over 400 winners worldwide”, said Al Nabooda

AF Farms was started in the early 1990’s by Mr Khalid Khalifa Al Nabooda with the vision of breeding and preserving the local UAE Purebred Arabian Racehorses which in turn could compete against the very best in the World.

AF Farms is a tranquil and harmonious environment where we strive for perfection in upholding the breeding of the UAE Local Arabian Racehorse. Currently consists of Al Aweer, Al Bahayes, Al Hanouf and Al Madam House Farm.

Each Farm has a designated purpose to benefit and maximize the growth and development of our horses at their various stages of their path to becoming Champion Racehorses.

This vision began with Al Aweer Farm which is located in the beautiful green oasis of the same name just outside Dubai. As the studs increased he added Al Bahayes Farm, Al Hanouf Farm and Al Madam House Farm which are located 40km away from Al Aweer in Sharjah.



At Al Aweer, which covers 240,000 sq.m, the horses can graze contentedly in green pastures shaded by the magnificent old trees. By contrast in Al Bahayes Farm, Al Hanouf Farm and Al Madam House Farm which lie near the dramatic Hajar Mountains, the horses enjoy freedom and pure air in an area that reflects all the beauty of the surrounding natural desert environment.

“We are a family success story, through our careful breeding practices and dedication to the understanding and preservation of the finest world class Purebred Arabian horses; we have become one of the largest and most successful stud farms in the UAE”, commented Al Nabooda.

Al Farms (AF) operates on the principles of breeding the true Purebred Arabian horse

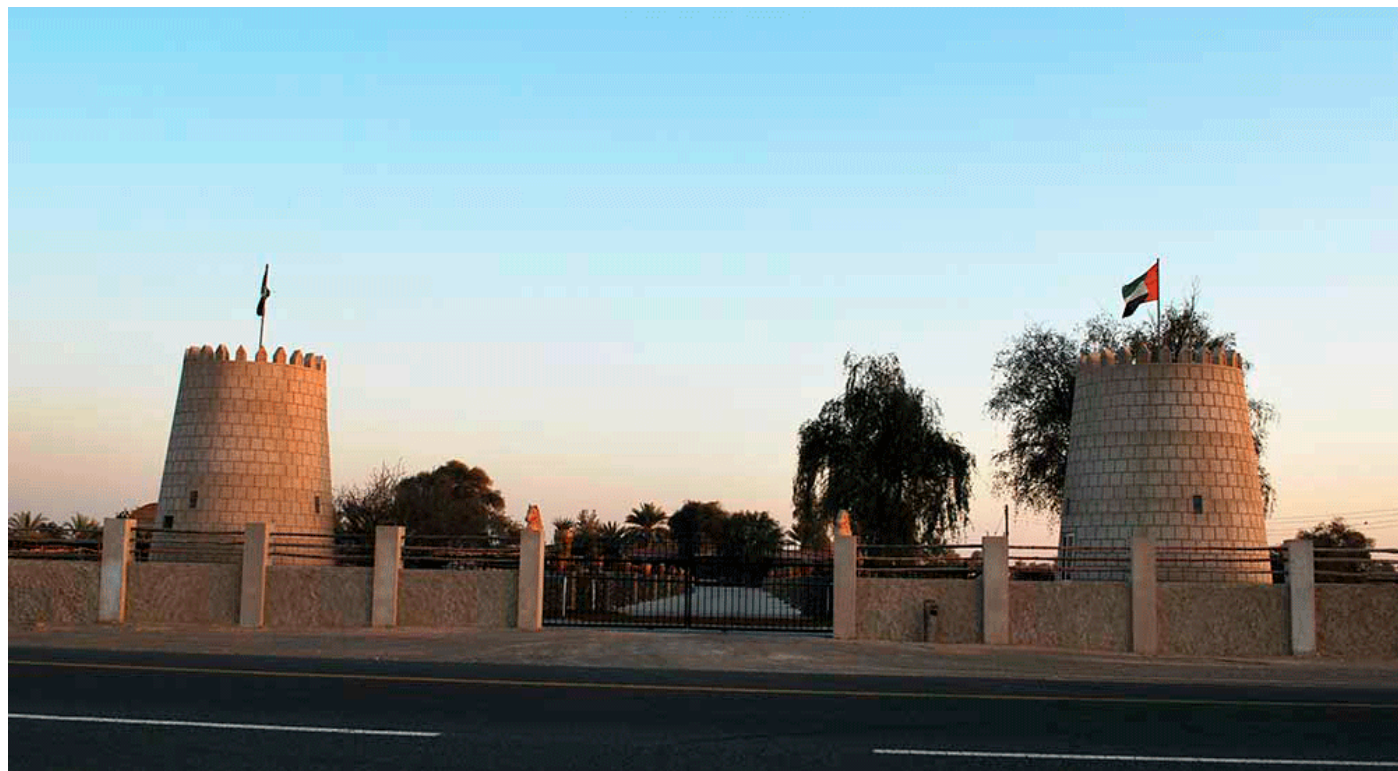
by selecting and retaining the bloodlines that have made the Arabian horse famous. He seeks to develop and preserve all the characteristics and traits that are the essence of the Arabian horse.

Today, Khalid Khalifa Al Nabooda the owner of AF is proud to say that *“Arabians bred at AF race successfully against the best in the UAE which are considered by some to be the best in the world. Thus the foundation towards the realization of dreams has been laid.”*

Al Aweer Farm

Since setting up Al Aweer Farm in the early 1990’s, Khalid Khalifa Al Nabooda’s aim has always been to breed purebred Arabian racehorses. Through careful research and selec-





tion he was able to purchase Arabian horses of some of the finest racing bloodlines and from these he has developed a successful breeding programme based on his remarkable collection of Arabian Mares and Stallions. The Studs now have over three hundred horses. Al Aweer houses the broodmares and foals in peaceful and shady surroundings, its trees nurtured by the natural water supply.

Al Bahayes, Al Hanouf Farms & Al Madam House Farm

Al Bahayes, Al Hanouf Farms and Al Madam House Farm are nestled in the plains of the Hajjar mountain range, about 40km from the Al Aweer Farm. The place and ground is more suitable for raising young stock as the weather is milder, less humid, has relatively good rainfall and wadis run around the farm. The three farms are located in the Emirate of Sharjah in the UAE and provide pre-training facilities as well as plenty of large paddocks as Al Nabooda is a firm believer in allowing his horses' free exercise in order to develop into strong, sound racehorses.

Over the years Mr Khalid Khalifa Al Nabooda embarked on a journey which through careful research of Purebred Arabian Bloodlines and wise selection of Stallions and Broodmares has developed his unique Bloodline which has resulted in AF Farms now having the UAE's Finest Local Purebred Arabians which are able to compete against the very best Purebred Racing Arabians in the World.

This was a feat which many thought would not be possible, but through perseverance, pa-

tience and self-belief Mr Khalid Khalifa Al Nabooda has now achieved this goal.

AF Farms has bred two individual Winners of the G1 Dubai Kahayla Classic on Dubai World Cup Night with AF Mathmoon, in 2016, which ran in the colours of H.H. Sheikh Hamdan Bin Rashid Al Maktoum and again in 2019 with AF Maher who carried the famous Black and Silver colours of Mr Khalid Khalifa Al Nabooda to victory.

For the 2016/2017 Racing Season Mr Khalid Khalifa Al Nabooda realized one of his lifelong dreams of becoming the UAE's Champion Racehorse Owner, this feat was made even more special in the fact that it was achieved with Local UAE Bred Purebred Arabians.

The 2018/2019 Racing Season was another special season for Mr Khalid Khalifa Al Nabooda and AF Farms for a number of reasons:

- In February 2019 Mr Khalid Al Nabooda and AF Farms were responsible for breeding of 5 out of 5 winners at the Abu Dhabi Race meeting; four of the winners ran in Mr Khalid Al Nabooda's colours and the 5th winner ran in the colours of H.H. Sheikh Hamdan Bin Rashid Al Maktoum;

- Mr Khalid Al Nabooda also became the UAE's Champion Racehorse Owner for the second time with an amazing 50 Winners.

What added to making it a special achievement was the fact that it was done with only Purebred Arabian Racehorses.

Khalid Khalifa Al Nabooda bought his first Arabian racehorses in the late 1980's and though always having had an interest in the breed, it was ownership that really ignited his passion,



AF Albahar (Amer x Al Hanouf by Sabaan)

fueling his desire to become a breeder too. As with all true racing enthusiasts, the more he studied, the more he realized he needed to learn.

In 1990 he began to develop Al Aweer Farm, belonging to his family in the oasis village of the same name, which provides the 'AF' prefix of all his homebred horses.

"Many people they think I succeed because I have a lot of horses. Not necessarily, it is not always true that if you breed a lot of horses, that you will breed a winner. I learn from my mistakes, nobody taught me anything. You need to know your bloodlines, you need to know how to feed those horses, how to raise them, all this is a challenge, particularly in this country, and makes it tougher to win."

Since the 2009/10 season (with the exception of 2014/15) he has consistently finished in the top ten owners list, winning his first owner championship in 2016/17 and becoming the first private owner to do so. It can be argued that in racing, success is a numbers game and certainly in the last four years, where he has either finished first or third, his number of runners has significantly increased, this year his 53 winners have come from an impressive 367 runners.



AF Al Buraq (Amer x Al Hanouf by Sabaan)

Owing to UAE rulings on certain bloodlines at that time, in 2015 the Haras de Gastines at Issé in France was purchased, with a view to breeding the horses he already owned prior to that decision, outside of the UAE. Though this has been a worthwhile experiment, Al Nabooda's focus was always to promote UAE bred horses. He still has a number of broodmares shuttling to France to use AF Al Buraq, his homebred stallion now owned by HH Sheikh Hamdan bin Rashid Al Maktoum and standing at the Haras de Saint Faust under the Shadwell Arabians banner.

Currently his bloodstock interests extend to around 400 horses, including 30 stallions. Most of the mares are based in the UAE, though this year he sent 15 to France to be covered by the UAE's leading sire AF Al Buraq, 11 have returned to the UAE, with three remaining in France.

"I always look to the dam line, downwards. The stallion is important to me, but more the dam line - what they produce and what they are related to. If you look at most of my broodmares, they are unraced or just placed, but they produce Group 1 horses. I believe more in the pedigree than performance."

His horses' bloodlines come from all over the world including France, England, Russia and



AF Mathmoon owned by HH Sh Hamdan bin Rashid Al Maktoum and bred by Khalid Khalifa Al Nabooda wins the 2016 Dubai Kahayla Classic

Saudi Arabia. He credits Mary Bancroft and her book on pedigree analysis, which encouraged him to collect sales catalogues and study the pedigrees of successful horses. He says: *"In the beginning I looked at the results to see what was winning, then looked at the pedigree of those winners and then I went to buy horses related to those winners."*

This willingness has so far yielded two winners of the Dubai Kahayla Classic (Gr1PA), first with AF Mathmoon (AF Albahar) in the colours of HH Sheikh Hamdan and with AF Maher (AF Al Buraq), winning in his own colours.

Both winners are full brothers that he bred, out of Al Hanouf (Sabaan), although with AF Maher, it is an even greater achievement, as he also bred his mother AF Raad (Madour).

Following AF Maher's win Al Nabooda commented: *"AF Maher proved that a local bred can compete and win world class prestigious races. Both AF Maher, and before him AF Mathmoon, made me proud, beyond my expectations and drew the attention of the world."*

Though he does occasionally sell or gift his horses, it is always after great consideration. He feels that every one of his horses speaks to him with the desire to show him what they could do on the racetrack, if only allowed the time to do so.

Champion owner Khalid Khalifa Al Naboodah celebrates third title.

"For me, on the racing front, it was another good season. To win the owner's title for the third time in four years just goes to prove we can breed quality horses (Purebred Arabians) under challenging weather conditions. Obviously, the results and work that has gone into breeding horses gives me a lot of pleasure and happiness. It's even better when you are the champion owner with horses bred and raised in your own farms."

To win the owners' title for the third time in four years just goes to prove that we can breed quality horses despite the challenging weather conditions. Obviously, the results and work that have gone into breeding horses gives me a lot of pleasure and happiness. It's even better when you're the champion owner with horses that you bred and raised at your own studs."

One of Al Nabooda's salient attributes towards his accomplishment is that he doesn't interfere in the work of his trainers.

"I don't push those who prepare my horses for the races," he said. "I think many owners do, to run their horses even when they are not ready. This is a big mistake because they don't get the desired results. You have to be patient, especially with young Arabians. They



AF Maher bred and owned by Khalid Khalifa Al Nabooda wins the 2019 Dubai Kahayla Classic

need time, and every horse is different, like we humans. When you are dealing with horses, you need to know what you are doing to achieve success."

He is proud of his achievements so far and hopes to write a book for the next generation of breeders. Not to list those achievements, which is he rightly says can be 'seen straight away on the computer' but so that new breeders in the UAE facing the challenges he has faced may have a shorter journey to success than he has had.

Al Nabooda held his first private auctions in February, 2020. He had 30 horses on sale of which 25 sold.

On the way to the fourth title

From the start of the 2020/21 season, with the first races at Al Ain Racecourse on 29 October to the last in Abu Dhabi on 20 December, Khalid Khalifa Al Nabooda leads the Statistics with his horses having finished first in 12 races, 17 in second place; 13 in third, 16 in fourth and 14 in fifth place.

In the five races in Sharjah Longines Racecourse, on November 28, Al Nabooda had a total of 19 horses competing, the only breeder with so many horses on a racing day so far: 11 as breeder and owner and 8 as breeder; being that

he had three that won, three that finished in second place and two that finished third. Since the start of the season, this has been the day that most of Khalid Khalifa Al Nabooda's horses have competed. Are he and Ernst testing all the horses to choose which one will compete in the Dubai Kahayla Classic and try to win again?

"The big race - Dubai Kahayla Classic - is still far away and as you know depends to the horse rating and distance and the big race is by invitation. We do our best as breeder and owner to have something in the big race to present our country", said Al Nabooda

Of the major races held during this period, at Group 3 Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan National Day Cup, at Abu Dhabi Equestrian Club, December 4, Khalid Khalifa Al Nabooda's AF Alwajel (AF Al Buraq x Samira De Carrere by Djouras Tu) confidently ridden by Tadhg O'Shea, won impressively the race.

Al Nabooda said: *"As an Emirati owner and breeder this is one race I have always wanted to win. Now I have and I am so proud."*

The duo Tadhg O'Shea and AF Taghzel (AF Al Buraq x Voici Kossack by Bengali D'Albert) finished in second place, with a neck difference from the first place, the HH Sheikh Mansoor bin Zayed Al Nahyan Cup, in Sharjah Longines Racecourse on December 12.

Khalid Khalifa Al Nabooda won the last Wathba Stallions Cup for Private Owners Only of the 2020, in Abu Dhabi, December 20, with AF Majalis (AF Albahar x Khute by Djouras Tu) ridden by Tadhg O'Shea.

In this race he had six horses of his breeding competing: four of which he owned and bred and two as a breeder: AF Majalis, the winner, AF Makerah, AF Hakeem and AF Ashras; AF Alareeq and AF Almajhaz as breeder

"AF Majalis is a promising horse that I raised on my farm in France. I believe that as he is getting older he will be much stronger and much better. The second horse, which ran by another Owner, and the third I bred them in the UAE and thanks to Allah the breeding in the UAE is very good and promising and can compete with overseas horses", said Khalid Khalifa Al Nabooda.

Know more about AF FARMS: <https://www.af-uae.com/alfarm/>

Sources: The Arabian Racehorse, Al Adiyat, Khalid Khalifa Al Nabooda, Cidinha Franzão.
Photos: Courtesy of Mr. Al Nabooda, Debbie Burt and Noëlle Derré/CCA



Deryan wins Kahayla Classic for France



Deryan and Ioritz Mendizabal win the 2021 Dubai Kahayla Classic from AF Alwajel and Tadhg O'Shea

French-trained Deryan (Mahabb x Haboob by Akbar) broke the track record when he lifted the US\$750,000 Dubai Kahayla Classic Sponsored by Mubadala, the opener on Dubai World Cup night at Meydan, in 2 minutes 11.87 seconds.

Ridden by former French champion jockey Ioritz Mendizabal, the 6-year-old had secured a perfect position on the rail, just off the pace, and easily picked up the leader AF Alwajel 200m from the winning post to win by three-quarters of a length from the Ernst Oertel-trained AF Alwajel (AF Al Buraq x Samira De Carrere by Djouras Tu), while Mubasher Al Khalediah (Laith Al Khalediah x Fayha Al Khalediah by El Saqr) finished a further three and a half lengths back in third.

This year's Kahayla looked a vintage renewal with the winners of nine Group 1 PA races in the field of 13. Strongly fancied were the Saudi raiders, Mubasher Al Khalediah and Mutawakel Al Khalediah, who had finished first and second in the Obaiya Classic, five weeks earlier. In that race Deryan had shown up well before fading to fifth, leading some to question his abilities on Dirt, despite winning a local Group 3 on that surface in Morocco over 100m less in 2019.

Another with questions to answer was AF Alwajel, a Group winning sprinter owned and bred by Khalid Al Nabooda, trained by Ernst Oertel and ridden by Tadhg O'Shea. Having been five lengths third behind Brraq in Round 3 of the Al Maktoum Challenge on his first attempt at 2000m, many considered him a non-stayer.

However, Deryan, partnered by Ioritz Mendizabal, was cruising on the bridle behind them in the final stages. The only concern as they drew level was that the horse might stop. He certainly looked hesitant to go past for a stride and even when in front, AF Alwajel was able to claw back some of that lead, to finish three quarters of a length behind at the line.

"He did it really well this time," said winning trainer Didier Guillemin, who had lifted the Al Quoz Sprint at Meydan on the same card with The Right Man in 2017. "He was quite nervous last time when he ran in Riyadh. This time, he was much calmer and we rode him differently, a little further back. I'm extremely amazing."

Sheikh Mansour bin Zayed Al Nayan is not only the owner, but also the breeder and wins this race for the second time after Rabbah De Carrère in 2014. A product of his Wathba Stud breeding, Deryan is the second Kahayla Classic winner to be sired by Mahabb, after Manark in 2015. Deryan's dam Haboob, is a daughter of Akbar and won on her debut over 1500m in France. She was placed behind Gabra in the Qatar French Arabian Breeder's Cup for three-year-old fillies over 2000m at ParisLongchamp in 2007.

For Ioritz Mendizabal it was a first victory in this dirt race and he said: "Last time in Riyadh, I was outside and he didn't gallop and relax. Today I spoke to the trainer and he said it was important, after (leaving) the gate to stop him and relax behind horses. He galloped and relaxed and after the first corner, I was in the (right spot). Turning (into the straight), I knew I would win."

AF Alwajel trainer Ernst Oertel said: "Great run. He didn't have it the easiest [run] up in front. He ran a great race. A good horse beat me. He's a young horse; it's his 2nd time over 2000m. Plenty to build on."

Jockey Tadhg O'Shea said: "My horse ran very bravely. I had a good stall number and looking through the race there was no obvious pace horse. So I was happy to do my own thing. He travelled great in the race. He ran a very brave race. Credit to the winner. The winner was very good on the day and my fellow lost nothing in defeat."



Mubasher Alkhalediah wins the Obaiya Arabian Classic



Local rider Adel Alfouaidi maintains golden run

The second running of the Obaiya Arabian Classic as part of the Saudi Cup card saw the crowning of a new champion in Saudi Arabian racing in Mubasher Al Khalediah. Already the winner of two Prince Sultan World Cups (Gr1PA), the six-year-old took over the mantle of Al Khalediah's star runner from Tallaab Al Khalediah.

Mubasher Al khalediah (KSA) flashed home to grab victory from his stablemate Mutwakel Alkhalediah in the US \$2 million Obaiya Arabian Classic, giving Saudi jockey Adel Alfouaidi a highly popular victory in the richest race in the world for Purebred Arabians.

The 6-year-old gave warning last time out that this upset could happen when beating Tallaab Alkhalediah - defending champion from this 2000m race in 2020 - in the Group 1 Prince Sultan World Cup. Both horses are trained locally by Mutlaq Mashref and owned by Alkhalediah Stables.

Drawn in stall five he was settled in the rear on the rail, though was soon brought wide by Adel Alfouaidi and gradually made his way closer to

the pace. Tallaab Al Khalediah had the advantage of stall one, which should have been ideal for this regular frontrunner, however by the home turn, it seemed that age had finally caught up with the 10-year-old. Deryan took over the lead, tracked by Mutawakel Al Khalediah, with Mubasher Al Khalediah steadily making ground behind.

This gave Al Khalediah Stables and trainer Mutlaq Mushref a one-two in the world's most valuable race for Arabians. Prince Fahad, representing winning owner said: "It means a lot to us; His Royal Highness Prince Khaled always wants to have the first in all races. We wish that the champ of last year won it this year; thank God we won this race with a Saudi jockey and got first and second places, which is a very good start to the year, and we hope to get better in the future.

It was between the grey Alkhalediah pair in the home straight and Alfouaidi, who had enjoyed a victory in Friday's stc International Jockeys Challenge, came with a powerful run wide of Mutwakel Alkhalediah approaching the final 200m and took the prize by a length and a quarter.

Prince Fahad, representing winning owner

Alkhalediah Stables, said: "It means a lot to us; His Royal Highness Prince Khaled always wants to have the first in all races. We wish that the champ of last year won it this year; thank God we won this race with a Saudi jockey and got first and second places, which is a very good start to the year, and we hope to get better in the future."

"Our jockey won a Group 1 at the end of last month, so we were expecting a lot out of him. I think this horse is one of two future stars of Alkhalediah Stables. Hopefully we will see him in the Dubai Kahayla Classic, and hopefully he can win. We hope he repeats the love story of Tallaab Alkhalediah."



Source: The Saudi Cup Media Group and Cidinha Franzao



Shaweesh, Divine Princess and Madaya shine in Mesaimmer Cup



Shaweesh ridden by Saleh Salem Al Marri

Ahmed Hassan Al Malki Al Jehani's Shaweesh (Nizam x Mansourah ASF) had a string of disappointments after a novice win in February coming into the Wednesday start, March 17. Hamad Al Jehani trained 6yo bounced back to enter the winner's circle for the third time when Saleh Salem Al Marri guided the grey horse to a two length victory in the PUREBRED ARABIAN HANDICAP (90 & below). Faleh Bughanaim ridden Bsheer finished runner up.

H.H. Sheikh Mohammed Bin Khalifa Al Thani's Divine Princess (Amer x Nacree Al Maurry) brushed aside a disappointing run last time around a month ago to shed her maiden status in fine fashion at Al Rayyan Park on Wednesday. Helmed by Marco Casamento in the PUREBRED ARABIAN MAIDEN PLATE (Fillies & Mares) (4-

6yo), the Gassim Ghazali trained filly beat Francois Herholdt ridden Salsabeel by one and a half lengths, and in the process registering a one-two for the colours of the owner.

Khalid Abdulaziz Al Kuwari's Madaya (Amer x Ussania Du Pouy) was the 18th winner of the season for Qatari jockey Saleh Salem Al Marri when the horse landed the LOCAL PUREBRED ARABIAN MAIDEN PLATE in comfortable fashion on Wednesday. The apprentice jockey guided the 6yo grey to a breezy win, winning the 1100m sprint with two lengths and three quarters to spare, beating Khalid Al Balushi ridden Suka'ar.

Source: Qatar Racing & Equestrian Club. Photos: Ju-haim/QREC

Injaaz Stud's Lekhraib shines in Fuweiret Cup victory



Divine Princess ridden by Marco Casamento



Madaya ridden by Saleh Salem Al Marri



Injaaz Stud's Lekhraib (AF AlBahar x Grace T) showed his versatility when the 7yo landed the Fuweiret Cup (Purebred Arabians Conditions) in a thrilling finish at the dirt track of Al Rayyan Park on Wednesday. Helmed by Alberto Sanna in the six furlong sprint, Lekhraib, the two time C&D winner from this term, won for the fifth time overall this season when the Mohammed Ghazali ward edged out stablemate Fakhir (No Risk Al Maury x Chine Orientale) by a nose. Fakhir had JP Guillambert for company and they finished two lengths in front of third placed Mohammed Bin Ahmed Bin Mohammed Al Attiya's Ateej (AF AlBahar x Sahara Croixnoire), ridden by Anas Al Seyabi by Gassim Ghazali.

Abdullah bin Fahad al-Attayah's Stilvio (AF Al-Bahar x Sylia Du Cayrou) registered his first career win when Meteb Ali Al Marri guided the 4yo to a

close victory in the Purebred Arabian Handicap (70 & below). Mohamed Jassim Ghazali trained colt edged out Abdulaziz Jaber Dharman ridden Ahzaab by a short head at the post as the 4yo won for the first time in eight starts.

Subaiya Awad Ibrahim's Suka'ar (Burning Sand x Raheel ASF) followed up his double runner up finishes with his maiden victory when the 5yo landed the Purebred Arabian Maiden Plate (4-6-Year-Old) on Wednesday. The Khaled Mohammad Alahmad trained horse was partnered by Soufiane Saadi for the first time and the two put up a fantastic run over 1700m to win by three lengths and three quarters.

Source: Qatar Racing & Equestrian Club. Photos: Juhaim/QREC



H.H. Sheikh Abdullah Bin Khalifa Al Thani's Amel impresses on debut

Bred and owned by H.H. Sheikh Abdullah Bin Khalifa Al Thani, the Purebred Arabian filly Amel (Al Mamun Monlau x Al Hanoof) stormed to a 2½ length win on her racecourse debut on Sunday, 21 March. The 4-year-old daughter of Al Mamun Monlau is trained by Thomas Fourcy and was ridden by Guillaume Guedj-Gay in the Prix Magic De Piboul – Wathba Stallions Cup at Mont de Marsan, France.

Ten lined up in this conditions race, which marks the return of the turf season in France. Rysk Tout (No Risk Al Maury x Jeanne d'Arca) came in second, with Asma Tourettes (Mister Ginoux x Neida Tourettes) ¾ length further back in third.

"She has debuted correctly", despite being

very green and having a good look around when she hit the front. She ended up in the lead early, which is never easy on debut. But when her jockey Guillaume Guedj-Gay put down his stick and picked up his reins, she found a good stride to finish. It's a good sign for the future", commented Thomas Fourcy after the race.

Regally bred, Amel is out of H.H. Sheikh Abdullah Bin Khalifa Al Thani's blue hen Al Hanoof (Maganate), the dam of champions General (Amer) and Al Dahma (Amer). Al Dahma has also produced the dual Group 1 scorer Yazeed.

Source: Qatar Racing & Equestrian Club /Photo: Robert Polin



Somoud ridden by Richard Mullen

Somoud stars in Mullen's Abu Dhabi treble

One of the major fixtures of the Abu Dhabi season, Sunday's fixture was officially highlighted by the 2200m Group 1 Emirates Championship, a Purebred Arabian feature in which class prevailed with last year's winner Somoud (Munjiz x Wadya by Akbar) proving a class apart as he defended his crown effortlessly.

In a capacity field of 14, Richard Mullen was able to settle him about halfway back, but racing alone on the rail before the pair cruised into contention leaving the back straight. Once Mullen pressed go, his mount shot to the front and the race was over as a contest, the pair repeating their HH The President Cup victory of a month ago in totally dominant fashion.

De Roualle said: "Obviously I am delighted and that was really impressive this evening, so we can look forward to another crack at The Jewel Crown next season."

Mullen, completing a treble on the card, said: "He has had a pretty busy season, but Jean and

his team keep turning him out. His only defeat was my fault, in The Jewel Crown, which I know Jean and the team want to remedy next season. Again, credit to Jean because the Kahayla Classic was an option on dirt at Meydan next week, but the trainer was adamant this was the right race. As he almost always is, he was proved right."

A Prestige contest for the 4-year-old Classic generation, again over 2200m, the UAE Arabian Derby was landed in determined fashion by Dergham Athbah (AF Albahar x Mandragore Al Maury by Dormane), completing a double on the card for Richard Mullen. Saddled by Mohamed Daggash for Athbah Racing and Stud, the home-bred colt was registering a second career success having shed his maiden tag on his penultimate appearance, a maiden over 1800m at Al Ain. Having initially settled in midfield, Mullen closed rapidly as the runners prepared to enter the short straight, at which point Mujeeb sneaked through on the rail and looked the likely winner. However,

Mullen's mount was not to be denied, grabbing the lead and prize in the final 25m.

Mullen said: *"I had a very willing partner who has done well from a bad draw out wide, so I had to race a bit further back than I wanted. The pace was slow, so it turned into a sprint in the end and I did learn last time that this horse stays well, so I was happy to commit a long way out. Then, as I say, he has really battled for me."*

Ernst Oertel saddled a quartet of runners Khalid Khalifa Al Nabooda in the 1400m handicap for horses in private ownership and they promptly occupied the first four places home, Mullen and Noof KB (AF Albahar x Karimah by Frere Des Loups) desperately clinging on to thwart the challenge of AF Motaghatres, delivered in the dying strides by Antonio Fresu.

The verdict went to Mullen's mount, the 8-year-old mare winning for the sixth time with

AF Motaghatres followed home by AF Mohanak, also finishing, with AF Ashras completing the placings for owner and trainer.

Mullen said: *"She deserved to win again because she always battles hard and tries her best, but to be honest, on the line I was worried we had been caught. Luckily our head was down when it mattered most."*

The opening 1600m maiden for horses foaled in the UAE was won by Rawaat Al Reef (Valiant Boy x Fascinator by Thoroughbred), initially first reserve, but taking full advantage of opportunity when it arose, Adrie de Vries riding for Al Ajban Stables and Abdallah Al Hammadi. Settled in about sixth of a group of nine who had the race between themselves from a long way out, De Vries' mount quickened to the front passing the 200m pole and just about had enough left to hold the late lunge of Raali. In doing so, the

Dergham Athbah ridden by Richard Mullen



Noof KB ridden by Richard Mullen

4-year-old filly opened her account at the sixth attempt, her previous five appearances including a pair of seconds and twice finishing third.

De Vries said: *"She took me there easily, but once in front, she started looking about, so is clearly still learning and you would hope, has plenty of potential."*

Close finishes continued as a theme in a 1200m handicap in which Alaber appeared about to lose his maiden tag when hitting the front inside the final 150m only to be denied close home by AF Seven Skies (Murhib x Khute by Djouras Tu) who seemed to dwarf the runner-up as he edged past.

Partnered by Bernardo Pinheiro for trainer Qa-iss Aboud and owner Humaid Amhi Al Mansouri, the 7-year-old was doubling his tally, adding this victory to a 1600m Abu Dhabi success, when also ridden by the Brazilian, in early January.

Pinheiro said: *"This was the only suitable race for him, over a trip probably too short, but they went quick which has really helped us."*

Jabalini (Nizam x Josika by Darike) and Szczepan Mazur were then able to defy top weight in a 2200m handicap, the pair clinging on grimly with the line winning post appearing just as time to maintain a diminishing advantage over Jawal Al Reef, finishing fast under Fernando Jara.

Homebred by The Royal Cavalry of Oman, the 6-year-old entire was registering consecutive course and distance handicap victories having landed a similar event, more comfortably, five weeks ago.

It was another winner for trainer Ibrahim Al Hadhrami, moving past last season's then personal record tally of 17, so now enjoying his best ever campaign.

Mazur said: *"This is a very nice horse and I have been aboard him each time he has won. In fact, I have only not won on him once in five races together, so we seem to have a good relationship!"*

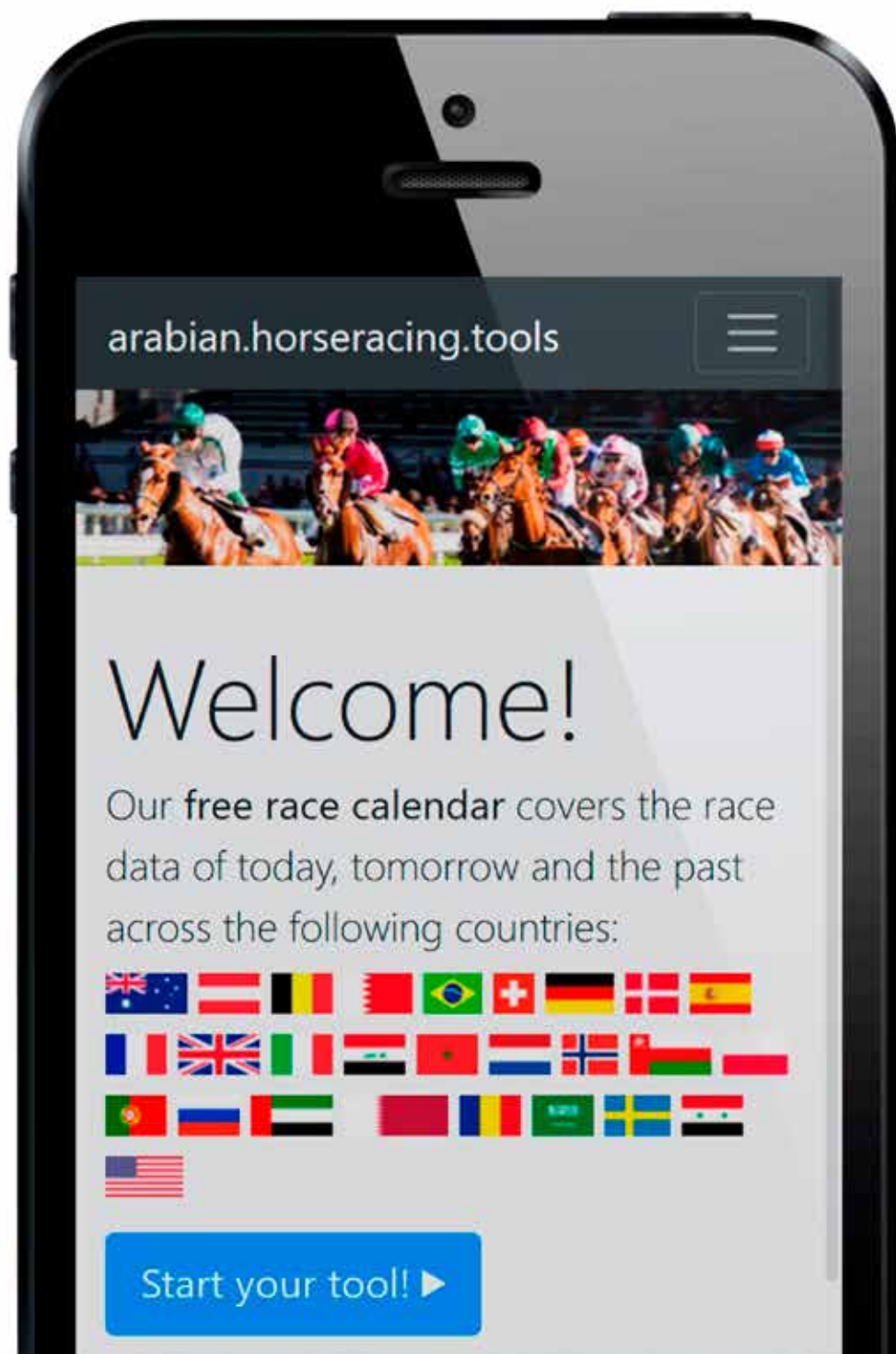
Source: Emirates Racing Authority

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Co-founder, Geri Moser

Pinheiro and Hareer Al Reef winners of Al Ain Marathon Finale



Hareer Al Reef ridden by Bernardo Pinheiro

Racing at Al Ain on Saturday afternoon, March 20, was highlighted by the finale, The Al Ain Marathon Series (Final Leg) a 5100m handicap afforded Prestige status, ultimately dominated by the two horses prepared by Abdalla Al Hammad for Al Ajban Stables, Hareer Al Reef (Bibi De Carrere x Valdora by Dormane) denying Balad Al Reef (Bibi De Carrere x Valdora by Dormane).

Only six went to post with Jeemi (Al Nasr x Tornado Du Loup by Tornado De Syrah) leading from the outset, stalked by Bernardo Pinheiro who refused to leave the inside rail on the eventual winner, the other quintet all opting to ride slightly wide.

Pinheiro went to the front with about 2200m remaining and was probably never headed thereafter with Balad Al Reef, thrice a previous winner of this race, trying to challenge in the straight,

but never getting to his full-brother, two years his junior.

The winner, an entire 8-year-old, had finished second on both previous attempts at this trip, last year behind Octave, another stable companion, and in 2019 when Balad Al Reef landed the prize for a third time. Ajjaj, winner of this in 2018 and victorious in the opening two legs of the series this season, never really threatened, finishing well beaten in third.

Pinheiro said: "I was keen to save ground, so stuck to the inside and the tactic has worked. This yard and trainer have a tremendous record in this race, so I was very happy to be riding for them and my horse has really just carried on galloping."

The Wathba Stallions Cup For Private Owners Only, the opening 1000m handicap was won comfortably by Tadhg O'Shea aboard AF Thobor



AF Thobor ridden by Tadhg O'Shea

(AF Al Buraq x Voici Kossack by Bengali D'Albret) who was prominent throughout before dashing clear about halfway. Like in so many of these private owners' races, it was another win for Ernst Oertel and Khalid Khalifa Al Nabooda who also bred the winner. Now a 10-year-old, it was a seventh career success for the entire, sixth on dirt and fourth at 1000m, including scoring thrice over this course and distance.

Oertel said: "He is a nice, old horse to have around the yard and, after starting his season a bit slowly, is really running well and won again like we expected to. Tadhg does a great job on our horses and he is UAE Champion Jockey for good reason, as he keeps showing everyone."

A 2000m maiden was turned into a rout by Al Mansour NF (Tabarak x Rolly Polly by Falina Des Fabries), apprentice Abdul Aziz Al Balushi performing the steering for Byerley Racing and Helal Al Alawi who trains locally. Twice runner-up in his previous eight starts, both times over 1400m here in Al Ain, the 4-year-old grey colt entered the final bend in about fourth, travelling strongly and hugged the inside rail, saving ground.

Eased to the front with more than 400m remaining, he was never going to be caught and Al Alawi said: "He deserved that after some good runs in defeat, both here and on the Abu Dhabi turf. He is versatile, clearly stays well and can hopefully build on this."

A maiden over 1800m, restricted to 4-year-olds foaled in the UAE, went to the Al Asayl team with Antonio Fresu sporting the silks of HH Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan for trainer Eric Lemartinel aboard Al Bateen (Al Nasr x Akba by Akbar).

Homebred, the colt was opening his account at the seventh attempt and, despite still showing signs of inexperience, ran out the comfortable winner, bettering his previous best, a third place finish, on his latest outing, over 2000m here at Al Ain, just last Friday.

Lemartinel said: "He ran very well when third last week behind our other two runners, but did not have too hard a race, so we were happy to bring him out again quickly. This horse should improve and we hope is going to be a nice one for next season as he matures."

Owner and trainer were then denied a double in the following 1800m maiden for fillies and mares, Fabrice Veron and Sundus having to settle for second behind the impressive Jouna (Rabbah De Carrere x Waahiba by Akbar) who was making it third time lucky in her fledgling career. Homebred by Yas Racing, the 4-year-old filly was runner-up on both her first two career starts, over 1600m and then 2000m on this Al Ain surface where she is trained by Jean-Claude Pecout whose previous two UAE winners were both achieved by Brraq, winner of Al Maktoum Challenge R1 and the concluding third round, both Group One contests.

Winning jockey Ryan Curatolo said: *"I was pretty happy throughout and we were quite confident because she had already run well here twice. I rode her the first time when she stayed on well over 1600m and saw her second run when perhaps 2000m was just a bit too far at this stage of her career. She could be a nice filly moving forward."*

The 1800m handicap produced a pulsating finish with apprentice Saif Al Balushi, who always looked confident, delivering Pharitz Oubai (Dahess x Laila by Tahar De Candelon) to lead in the very final strides, denying Dream De Montjoi with Taajer on both their girths in a very close third. Checked over by the vet before the race, the 6-year-old gelding had actually failed to win any of his 15 previous starts, but was finally off the mark for trainer Ibrahim Al Hadhrami and owner HE Al Sh Nasser Mohd Nasser Al Hashar.

His 13 dirt outings, prior to this, had seen him finish second on five occasions and third on a further four.

Al Hadhrami said: *"This horse has been running consistently well, especially here at Al Ain, and I am delighted for everyone associated with him that he has finally put his head in front. Hopefully that will do his confidence a lot of good and maybe he can win a few now."*

Source: Emirates Racing Authority



Al Mansour NF ridden by Abdul Aziz Al Balushi



Al Bateen ridden by Antonio Fresu



Jouna ridden by Ryan Curatolo



Photo: Juhaim/QREC



After winning the first race of the year, RG El Bak won again

The Prêmio IFAHR 2021 Award - International Federation of Arabian Horse Racing, held on February 27, was the third race of the 2021 calendar at the Hippodrome of Cidade Garden.

Played in 1,200m on turf for 3-years-old & more up to two wins, the Prêmio IFAHR; which had the participation of eight animals, was won by RG El Bak (RG Karat x Endora by Wojskaw), who won the first race on January 16th with the same jockey José Severo.

As in the first race, the Rach Stud horses, Gunther Rach (Eksort Rach x Geneve AJR by Second Chall), Graccus Rach (Veracious Rach x Gracyara HCF by LD Halston) and Osiris Rach (Eksort Rach x Olympia Rach by Aicyng AHRA) dominated the race until the final 100 meters when they were attacked by RG El Bak who in a sensational sprint won with ½ length advantage over Gunther Rach.

Trainer Estanislau Petrochinski said: "RG El Bak started giving us a lot of joy: two races and two victories and he always runs at the end. I believe that with increasing distances and, mainly, on turf it will give us much more joy. He is a three-year-old horse, very young and will certainly improve a lot and bring us many more victories."

José Severo: "RG El Bak is an excellent horse, who runs over and runs very fast. In the middle of the course I was a little far from the pointers, but it is a horse with excellent acceleration and on the straight I asked and he answered and won the race very well."

Ricardo Saliba said: *We had good expectations about this race, as it is a preparatory race for the GP Arab Brazilian Chamber of Commerce (GP Câmara de Comércio Árabe-Brasileira) in March. Gunther Rach is a horse that ran a second time on his return, after a rest, and finished in second place. Graccus Rach was also very good, as he has the classic Arabic morphology and speed for racing and fourth to Osiris Rach who won the Wathba Stallions Cup for Fillies in December. The four horses ran in a balanced way and this shows us that they are running regularly and we are proud of the victory of RG El Bak because he has Rach blood in his pedigree.*

"Despite all the problems that COVID -19 has been causing, the Arabian Horse races this year are breaking records for participation, awards and even numbers of disputes that will be held during the season. We will be distributing more than R\$ 300,000.00 in prizes in the 24 races planned for the season, ending on December 18", said Almir José Ribeiro, Racing Director at ABCCA.

The Prêmio IFAHR 2021 also scores for the Arabian Cup, a ranking that encourages the functional races of the Arabian Horse and will distribute R \$ 215,000 in prizes this year. The Prêmio IFAHR 2021 is organized by the Brazilian Arabian Horse Breeders Association in partnership with the Jockey Club de São Paulo.

Text: Cidinha Franzão. Photos: Porfírio Menezes



Rach Stud wins 1-2-3 places in Prêmio Maurício Fonseca Sad

The opening Prêmio Maurício Fonseca Sad of the race day at the Hippodrome of Cidade Jardim, Jockey Club de São Paulo, on February 5, disputed by seven animals, it was brilliantly won by Menthor Rach. The race was rated at 1,100m on dirt for 3-years-old & more up to 1 win.

Since the start, Gunther Rach (Eksort Rach x Geneve AJR by Second Chall) and Osiris Rach (Eksort Rach x Olympia Rach by Aicyng AHRA) dominated the race and before the final turn and entry into the final stretch, Menthor Rach moves from inside and overtakes Osiris Rach, thus securing second place.

From the final 200 meters on, Menthor Rach, owned by Ricardo Saliba, trained by Lucas Quintana and mounted by I. Silva advances from the outside and opens a length advantage over Gunther Rach and wins the race.

Menthor Rach (Sarmata x Musa Rach by Polonez) and jockey I. Silva were the winners of the Wathba Stallions Cup for Colts, held on December 4.

Third, Osiris Rach and jockey A. R. Oliveira winners of the Wathba Stallions Cup for Fillies. Both races are part of the HH Sheikh Mansoor Bin Zayed Al Nahyan Racing Festival calendar.

Ricardo Saliba said: "Menthor Rach participat-

*ed in a preparatory way for the GP Câmara de Comércio Árabe-Brasileira to be held in March. He is a pure Polish stallion son of *Sarmata in a daughter of *Polonez, two of our stallions champion of the breed and who have had excellent results in the sport. At the same distance, he broke the record that Mahatma Rach won in the November 14th race. Menthor Rach will probably be our main racehorse in the 2021 season."*

"Osiris Rach, a beautiful chestnut daughter of Eksort Rach, a stallion of Pure Polish blood who has successfully completed 160km Endurance races, showed great category at the beginning of his career. We are very pleased with her performance and soon she should be ready for longer distances, as she seems to have a huge heart", said Paulo Saliba.

The Prêmio Maurício Fonseca Sad also scores for the Arabian Cup, a ranking that encourages the functional races of the Arabian Horse and will distribute R \$ 215,000 in prizes this year.

The Prêmio Maurício Fonseca Sad is organized by the Brazilian Arabian Horse Breeders Association in partnership with the Jockey Club de São Paulo.

Texto: Cidinha Franzão / Photos: Porfírio Menezes

Double for O'Shea bettered by Al Nabooda and Oertel trebles



AF Dars ridden by Tadhg O'Shea

The opening 1600m handicap for fillies and mares at the Abu Dhabi Equestrian Club on Sunday, March 14, due to be contested by a capacity field of 14 before a late withdrawal, was won in quite taking fashion by turf debutante Nadhra (Munjiz x Kunooz by Amer), previously a maiden after three attempts on dirt at Al Ain. Homebred, the 4-year-old filly was held up towards the rear by Fabrice Veron before making stealthy progress as the field descended on the home turn. Pulled slightly wide leaving that bend, Veron's mount picked up nicely to hit the front inside the final 100m and win going away for Eric Lemartinel and HH Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan.

Veron said: "I was actually a little bit disappointed by her last time at Al Ain, but she is a filly I have always liked and has not let me down here. She probably did not like being surrounded by

other horses then and I was able to take my time today, but she was a lot more professional here and is learning. The switch to turf has certainly not harmed her, but I would be happy to try her again on dirt; I think she has plenty of ability and is going to be a nice filly next season."

The maximum allowed field of 14 then contested a 1400m maiden but very few were ever able to get competitive with the first two home probably occupying those positions from the outset.

However, it was AF Dars (AF Al Buraq x Af Daimounah by Tidjari Des Forges) and Tadhg O'Shea who landed the prize for Khalid Khalif Al Nabooda and Ernst Oertel, the UAE Champion Jockey having stalked Basima Al Wathba throughout the majority of the race before hitting the front without 175m remaining. The race

was soon over, the homebred 4-year-old colt building on his debut, over 1000m here at Abu Dhabi, when fifth seven weeks ago.

O'Shea said: "It is competitive racing this evening, but I did feel this was one of my better chances even from the worst of the draw out in 14. Ernst and his team have produced him in great shape, as they always do, and he jumped well so clearly had learned a lot. He surprised me because he was a bit of a handful before the race, but when I needed him, he really battled, so as I said, learned a lot from the first time. He could be a nice horse."

Oertel added: "The 1000m first time was too short and we all learned from that first outing. He is a winner now, so we can go home, regroup and plan ahead."

For horses foaled in the UAE, a 1400m handicap went to the same connections, again defeating 13 rivals in a full field, with O'Shea finding a very willing partner in the form of AF Musannef (AF Al Buraq x Nasemah by Kaolino), doubling his career tally while winning on turf for the first time at the seventh attempt.

Without a win until just over three weeks ago when he landed a 1600m Al Ain maiden, he was then a gritty second over 1700m at Sharjah in a handicap, perhaps finding the trip a tad too far.

Challenged throughout the straight, and probably headed, by SS Jalmod, O'Shea was able to drive his mount back to the head of affairs where it mattered.

O'Shea said: "He won narrowly at Al Ain and then ran a very creditable race when second, to the same horse he had beaten, at Sharjah, proving a tough horse on both occasions. I actually thought he was better on the sand, but pleasingly, he has proved me wrong this evening. The yard are in great form so long may it continue."

Owner and trainer promptly completed a treble with O'Shea having to settle for a never dangerous third on this occasion aboard AF Mohanak (AF Al Buraq x JAP Hamsah by Odin), in a 1200m handicap also restricted to those foaled locally.

It was to prove a landmark occasion for Swedish jockey Malin Homberg who was able to open her UAE account, after 25 previous attempts, aboard AF Taghzel (AF Al Buraq x Voici Kossack by Bengali D'Albret), the pair probably never headed after a fast start.

Homberg said: "I am so pleased to ride a winner for these connections who have given me so much help over the season and I have to thank Tadhg

AF Musannef ridden by Tadhg O'Shea



for helping me get the opportunity with the Oertel team. I was third on this mare last time, so knew she was game and would battle for me which is exactly what she has done. I am just thrilled."

The Wathba Stallions Cup for Private Owners Only this week was a 2200m handicap which proved the perfect opportunity for 9-year-old entire M'A Yaromoon (Munjiz x Romance Du Loup by Djarni Des Forges) to finally get off the mark after 11 previous attempts, admittedly not

that many for one of his age.

Settled in midfield among a dozen runners by Jesus Rosales, sporting the silks of Hassan Ibrahim Al Ahmad Al Jesmi, another previously without a winner, after 19 tries as an owner, the pair made relentless progress leaving the back straight before hitting the front just inside the final 200m, the race soon in safekeeping for trainer Khalifa Al Neyadi.

Source: Emirates Racing Authority



M'A Yaromoon ridden by Jesus Rosales

AF Taghzel ridden by Malin Homberg



Antonio Fresu wins three races in Al Ain



Dagui Lotois ridden by Antonio Fresu

The 1600m Group 3 Al Ain Mile, the biggest race of the season in the Garden City, was the undoubted highlight of Friday's meeting in Al Ain, March 12, especially for connections of Dagui Lotois (Dahess x Larissa Lotoise by Djourman) who proved a class apart from his ten rivals.

Antonio Fresu, completing a treble on the card, oozed confidence throughout on the 5-year-old entire, saddled by Ahmed Al Mehairbi for Al Rahmani Racing, hugging the rail on the home turn. The ground they saved propelled them from about fourth into a threatening position and, once Fresu pressed the accelerator, they dashed to the front with the race in safekeeping with full-

ly 300m remaining. All three of the horse's career victories have been registered here at Al Ain, this following consecutive victories in a maiden over 1800m in January last year followed by a 2000m conditions race a fortnight later.

He arrived here after finishing fourth in the 1600m Group 1 Al Maktoum Challenge R1 and third in both the 1900m second round of the Al Maktoum Challenge and, on the Abu Dhabi turf, over 2200m in HH The President Cup, also Group One contests.

Fresu said: "It has certainly been a good evening and this is a very pleasing victory for the horse and who team who deserved a big win with

him. He is a very good horse who, hopefully, has some options this season, be it on turf or maybe the Kahayla Classic, but we will just have to see how he comes out of this."

A 2000m maiden for horses foaled in the UAE was dominated by runners prepared at Al Asayl by Eric Lemartinel, the Frenchman supplying the first three home, headed by Antonio Fresu aboard Minwer (Majd Al Arab x Chick Flick by Calin Du Loup). The Italian jockey was sat motionless when carried to the front at the top of the long straight with it soon apparent virtually all his 14 rivals were beaten. The exception proved to be Sundus who was closing in the final 200m, without ever really looking likely to get there under Fabrice Veron. Stablemate Al Bateen completed the Lemartinel 1-2-3.

A 4-year-old gelding, he was shedding his maiden tag at the seventh attempt, sixth on this track with a solitary Abu Dhabi turf effort in Abu Dhabi among his previous appearances. He becomes the second horse to carry the silks of Sheikh Khalifa bin Sultan bin Khalifa Al Nahyan to victory, following dual heroine Mumayyaza, most recently victorious in the Emirates Fillies Classic in the middle of last month.

Lemartinel said: "As this horse gets older, bigger, stronger and more experienced, he has improved with his racing. He is only a 4-year-old and, you would hope, with more improvement to come."

Trainer and jockey later doubled up with Muthhel (Majd Al Arab x Elmalak Elwaheed by Djel Bon), Fabrice Veron again second on a stable companion, this time Eyjabi, in a 1600m maiden. Both are homebred 4-year-old geldings who race in the silks of HH Shaikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Veron's mount having just his second start. He was third on debut, whereas the winner arrived with extra experience, losing his maiden tag at the fourth attempt, having previously finished ninth on both starts locally, but in better quality races than a maiden.

The best quality from a pair of 2000m handicaps proved a memorable occasion for trainer Ibrahim Al Hadhrami, who was able to relax over the final 300m when his stablemates Asif (Dhiaa



Minwer ridden by Antonio Fresu



Muthhel ridden by Antonio Fresu

Al Reef x Hayat By Gerbya) and Salb forged clear of 11 toiling rivals, the former landing the spoils under Szczepan Mazur. The four-year-old colt has now won four of his six career appearances, but remains unbeaten on dirt surfaces with a debut success in Muscat now followed by three consecutive Al Ain victories. Sandwiched between were two less successful, albeit in decent races, attempts on the Abu Dhabi turf. This was the longest trip he has tackled to date, his Muscat victory over 1600m followed by two here at Al Ain, the second month ago. As was the case then, he seemed reluctant to go to post, but he certainly relishes with far more zest!

Al Hadhrami said: "That was very pleasing and we came here thinking they both had good chances. Luckily we were correct and it is a big result for the whole team."

Earlier, a lesser 2000m handicap was landed comprehensively by AF Yahawa (Murhib x Hathrah by Makzan), driven clear in the final 225m by Tadhg O'Shea to post a decisive success for Khalid Khalifa Al Nabooda and Ernest Oertel. Content to take his time in behind a posse who were keen to lead, O'Shea eased his mount into contention halfway up the straight before putting the race to bed in just a few strides. The homebred 6-year-old entire has now won on three oc-

casions, all on this course having won a 1600m maiden in November 2019 and a handicap, over 1800m, on his most recent outing, just a fortnight ago at the previous Al Ain fixture.

O'Shea said: "He stayed on strongly over 1800m the last day, so we were confident the extra 200m would not be an issue as he is a more mature horse than when he tried it last season."

The Wathba Stallions Cup for Private Owners Only, the opening 1400m handicap was won decisively by AF Ramz (Al Kesbe x Obayya Al Faisal by Zefiro De Nulvi) who was never going to be denied under Omani apprentice Abdul Aziz Al Balushi, once sent past stable companion AF Mozhell about 300m out. The latter was denied second close home by Noof KB. A 7-year-old entire, AF Ramz was winning for the fourth time, all on the Al Ain dirt and thrice at 1400m. His previous success, in early December, was over 1600m.

He is owned and trained by Khalifa Al Neyadi, celebrating his ninth winner of the campaign as he closes in on his best ever tally, of ten, achieved last season.

Source: Emirates Racing Authority

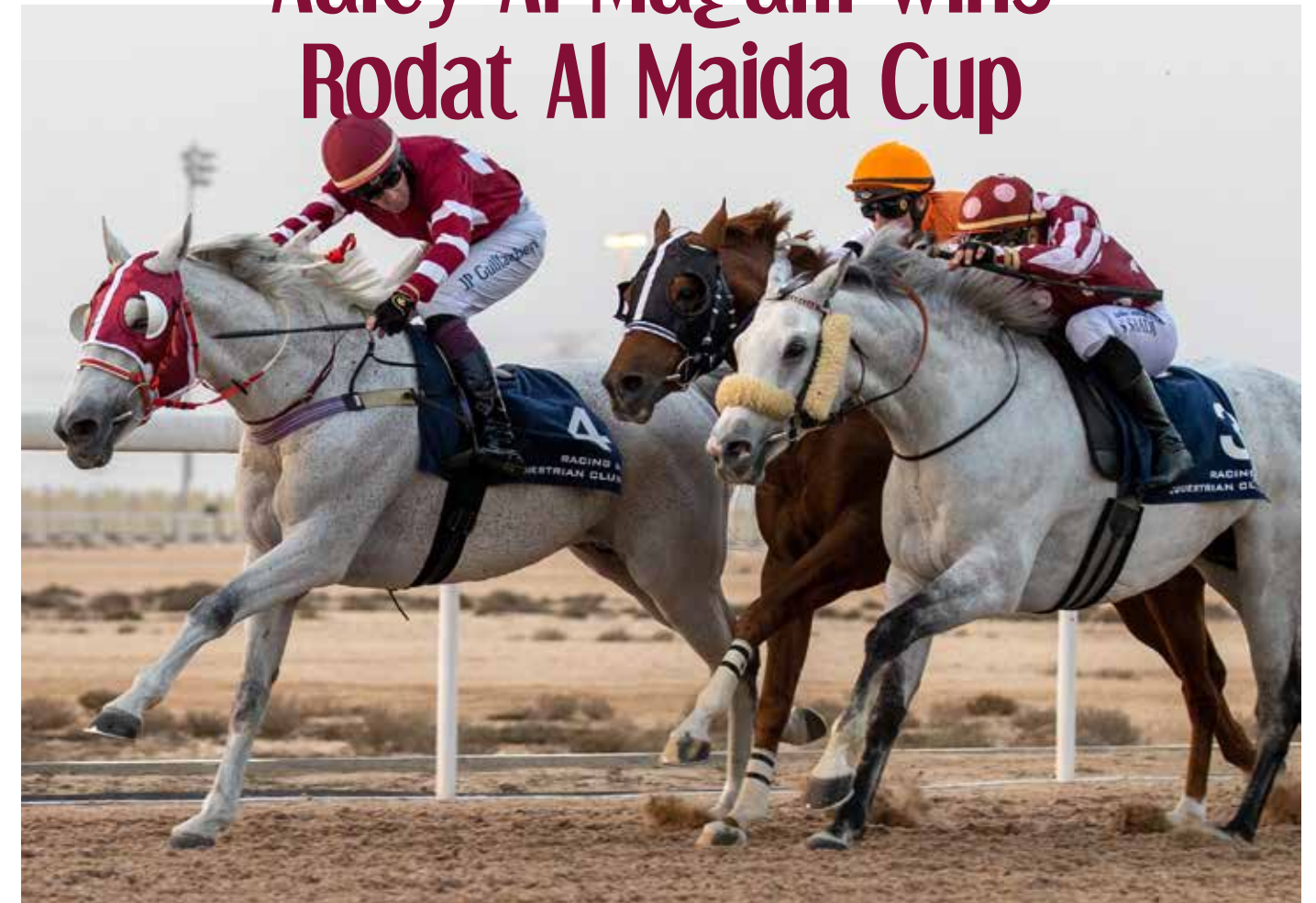


AF Ramz ridden by Abdul Aziz Al Balushi



AF Yahawa ridden by Tadhg O'Shea

Aaley Al Magam wins Rodat Al Maida Cup



Meshaal Bin Ali Al Attiyah's Aaley Al Magam (Amer x Abigaille) made a scintillating run on the inside on the home straight to win for the second straight time this season following his Al Zubara Trophy victory over the HH The Amir Sword Festival weekend with the Rodat Al Maida Cup (Local Purebred Arabian Conditions) at Al Uqda Complex on Wednesday, March 10. In the dirt feature over 2000m, JP Guillambert tracked leaders early on before finding traffic on the home straight, and instead choosing to go down the rails and edging out Umm Qarn's SEALINE (Amer x Jalalah), ridden by Soufiane Saadi for trainer Alban Elie De Mieulle, by a neck at the post. Injaaz Stud's LEKHRAIB (AF AlBahar x Grace T), trained by Mohammed Ghazali, settled for a close third under Marco Casamento.

Mohammed Bin Ahmed Bin Mohammed Al Attiya's ATEEJ (AF AlBahar x Sahara Croixnoire) completed a hatrick following up his turf sprint victory over the HH The Amir Sword Festival weekend with another one on dirt at Al Uqda Complex on Wednesday. In the Purebred Arabian Conditions event, the Gassim Ghazali schooled 8yo had Anas al-Seyabi for company, and the

two did enough on the home straight to beat Faleh Bughanaim ridden Daloob by a length and three quarters.

Mansoor Mesfer Al Hajri's AL ADDAAJ (Zaeem Al Shajaa x Sho'alat Al Wajba) had only won sprints coming into the 2000m Local Purebred Arabian Handicap (75 & below) on Wednesday. But eventually the longer trip did not prove to be much of a trouble as Meteb Ali Al Marri guided the 5yo to a thrilling victory in the race, edging out Alberto Sanna ridde Fanann by a head at the post.

Saad Rabiah Saad Al Kaabi's RAFEEAT AL SHAN (AF AlBahar x Foze) completed a C&D double at Al Uqda Complex when she landed the Purebred Arabian Handicap (80 & below). The Ibrahim Saeed Al Malki trained mare had Anas Al Seyabi in the saddle for the 1100m sprint and the Qatar bred 5yo combined well with the jockey for the second straight time to register a fine win, finishing ahead of the competition with a length and a quarter to spare.

Source: Qatar Racing & Equestrian Club. Photos: Juhaim/QREC



Ateej ridden by Anas Al-Seyabi



Rafeeat Al Shan ridden by Anas Al Seyabi

Al Addaaj ridden by Meteb Ali Al Marri



Hakeemat Muscat and Ottoman shine in Abu Dhab



Hakeemat Muscat ridden by Szczepan Mazur

Sunday's racing, March 7, on the Abu Dhabi turf was officially highlighted by the 1400m Group 2 Liwa Oasis and it delivered a nail biting conclusion worthy of any feature race with the gallant, heartbreakingly for connections, Rawaa denied in the final strides by the persistent challenge of Hakeemat Muscat (Akim De Ducor x Djourella by Kerbella).

The pair, having seem off the challenge of eventual third MH Rahal, basically duelled throughout the final 225m with Hakeemat Muscat finally able to stick her head in front in the closing stages with the 6-year-old mare answering every urging requested by Szczepan Mazur.

Saddled by Ibrahim Al Hadhrami for Muscat Stud For Pure Arabian Horses the homebred has now won four times, twice in the UAE at Abu Dhabi, adding this prize to the 2400m Group 3 Arabian Triple Crown she landed in April 2019. She was, it appears, promptly retired.

Mazur said: "The trainer has just told me this

will be her final race, so that is the perfect farewell to racing. She is a very good mare who will, hopefully, be a good asset for breeding. She is not always the easiest to get to the front, but tonight she has really fought well for me and that is her biggest win, so as I said; the perfect swansong."

The main support race, restricted to the 4-year-old Purebred Arabian Classic generation, was the 2200m Group 3 Arabian Triple Crown R2 which, on paper at least, looked competitive but, in reality, the vast majority among the capacity field of 14 may as well have stayed at home.

Riding in the lime green silks of Al Ajban Stables for trainer Abdallah Al Hammadi, 'the flying Dutchman' Adrie de Vries went straight to the front on Ottoman (Valiant Boy x Caviyar by Calin De Louve) and they hardly sensed a rival. Seemingly allowed to set easy fractions, De Vries pressed the accelerator entering the relatively short straight, after which the race was basically over as a contest.



Ottoman ridden by Adrie de Vries

The striking steel grey colt was opening his turf account, at the fifth attempt and doubling his career tally having won a 1600m maiden at Al Ain by an unchallenged ten lengths on just his second racecourse appearance in November.

De Vries, completing a rapid double, said: *"I have not ridden the horse before, but I have watched all his races back and I really thought this longer trip was going to suit him. It has! The trainer told me to be handy, but we broke well and I was able to get an easy lead, so I was always happy. When I asked him at the top of the straight he put that to bed quickly. The trip has really suited him, as we thought it would."*

A 2200m maiden raised the curtain and, eventually, was won fairly comprehensively by Gurm (Daheess x Nevada Du Loup by Manganate), opening his account at the tenth attempt for Eric Lemartinel and HH Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan.

Actually making his turf debut, after nine Al Ain appearances, the gelded 5-year-old home-bred was far from fluent as the stalls opened, but was able to secure a decent midfield position under Antonio Fresu, partnering him for the first time. The duo hit the front about 275m from home and always looked in control thereafter.

Fresu said: *"This horse has bene running some good races at Al Ain and seemingly improving all the time. This was his first start on grass and, after being slightly slowly away, he has picked up nicely*

when I needed him to. You would think he will build on this because he is a nice, young, horse who clearly goes on different surfaces."

Lemartinel added: *"This was his first race on the grass and we had been aiming at it because there are not many available turf races for him, so this was ideal."*

A 1600m handicap was won in the most determined fashion by AF Nafece (AF Al Buraq x Bucelia Du Cayrou by Dormane), ridden by Omani Al Moatasem Al Balushi, who was not only doubling his own account for the campaign, but also that of trainer Mohd Ramadan. The pair hit the front exiting the turn for home and shrugged off a persistent challenge from eventual third, Fakhr, and just thwarted the desperate late lunge of Dastour.

In doing so, the 8-year-old gelding doubled his career tally, supplementing a 1400m Abu Dhabi success in a maiden in April 2019 for his breeder, Khalid Khalifa Al Nabooda, Tadhg O'Shea and Ernst Oertel.

Ramadan said: *"The 1200m at Sharjah last time was not far enough and he is better on turf, so when he was second reserve, we just hoped he would get in. We had the jockey booked, but have had to change three times! Luckily, there were non-runners, so he was able to take his chance. That was very pleasing."*

In the Wathba Stallions Cup for Private Owners Only, a 1200m handicap attracted a field of just

ten in which Adrie de Vries was content to bide his time on Ashton Tourettes (No Risk Al Maury x Neida Tourettes by Dormane) in the colours of Ziad Galadari for Sharjah handler Ibrahim Aseel.

Certainly not the fastest away, the 6-year-old entire suddenly loomed behind the leaders in the straight before unleashing decisive acceleration in the final 125m to, ultimately, win decisively. It was a second career success for the horse, adding to his 1200m maiden victory over 1200m

on the Sharjah dirt in December 2018.

De Vries, who was replacing the unavailable Dane O'Neill, said: *"That was a nice spare ride! I have never sat on the horse, but the trainer was, I think, quietly confident and just told me to give him a chance. We slightly missed the break, so I did not rush him and then, when I asked, he produced a really good turn of foot. I was impressed."*

Source: Emirates Racing Authority



Gurm ridden by Antonio Fresu

AF Nafece ridden by Al Moatasem Al Balushi



Maqam wins the final PA race of the Jebel Ali campaign



The fixture kicked off with the fifth and final Purebred Arabian race of the Jebel Ali campaign on March 5, a 1400m handicap for horses foaled in the UAE and turned into a procession by Maqam (Abu Alemarat x Wycked by Burning Sand), ridden by Antonio Fresu for Eric Lemartinel and Sheikha Alyazia bint Sultan Al Nahyan. It was a third career win for the 5-year-old homebred entire, a close fourth over 1700m at Sharjah just six days ago, when ridden by Fresu for the first time.

Fresu said: "This is a nice horse who was a bit unlucky last time at Sharjah after a slow break

when we were in traffic which he did not enjoy.

"This straight 1400m on a wide track was perfect because we could keep out of any trouble and he enjoyed it."

Lemartinel added: "This straight course has really suited him as we thought it would. He has run plenty of good races, but we thought these conditions would be ideal and that has proved to be the case."

Source: Emirates Racing Authority

Jawaal lands Ruler's Cup in hard fought Sharjah feature race



Jawaal ridden by Jim Crowley

Racing at Sharjah Longines Racecourse on Saturday, February 27, afternoon featured the track's traditional annual highlight, the HH The Ruler Of Sharjah Cup, a 1700m conditions race afforded Prestige status, where class prevailed with Jawaal (Mahabb x Gabra by Dormane) delivering a workmanlike, rather than spectacular, performance to win the prestigious prize.

Settled in midfield by Jim Crowley, opening his account for the year, the homebred 5-year-old entire was one of several holding a genuine chance entering the short straight where he soon gained the initiative. They looked set to win easily, but were made to work hard by Al Ajeeb W'Rsan, Alazoum and Maqam who followed him home in that order.

Crowley's mount, reunited with the jockey for the first time since they won last year's 1600m Emirates Colts Classic, the only previous time they were combined, was actually winning

a fourth Prestige race and is now unbeaten at Sharjah after three course appearances. In December he won a pair of 1200m course Prestige contests, a handicap, the HH Sheikh Mansoor bin Zayed Al Nahyan Cup and, just a week later, the Crown Prince Of Sharjah, a conditions race.

Both were also restricted to horses foaled in the UAE. He then tackled 'open' company in Group Three and Group Two contests in Abu Dhabi and at Meydan respectively. He clearly benefitted from this return to calmer waters.

Al Jahoori said: "He really seems to like the Sharjah track and has won all his three races here. I am very happy that he was able to step up in trip and I am very lucky to be training this horse. He's still green and learning, so I think he needs time to grow and, we hope, he will be a nice class horse. Jim Crowley has done well on this horse before and I am very happy he accepted the ride and won well with him again."

Shawall ridden by Abdul Aziz Al Balushi



For horses foaled in the UAE, the curtain raising 1200m maiden attracted a field of 13, but there was probably only ever one leader with Omani apprentice Abdul Aziz Al Balushi sending Shawall (Bibi De Carrere x Shajaret Eddor Al Reef by Scharly) straight to the head of affairs, kicking clear shortly after halfway and with the race soon settled. Sporting the silks of Al Wathba Racing for trainer Majed Al Jahoori, Al Balushi was achieving something various other jockeys had failed to do on the homebred 6-year-old gelding in no less than 21 previous attempts! Runner-up four times and third twice previously, this was his first appearance in maiden company since a second place finish, over this 1200m Sharjah course and distance, at the end of November. He was also third over the same track and trip, behind aforementioned stablemate Jawaal in the Crown Prince Of Sharjah, a Prestige contest, in December so was fully entitled to win a maiden such as this.

The following handicap, over the same 1200m, produced an almost carbon copy with Fabrice Veron soon in front aboard Anna Bella AA (Burning Sand x Angel Proof by NF Proof) and the pair staying there throughout the remainder of the contest, 11 rivals never able to land a telling blow. Previously a maiden after 13 starts, seven local-

ly, the 7-year-old mare, was a breakthrough first ever winner, after 53 previous runners over four seasons for trainer Abdelkhir Adam. She races in the colours of Liwa Stables from where he trains and this was the first time she had finished in the first three locally, although she had managed a second and a pair of third place finished in her native US.

A delighted Adam said: *"I knew she would win or go very close today because we knew she was in very good form and I told Fabrice that he had a big chance on her. He is a very good jockey and gave her a very good ride today."*

A definite theme was developing on the straight track and the following second 1200m handicap, this one restricted to runners foaled in the UAE, was won in identical fashion by AF Thayer (AF Alsalaam x Aberfeldy by Amer).

Smartly away under Tadhg O'Shea, riding for his main employer Khalid Al Khalifa Al Nabooda and the owner's principal trainer Ernst Oertel, the pair never saw another rival, leaving ten opponents trailing in their wake. The majority of the powerful Al Nabooda string are homebred and this 4-year-old colt is no exception, doubling his career tally here in comfortable fashion. He is actually unbeaten on dirt having made a winning debut, over this 1200m course and dis-

tance, in late November before contesting two better class races on the Abu Dhabi turf.

He clearly appreciated reverting to the Sharjah dirt and Oertel said: *"This 1200m is ideal for him, as well as the surface whereas, in Abu Dhabi we tried him over 1400m and 1600m when, on reflection, we probably employed the wrong tactics with him."*

Connections were then denied a rapid double in the following 1700m handicap when their AF Musannef, who had fought off several challengers, had no answer to the final thrust delivered, completing his own brace, aboard Taafer (AL Nasr x Richly Blessed by TH Richie). Riding in the colours of HH Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan for Eric Lemartinel, the five-year-old gelding

was the fourth consecutive winner on the card losing their maiden tag, in his case after 16 previous outings.

That said, it was hard to begrudge him what had previously proved an elusive first win; he had four second and the same number of thirds in the bank before this. On his tenth start of a busy campaign, just last Saturday, he was denied close home by the aforementioned AF Musannef in a 1600m Al Ain maiden, so was exacting revenge here.

Lemartinel said: *"The horse really deserved a win after so many good placings, so I am delighted for him, the owner and the whole team."*

Source: Emirates Racing Authority

AF Thayer ridden by Tadhg O'Shea



Al Nabooda, Oertel & O'Shea

Al Ain doubles highlighted by Derby Success



AF Mahzamy ridden by Tadhg O'Shea

The traditional seven races at Al Ain on Friday evening, February 26, a meeting highlighted by the 1800m Al Ain Derby, a Prestige contest for 4-year-olds foaled in the UAE and won in determined fashion by AF Mahzamy (AF Al Buraq x Mangnifique by Doran) under a positive Tadhg O'Shea for his main employer, Khalid Khalifa Al Nabooda and trainer Ernst Oertel.

Inaugurated in 2016, the owner and trainer became the first dual winners of the prize they also landed in 2017 with AF Taraha, partnered by Antonio Fresu.

Having stalked the leader, Sawt Assalam, O'Shea drove his mount, a homebred colt having just his second start, to take the lead with about 550m remaining and found a resolute partner, initially seeing off a renewed challenge from that rival, then always holding late

bids presented by Fahd Al Wathba and then ES Rahmani who snatched second close home. One of eight maidens in a field of 11, AF Mahzamy was well beaten on his only previous start, a 1400m Al Ain maiden, but clearly benefitted from the extra distance and experience gained on that debut 34 days ago, completing a rapid 1800m double on the card for connections in the process.

Oertel said: "He is only small, but he is a very tough little horse. I would not say we were confident after a moderate first run, but he has given me a nice surprise the way he won today."

"We have lots of these nice 'babies' this year and we have brought them along slowly, so hopefully we have a good bunch of young horses for the future."



Tayseer ridden by Antonio Fresu

"We will see how he is after this race, but we could put him away for next season now because this was a big prize and he has had to work hard."

Also over 1800m, the meeting kicked off with a handicap for horses in private ownership and, like so many such races, O'Shea partnered the winner for Al Nabooda and Oertel.

Having settled AF Yahawa (Murhib x Hathrah by Makzan) in third, behind stable companion AF Taraha, Pharitz Al Denari and early leader, Inthar, O'Shea went in pursuit of the leader early in the straight. The pair was soon dueling, with Inthar unable to repel the determined O'Shea drive. Homebred, the 6-year-old entire was doubling his career and course tally having won a 1600m Al Ain maiden in November 2019. This was just his second outing of the season having finished fourth over this 1800m course and distance at the end of October on his previous racecourse appearance.

Oertel said: "He just had a little problem after his last start, so we have had to be patient with him and, I admit, we were a bit worried about his fitness after so long off, but he is a tough, consistent horse. He has won here before and we were pretty hopeful, but as I said, just a bit concerned about his fitness. He clearly likes it here, so I imagine we will look for another Al Ain race for him."

For horses foaled in the UAE, a 1400m maiden, was dominated by trainer Abdallah Al Hammadi, already enjoying his best ever season and saddling winner number 18 for the campaign

with Jesus Rosales and Odessy (Valiant Boy x Golden Odessy by Oh By Gosh) denying Fernando Jara aboard stable companion Ortagon. It had appeared Jara had timed his challenge to perfection, hitting the front entering the final 200m, only to be headed with about 75m remaining by Rosales' mount, losing her maiden tag at the third attempt having never threatened in either previous start, both over 1600m, here at Al Ain and then on the Abu Dhabi turf. Both first and second are owned by Al Ajban Stables, as have been all the Al Hammadi winners this season.

A capacity field of 15 then went to post for a second 1400m maiden, but once Antonio Fresu and Tayseer (Mahabb x Men Abu Dhabi by Johnny Onthe Spot) hit the front exiting the home bend, there was only going to be one winner, this one saddled for HH Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan by Eric Lemartinel. Settled in fourth by Italian Fresu, the 4-year-old homebred colt railed in a style a greyhound would have been proud of, seemingly gaining lengths effortlessly to enter the long straight in front. Soon clear, they were never going to be caught, a first win at the fourth attempt, all this season, for Lemartinel's charge who was producing by far a career best tackling the shortest trip he has faced to date.

It was a similar story in the following 1600m handicap for fillies and mares with Jose Santiago adopting virtually identical tactics with the same end result aboard AF Barari (AF Maqam Alezz x AF Disan by Madoua De Piboul) for Yousif

bin Ghilan in the colours of Khalfan Hamad Al Qubaisi.

Sat motionless aboard the 7-year-old mare, Santiago took the shortest route around the race's only bend and the pair cruised to the front early in the straight, soon skipping clear. The race was in safekeeping with fully 300m remaining with Santiago able to allow his mount to virtually 'freewheel' the final 150m. Third over course and distance just last Saturday, this was a second career success for the mare, both over this Al Ain 1400m having won a maiden, for Antonio Fresu, just last March on her final start last season. The current campaign has been a busy one as this was actually her eighth start since starting her new season in the middle of November.

A former UAE Champion Jockey, not to mention a Dubai World Cup winner, Fernando Jara, during his previous 147 local victories, cannot have partnered many easier than Kerless Del Roc (Dahess x Kerlia Des Pins by Kerbella) who proved in a class of his own against 11 help-less rivals in a 2000m conditions race. Beaten

on debut, his sole turf start, the 4-year-old colt was then partnered with the Panamanian jockey, the pair easily winning a maiden over 1800m here at Al Ain before the duo followed up, over the same course and distance, in a conditions race. Trained by Ahmed Al Mehairbi for Al Rahmani Racing, those two victories were achieved by a combined 16 ¼ lengths. On this occasion he crossed the line 15 lengths clear having almost cantered the final 200m. If this had been a boxing match, it would have been stopped about 400m out, so easily did he win.

Remarkably, considering he was eased down a long way out, he actually broke the track record to add to his 1800m Al Ain fastest time registered in his maiden victory in January.

Al Mehairbi said: "As I said five weeks ago and the week before that after his first two wins, this is a really exciting young horse and one we have always really liked. He is improving all the time, as he matures and with extra experience and he is a great horse to have in a relatively small yard. He is spearheading our best season and we hope he has more to offer."



AF Yahawa ridden by Tadhg O'Shea



Brraq gains Al Maktoum Challenge Round 3 (GR1 PA)

BRRQAQ (Mahabb x Fattana by Njewman) trained by Jean-Claude Pecout for YAS Horseracing Management and ridden for the first time by Ryan Curatolo won Round 3 of the Al Maktoum Challenge, run over the same course and distance as the Dubai Kahayla Classic, just over four weeks away on Saturday 27 March.

Curatolo commented after the race: "It was a fantastic night and this is a very talented horse, even if he is a difficult horse to train as the trainer will tell you. Looking at Brraq's run in the last two times, I knew he would maintain the pace. I was able to get on the inside rail on the turn and saved a bit of ground before challenging in the straight. They went a bit quick for him early on, but once on the rail, he was happy in a rhythm and it all went perfectly in the end. I am delighted to have a Group One winner on the international stage and have to thank connections for the opportunity."

This was a second Gr1PA winner for the Al Ain based trainer, who is having his first season in Dubai, and for the horse who was victorious in Round 1 over 1600m. He also placed second in Round 2 over 1900m to RB Frynnh Dude.

Whilst Byerley Racing's colt chose to contest the Obaiya Arabian Classic instead of a rematch at with Brraq at Meydan, Brraq's performance

cannot be considered a soft win. His time of 2.13.58, broke the previous track record set by Tallaab Al Khalediah when winning the Kahayla Classic in 2018.

Running on well in second was the Omani runner, Al Roba'A Al Khali ridden by Al Moatasem Al Balushi for trainer Younis Al Kalbani. A three-time winner in Oman, he was successful on his UAE debut at Sharjah in the GCC Cup, a Prestige contest over 1700m - a race won by AF Maher prior to his Kahayla Classic win in 2019. The five-year-old is owned and bred by Hamed Salim Rashid Al Balushi and is by Za'eem ASF, a brother to the multiple Group1PA winner and sire, Jaafer ASF.

In third, stepping up to 2000m and testing the waters for a try at the Kahayla was AF Al-wajel. The Group 2PA winning sprinter of Khalid Khalifa Al Nabooda's had been third in Round 1 to Brraq, but has failed to find his feet on the Dirt at Meydan. Though he travelled well for Tadhg O'Shea throughout the majority of the race, he lacked his customary turn of speed when it mattered and so far, seems a much better horse on the quick Turf at Abu Dhabi.

Source: Equine Creative Media

2021 People's Choice Award Nominees Announced

Dubai Racing Club has announced the four finalists for the People's Choice Award, and as the name suggests, fans will vote to decide the winner of this accolade which recognises the most compelling moment in horseracing world-wide since the 2019 Dubai World Cup. It is a part of the HH Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum Horse Racing Excellence Awards, inaugurated in 2017, with Hong Kong female jockey **Kei Chiong Ka-kei**, winning the first award in this category for her record four race wins on one day. In 2018 **Lady Eli** was the most popular among fans, for her miraculous recovery from a life-threatening condition and her remarkable courage allowing her to become an American champion. Australian superstar mare **Winx** was the most recent awardee in 2019, a crowd favourite, and among the many highlights earning her the nomination and award with a record four consecutive wins in the Cox Plate.

2021 FINALISTS

HAIL HOLLIE! JOCKEY DOYLE DARES THE MEN TO KEEP UP

When 24-year-old British jockey Hollie Doyle was named third in the 2020 edition of BBC's Sport Personality of The Year, she emulated a feat accomplished by the legendary Frankie Dettori and placed horse racing firmly in the spotlight. The award put her in the company of sporting legends like Formula One- star Lewis Hamilton and football icon Jordan Henderson. It was a result of Doyle's very impressive list of extraordinary achievements in 2020. Riding five winners in one afternoon, a victory at Royal Ascot with G1 success on British Champions' Day, becoming the first woman to ride a winner at the International Jockeys' Championship in Hong Kong and her record-breaking 151 wins, with 373 podium finishes are just some excerpts from Doyle's remarkable year. In winning the award she also made a very important announcement to the world - that she had achieved success as an outstanding jockey, rather than a woman jockey. Having learned to ride on a pony at a young age, Doyle claims "I sat on a horse before I could even walk!". Both her parents Mark and Caroline were jockeys, which meant Hollie was immersed in the sport from the very beginning, going on to attain unprecedented success through dedication

and hard work. One of the fittest jockeys on the circuit, amongst both men and women, Doyle is now a regular on the international arena, having earned a ride on the Breeders Cup card, Team Deirdre (Japan) called upon her services at the Bahrain International Trophy and she made history in Hong Kong, finishing third in the International Jockeys' Championship. Famous for her work ethic and relentless pursuit of excellence Hollie Doyle was named 2020 Sunday Times Sportswoman of The Year and HWPJ Jockey of The Year in Britain, where many are of the opinion it is only a matter of time before she becomes the country's first female champion.

PART-TIME TRAINER SCORES BIG WITH MESSI

Part-time horse trainer Timo Keersmaekers would spend an average of 70 days on the road as a successful tableware businessman based out of Antwerp. The Covid-19 Pandemic forced the Belgian, to cut down his travel, and instead focus on his modest stable housing just eight horses, one of whom was about to take him on a journey of a lifetime. The main protagonist of this fascinating tale is Messi, an 8-year-old Purebred Arabian - who emerged as Keersmaekers' best racing prospect in the yard, winning back-to-back races in Belgium and Germany in mid-2020, beating serious global superstars, culminating in victory in the richest Arab Race in Abu Dhabi - the \$US 1.9 million, 2200m Group 1 Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan Jewel Crown. Messi's victory made headlines across the world, as this small-time operation drew kudos from the global media. A feel-good story emerging out of the often-tragic Covid-19 experience. Owned and bred by Keersmaekers, Messi began showing signs of his potential, and the 'full extent of his speed' through a winning streak in Belgium and Germany, twice accounting for top-rated Saudi star Mashhur Al Khalediah including in the United Arab Emirates President Cup Listed Stakes. Keersmaekers decided it was time to take the show on the road to France, entering Messi for the prestigious G1 Qatar Arabian World Cup at the Longchamp racecourse in October. Messi finished a close second, and this was enough to inspire Keersmaekers' decision to travel to Abu Dhabi, where Messi reached the pinnacle of his career.



Notable President Cup double for Mullen again!



Somoud ridden by Richard Mullen

The Abu Dhabi Equestrian Club staged one of the biggest meetings of the capital racetrack's season on Sunday, February 21, highlighted by the 2200m Purebred Arabian Group 1 HH The President Cup, won stylishly by Somoud (Munjiz x Wadya by Akbar) under a polished ride from Richard Mullen.

Riding for Yas Racing and Jean de Roualle, Mullen settled the 7-year-old homebred entire in about sixth of the 13 runners behind a frenetic early gallop set by first Barrelaman and then Basmah. As distress signals went out on the latter, Mullen, who had eased into contention on the home turn, attacked at the top of the straight, his mount responding well and opening up a decisive lead.

BF Mughader and Dagui Lotosi both finished

well but Somoud was not for catching, adding this big prize to the Group 1 Emirates Championship, over the same 2200m, he won last March when trained by Ahmed Al Mehairbi.

Mullen said: *"I was drawn a bit wider than ideal, but I was able to get him settled and we knew there was going to be a good gallop today which he really needs. He was always going well and I probably had to commit for home sooner than ideal, but with this short straight, you cannot take risks."*

Mullen won the race on Loraa for De Roualle in 2017 and the Frenchman also landed the spoils last year with Rmmas under Tadhg O'Shea.

De Roualle added: *"I am so grateful to Sheikh Mansoor for the opportunity to train these lovely horses and I am blessed to have such a*



Alsaeid ridden by Szczepan Mazur

good job. We have won this prize three times in five years which is a great team effort."

The Thoroughbred HH The President Cup, a 1400m Listed contest, looked wickedly competitive with a field of 15 taking part, but that did not prove the case with Mullen scoring an emphatic success aboard Medahim (Kodiak x Novel Fun by Noverre) for Satish Seemar and Sayed Hashish.

A 7-year-old gelded son of Kodiak, Medahim won thrice in Britain for previous connections, but was opening his local account at the fifth attempt. He started this season twice finishing second, over 1600m here in Abu Dhabi, to Boerhan, fourth on this occasion.

The second of those runner-up finishes was actually in the Listed National Day Cup when denied right on the line. He then went to Meydan and was far from disgraced when seventh in the 1400m Group 2 Al Fahidi Fort. Settled in midfield here, he showed taking acceleration to pass numerous rivals and storm clear entering

the final 200m with the race soon in safekeeping.

Mullen said: *"I actually dropped my whip in the National Day Cup so I owed the team that. We knew the 1400m here would really suit him. That was a massive effort and very impressive indeed."*

A 1600m maiden kicked things off and it would be hard to begrudge Aahid Al Khalediah II (Laith Al Khalediah x Ohood Al Khalediah by RW Country Gent) is breakthrough success having finished second in four of his six previous career outings and all bar one of his four local starts. Trained in Al Ain by Helal Alalawi for The National Stables from where he trains, the 6-year-old entire was runner-up on his turf debut, over this Abu Dhabi 1600m, a fortnight ago and made no mistake this time under a confident Pat Cosgrave. Happy to take his time, on the inside rail, just in behind early leader Al Capone Monlau, Cosgrave decided it was time to go exiting the home turn and the race was basically all

over, the pair surging clear to score decisively.

Cosgrave said: *"The trainer and his team have always really liked this horse and I really thought we would win the last day, but his first time on turf was perhaps just a bit all too new for him. The way he travelled today he could certainly cope with dropping to 1400m, but he has seen out this 1600m well."*

Harry Bentley then employed virtually identical tactics to land a 2200m handicap aboard Whistle (Thoroughbred x Lady Wish by Munjiz) for Abdallah Al Hammadi and his main patron, Al Ajban Stables. Settled in third, but second of the main group behind AF Kafu who opened up a healthy lead about halfway, Bentley's mount was in position to attack when the early leader weakened entering the straight. Several tried to challenge, but Whistle found plenty for pressure to win in determined fashion and shed his maiden tag at the sixth attempt on his fifth appearance of the campaign.

A 5-year-old entire, he was having his third turf outing and was bettering his best previous finish, a 2000m third in a maiden on the Sharjah dirt.

Al Hammadi said: *"We were very hopeful this stamina test would suit him because his best run was when staying on over 2000m and it has. He is lightly raced and, we hope, improving."*

A 1600m maiden for horses in Wathba Stallions Cup for Private Owners Only developed into a duel over the final 150m at which point Murooj had grabbed the initiative from a weakening Saheel Al Megirat only to be challenged immediately by Alsaeid (Majd Al Arab x Frayne by Dormane). The pair traded blows throughout the final stages before the last named, under Szczepan Mazur, produced a late lunge as the line approached to snatch the spoils in thrilling fashion. Saddled by Ibrahim Al Hadhrami for Ben Shahwan Arabian Horse Stables, the 5-year-old entire was having just his third turf outing, but first since March. Previously unplaced on the grass, he has a pair of both second and third place finishes in dirt races to his credit.

Mazur said: *"I am lucky to ride some nice horses for these connections and the trainer has always thought this horse has plenty of ability and the return to turf has suited him."*

Al Hadhrami said: *"He has been placed on dirt, but we always thought he could win and we now know he goes as well, if not better, on turf."*

Over 1600m, restricted to 4-year-old fillies foaled in the UAE and with Prestige status, the Emirates Fillies Classic was well contested with at least half of the 15 runners holding a realistic chance entering the straight. This was the moment that Antonio Fresu chose to set sail for

home on Mumayaza (Majd Al Arab x Wycked by Burning Sand) in what proved a decisive move as the pair shot clear and always looked to be holding the challenges of Rawaat Al Reef, Heba Al Wathba and her own stable companion, Foah. The last named, as well as the winner, was saddled by Eric Lemartinel and she clearly impressed Fresu, doubling her career tally after four starts in the process having landed a 1000m Abu Dhabi maiden on her second start.

Fresu, sporting the silks of Sheikh Khalifa bin Sultan bin Khalifa Al Nahyan said: *"She was a nice spare ride and I have to thank connections for the opportunity. She has plenty of natural speed and really quickened when I asked and, although tiring, has stayed on well over a trip plenty far enough for her."*

Eight went to post for the colts and geldings' equivalent, also over 1600m for 4-year-olds foaled in the UAE and a Prestige contest, but seven may as well have stayed home with the irrepressible Hameem (Valiant Boy x RB Burn Baby Burn by TH Richie) maintaining his unblemished debut season, remaining unbeaten after six starts. Completing a double for Abdallah Al Hammadi and Al Ajban Stables, the colt now has five consecutive turf victories to his name under Adrie de Vries, having won on his racecourse bow on dirt at the end of October under Jose Santiago. De Vries barely moved a muscle as he ghosted his mount past early leader AF Muataq after which the result was never in any doubt. On his previous start, over this 1600m, he won the Listed Arabian Triple Crown R1 having previously beaten his elders in the Abu Dhabi Equestrian Gold Cup, another Prestige race over this course and distance.

De Vries said: *"He has broken well from the stalls today, so I just kept it simple and he seems to be improving all the time. He is very smart."*

Source: Emirates Racing Authority



Exciting H.H. The Amir Sword Festival concludes with Mon'nia victory



In the presence of H.H. the Amir Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al Thani, H.E. Sheikha Yasmeen Bint Mohammed Bin Khalifa Al Thani's MON'NIA won the US\$1mn features on the final day of what has been an exciting H.H. The Amir Sword Festival at Al Rayyan Park on Saturday, February 20.

H.E. Sheikha Yasmeen Bint Mohammed Bin Khalifa Al Thani's Mon'nia (Amer x Margouia) ensured trainer Julian Smart returned to the winner's circle for the biggest prize in Purebred Arabian racing in Qatar for the sixth straight year as the filly showed some amazing pace coming off the bend, right till the post to land the H.H The Amir Sword (GR1 PA) (Sponsored by Al Hazm) (PUREBRED ARABIANS 4 Year Olds & Older). Helmed by Tomas Lukasek, Mon'nia was midfield even as Umm Qarn's Bin General and Jabalah set the pace up front early on in the 2400m feature. Mon'nia began her move up on the bend before pulling away. Khalifa Bin Sheail Al Kuwari's Lady Princess, trained by Thomas Fourcy, gave chase and even closed the gap but not enough to threaten the leader. H.H. Sheikh Mohammed Bin Khalifa Al Thani's Ebraz (Amer x Massamarie) too upped the pace under Maxime Guyon with his characteristic kick, and managed to edge out Julien Auge ridden Lady Princess (General x Nacree Al Maury) for the

runner up spot a length and a quarter behind the winner.

Abdullah Bin Fahad Al Attiyah's Munir Du Soleil (Munjiz x Rahab) produced a late kick to win in two different countries in as many starts. Helmed by Tomas Lukasek, the Thomas Fourcy ward bided his time and surged forward coming off the final bend. The duo eventually passed leader Hidalgo Du Croate, ridden by Jason Watson for Mohammed Hussain Afroz, and built a healthy gap to win comfortably with three lengths to spare. Sheail Bin Khalifa Al Kuwari's Hidalgo Du Croate put up a promising run leading for the bulk of the 1850m race and finishing runner up.

H.E. Sheikha Reem Bint Mohammed Bin Khalifa Al Thani's Methgal (TM Fred Texas x Theeba) won the Qatar International Cup (GR1 PA) (Sponsored by Daam) (4 Year Olds & Older) for the second consecutive year with a fantastic run down coming off the final bend on Saturday. In the mile long run, the Julian Colin Smart trained 5yo had Maxime Guyon for company, like last year, and the two kicked up the pace on to the home straight and chased down the in-form Al Naama, helmed by Soufiane Saadi, taking a win by three quarters of a length.

Source: Qatar Racing & Equestrian Club. Photos: Juhaïm/QREC



Munir Du Soleil ridden by Tomas Lukasek



Methgal ridden by Maxime Guyon

Ajjaj lands Al Ain featured Marathon in determined fashion



Ajjaj ridden by Richard Mullen

Racing at Al Ain on February 20 was highlighted by the Second Leg of the Al Ain Marathon Series, a 4100m handicap in which just five went to post, but it produced a dramatic conclusion with Richard Mullen and Ajjaj (Tahar De Candelon x Shumoos by Djouras Tu) the waiting RB Grynade, the mount of Fabrice Veron, in the final 25m.

Of the quintet, only top weight and eventual third Balad Al Reef (Bibi De Carrere x Valdora by Dormane) did not lead at some point with Jeemi setting the early tempo, headed by Ha-reer Al Reef with about 800m remaining, but soon relinquishing that advantage to RB Grynade (Burning Sand x Frynzy by Dormane).

As Mullen started to challenge, about 350m from home, RB Grynade drifted across his path, forcing Ajjaj to check. Mullen was able to pull him around his errant rival and his mount responded well, staying on strongly to lead where it mattered.

Trained on the Al Ain track by Jean de Roualle, the homebred 10-year-old entire, has now won five times, all in the UAE and was winning

this race for a second time, having also landed the prize in 2018 when he followed up in the 5100m concluding leg of the series.

De Roualle said: "That was really pleasing because he had traffic problems and was stopped, so over such a long distance, it takes a lot to get momentum going again. This horse is ten years young and in Richie Mullen we have the perfect jockey for these horses; he has ridden a marvelous race today and we are delighted he rides our horses."

The fixture kicked off with a 2000m maiden for which a capacity field of 15 faced the starter, but very few were ever able to land a blow with several ruining their chances with very slow starts. Tadhg O'Shea and AF Sadn (Af Albahar x Mahra by Bengali D'Albret) were the early leaders, but weakened quickly about 750m from home at which point Jouna and Royston Ffrench grabbed the initiative with Harturo Du Faust (Mared Al Sahra x Mecca Di Gallura by Veinard Al Maury) for company, the remainder soon well beaten.

The latter, ridden by Omani apprentice Abdul

Aziz Al Balushi for Abu Dhabi Racing and Helal Alalawi, took over about halfway down the long straight.

Ffrench's mount tried to battle back, but had to settle for second with the winner pulling away in the final 150m. Third on debut, at the end of October, over 1400m here at Al Ain and his best previous placing, the 4-year-old colt was opening his account at the fifth attempt.

Alalawi, who trains in Al Ain, said: *"He was staying on over 1400m, 1600m and then 1800m, so we hoped the extra distance would be in his favour and, thankfully, he has relished it."*

O'Shea may have been out of luck in the opener, but made no mistake in the following 1600m maiden for horses foaled in the UAE, another full field and, again, very few of the 15 ever threatened. As has been the case in a lot of Al Ain races, this year in particular, the race developed into a duel with O'Shea aboard AF Musannef (AF Al Buraq x Nasemah by Kaolino) battling throughout the final 575m with TaaJer, the pair both maidens after 26 combined starts!

Trained by Ernst Oertel for Khalid Khalifa Al Nabooda, AF Musannef only managed to get his head in front in the dying strides, improving on two second and a third placing in his previous 11 attempts. The homebred 5-year-old entire posted those placings this season and he has ac-

tually now been placed in all four dirt outings this season, his one failure having come on the Abu Dhabi turf.

O'Shea said: *"He has been knocking on the door this season and deserved a win, especially the way he has really battled for me. It was a good and the runner-up deserves a lot of credit also."*

Ninety minutes later connections were celebrating a double after the hard fought success of dirt debutant AF Alajaj (AF Albahar x Hathrah by Makzan) in a 1600m handicap Wathba Stallions Cup for Private Owners Only. Sent straight to the front by O'Shea, the homebred 4-year-old colt won his first career start, over 1400m on the Abu Dhabi turf just over a month ago and was then far from disgraced when sixth behind the imperious Hameem in the 1600m Listed Arabian Triple Crown R1, also in the capital.

Here he was harried throughout the final 500m by Al Mansour NF who, as hard as he tried, just could not get past.

Winning trainer, Oertel said: *"Some of my horses do not run as well here as they do in Abu Dhabi, but he has coped well with it and he is a nice, young horse. We will probably go back to Abu Dhabi for his next start and have another crack at Hameem."*

Doug Watson does not train that many Pure-



AF Alajaj ridden by Tadhg O'Shea

bred Arabians, but he is a dab hand with them and he saddled RB Blyng (Majd Al Arab x Frynzy by Dormane) who turned a 1600m conditions race into a procession under Sam Hitchcott for Byerley Racing. Having just her seventh career start and second in the UAE, after a fruitless turf debut at Abu Dhabi in early December, the 5-year-old mare has now won three of her seven career appearances, two over 1600m, after a pair of victories in the US, the native land of both herself and the handler. In front from a long way out, she scooted clear with about 450 remaining and Hitchcott never had a moment of concern thereafter.

He said: *"That was a good win and I was always happy. She travelled well, enjoyed bowling along in front and then put the race to bed well when I asked her."*

Class prevailed in the finale, a 1000m conditions contest, Hitchcott completing a double on the card, this time combining with Majed Al Jahoori aboard Rawaa (Munjiz x Rudina by Burning SandS), also completing a brace for Yas Racing.

A 6-year-old homebred, the mare was having

just her eighth career start and trebling her win tally having won her first two career appearances, over 1200m at Sharjah, then over this Al Ain 1000m. Her three previous outings were in the 1600m Group 1 Al Maktoum Challenge R1 on dirt at Meydan, the 1200m Group 3 Al Ruwais on the Abu Dhabi turf and, back on dirt at Meydan, the 1400m Group2 Mazrat Al Ruwayah. She readily took full advantage of this much easier assignment.

AF Mozhell (Al Kesbe x Al Saleel by Hatteen) and Saif Al Balushi, a second Omani apprentice to register a victory on the card, routed 11 opponents in a 1000m handicap for Khalifa Al Neyadi who both owns and trains the 6-year-old entire. Bred by Al Nabooda, this was a third career success for the horse and second this season, adding to a 1000m Sharjah success early last month. Having chased eventual runner-up Muhaymin and Abdul Aziz Al Balushi throughout the first half of the race, AF Mozhell shot clear and was never going to be caught.

Source and photos: Emirates Racing Authority



Rawaa ridden by Sam Hitchcott

Ghannam wins Gulf Cup at H.H. The Amir Sword Festival



The highlight of the second day, February 19, for the Purebred Arabians was the \$100,000 Gulf Cup for horses bred in the Gulf States. This was won on the line in thrilling fashion by Ghannam (AF AlBahar x Bedur ASF), a five-year-old homebred of Abdullah Saeed Abdullah Al-Mesnad. The son of AF AlBahar has really found his feet since arriving in Doha, a winner over a mile in Duindigt in 2019, he has not been out of the frame this year, forming a successful partnership with Alberto Sanna.

Returning to Turf after two dirt starts was not enough to stop Ghannam denying Umm Qarn's Aahil from recording a hat-trick of wins in the race. Trained by Wasim Al Sahn since arriving in Doha, the colt came with a strong run on the outside and won going away from Aahil and Barra.

Earlier in the card Group 3PA Sprinter Championship winner Ateej (AF AlBahar x Sahara Croixnoire) continued his good run of recent

form, dropped back to 1200m, with a win in the Purebred Arabian Sprint Cup. Ridden by Soufiane Saadi the veteran eight-year-old is still a force to be reckoned with, having his best season to date, with three wins, two seconds and a fourth to his name. Racing in the colours of Mohammed bin Ahmed bin Mohammed Al Attiyah and trained by Gassim Ghazali, Ateej chased down the long-time leader Al Jeryan Stud's AJS Berline to win by a quarter of a length. The fast-finishing Mkatyns was a length and a half behind in third.

It was a remarkable day for the stallion AF AlBahar, who, as well as siring the winners of the principle Arabian races, also scored with AJS Beriut (AF AlBahar x Miss Ginioux) in the Local Bred Novice plate for fillies and mares over 1600m. Al Jeryan Stud's four-year-old filly had won well on her debut in October and though beaten by Alf Lyla next time, she turned the tables on that one, who finished fifth. Settled

in behind the leaders, it looked as though AJS Beriut would have to settle for a place, but she rallied under pressure from Alberto Sanna in the final 100m and got up to win by a short head from Abida, with Ghanayem nearly two length behind in third.

The Purebred Arabian Maiden Plate over 2000m was won by Umm Qarn's Bin Al Tair (Al Tair x Al Yzea), trained by Alban de Mieulle and ridden by Soufiane Saadi. One of a handful of

runners from Al Tair's first crop, he had been placed on his three-year-old debut in France and again on his debut in Doha in December. The colt showed a good turn of foot to make up ground on the outside and should progress from this.

Source: Equine Creative Media. Photos: Ju-haim/QREC



Ateej ridden by Soufiane Saadi



AJS Beriut ridden by Alberto Sanna



Aalee Al Magam lands Al Zubara Trophy in perfect start of H.H. The Amir Sword Festival

Meshaal Bin Ali Al Attiyah's Aalee Al Magam (Amer x Abigaille) won for the first time since a C&D victory back in December 2019 when JP Guillambert guided the 9yo to a fantastic victory in the Al Zubara Trophy (Local Purebred Arabians 4yo & older) on Day 1 of the H.H. The Amir Sword Festival at Al Rayyan Park on Thursday. Saddled by Gassim Ghazali in the 2000m contest, the grey horse stayed on the rails tracking leaders for the bulk of the race, before Guillambert found a gap and lined up his mount for a straight shot at the post. As the pace increased, Injaaz Stud's Lekhraib (AF AlBahar x Grace T), schooled by Mohammed Ghazali and ridden by Julien Auge in the feature, gave chase and stayed within striking distance of the leader. Aalee Al Magam however held on at the post to win by a head in front of Lekhraib. H.H. Sheikh Mohammed Bin Khalifa Al Thani's Khatafaynee (AF AlBahar x Fifth) finished third under Maxime Guyon, edging out Ronan Thomas ridden Sealine by a neck.

Osama Omer Al Dafea's Tahar (TM Fred Texas

x Insaf) had shown promise on his last two C&D outings earlier this season even as a victory had eluded the 6yo for a year. On Thursday, in the Purebred Arabian Handicap (85 & below), the grey horse changed that record landing the miler in a thrilling finish. Ridden by Carlo Fiocchi in the mile long race, Tahar edged out Ronan Thomas ridden Umm Bab by a neck at the post in a frantic finish.

Umm Qarn's Antar (Al Mamun Monlau x Al Dahma) led a one-two for the colours and the trainer Alban Elie De Mieulle when he opened the H.H. The Amir Sword Festival with a comfortable victory in the Purebred Arabian Plate (4 Year Olds) on Thursday. Winner in the Qatar Derby (Gr3 PA) over C&D, the colt was partnered by Ronan Thomas once again and the duo beat stablemate Muqla, helmed by Soufiane Saadi, by one and a half-length at the post. The win was Antar's third this season.

Source: Qatar Racing & Equestrian Club. Photos: Ju-haim/QREC

Jabalini ridden by Tadhg O'Shea



O'Shea shines in Abu Dhabi with four consecutive wins

The Abu Dhabi turf played host to six races on Sunday, February 14, and UAE Champion Jockey Tadhg O'Shea landed four consecutive races for a memorable four-timer, including doubles for both Khalid Khalifa Al Nabooda and Ernst Oertel.

Owner Royal Cavalry of Oman and trainer Ibrahim Al Hadhrami were actually completing doubles when O'Shea opened his haul in a 2200m handicap aboard Jabalini (Nizam x Josika by Darike), half of a pair among the ten runners who ever really seemingly threatened to win. Ryan Curatolo was allowed to set what appeared a moderate tempo aboard Waadh, stalked by O'Shea and, until about 700m out, by Veron aboard Jeemi. Once the last named dropped away it was a duel, one O'Shea always looked likely to get the better of once his mount hit the front with about 350m remaining, despite Waadh rallying gamely for Curatolo. An-

other homebred, the 6-year-old entire has now won half of his six UAE outings, including three of his five on the Abu Dhabi turf.

O'Shea said: *"I actually rode this horse and was third over 2600m on him in Oman, so was keen to get back on him over this longer trip and I was available for the spare ride."*

"I was pretty confident throughout until, perhaps, soon after we hit the front when he almost thought he had done enough, but he soon picked up again. It was a good effort in a decent little race."

O'Shea is best known for his association with owner Khalid Khalifa Al Nabooda by whom he is retained and they, as is so often the case, combined to snare the race for horses in private ownership, a 2200m handicap, courtesy of AF Abahe (Al Kesbe x Kerouane by Tidjani).

Like the vast majority of the Al Nabooda string, the 8-year-old entire is homebred and

trained by Ernst Oertel. They must have been pretty happy throughout the majority of the contest because, although nearer last than first throughout the majority of the race, O'Shea always looked confident. He edged his mount closer leaving the back straight and, though briefly denied a clear run leaving the home turn, soon found daylight and was always going to catch Fertile Du Croate, denying Ibrahim Aseel a double in the process. Al Nabooda's horse was registering a fourth career success, but first on turf and over such a long distance. He had previously won thrice on dirt, in consecutive races, between November 2017 and January 2018.

O'Shea said: *"They went a nice even gallop and, from my wide draw, I had to ride for a bit of luck. I had a lovely trip for the vast majority of the race before it became a little bit tight on the bend, but we soon found room and I had a very willing partner who deserved to win again."*

The same connections then combined with AF Makerah (Af Al Buraq x Aicha Croixnoire by Dahman El Arami) in the following 1600m handicap, O'Shea riding a virtual carbon copy of the previous race, settling his mount in rear, mak-

ing stealthy progress entering the home turn and leading in the final 150m or so. The main difference was though that this time runner-up Hazeem Al Raed was clearly not in the mood to be denied, fighting back gamely under Antonio Fresu, seeking a double on the night. They battled back in determined fashion, but the head of AF Makerah was in front, narrowly, where it mattered.

Another Al Nabooda homebred, the 8-year-old mare was winning for a sixth time, all in Abu Dhabi and now has four course and distance victories to his name.

O'Shea said: *"This time we had a great draw and a nice low weight, so we knew a lot was in our favour. She has shown a great attitude and, to be fair to the trainer, he has been telling me to ride her all season, but I have ignored him until now and always picked something else!"*

O'Shea clearly believes in the 'if it ain't broke don't fix it' mantra because he used virtually identical tactics to add the finale and only Thoroughbred contest on the card, a 1600m maiden, to his burgeoning haul aboard Law Of Peace (Shamardal x Certify by Elusive Quality).

Not the quickest away on local debutant, the



AF Abahe ridden by Tadhg O'Shea

AF Makerah ridden by Tadhg O'Shea



4-year-old Shamardal gelding having his first start in the colours of Nasir Askar and since joining Satish Seemar, found himself in last. However, O'Shea never appeared unfazed, pulling outside rivals to make steady progress before unleashing his winning effort in the final 250m, denying racecourse debutant Waathig.

Raced four times in Britain by Charlie Appleby for Godolphin, he was thrice second, but has now opened his account and should be open to improvement considering his previous appearance, after which he was gelded, was 376 days ago.

Sporting a massive grin, albeit behind a mask, O'Shea said: "Plan A went straight out the window because we missed the break somewhat, but they went a good gallop, so it probably helped me in the end. He took a big breather, having his first start for a long time, on the home turn and then finished his race off strongly. I actually rode four here about ten years ago when the late Pat Buckley told me 'to go home and think how I could have ridden five, come back and do it sometime'. I did not quite manage that but will dedicate these four to Pat!"

A 1200m handicap looked set to be dominated by Ernst Oertel duo AF Taghzel and AF Majalis with the pair locked in battle throughout the

short straight, but just as the latter, seeking to remain unbeaten this season after four starts, fought passed his stable companion, Al Mobher (Big Easy x Radwa De Faust by Al Sakbe) dashed past them both in the final 100m to win going away. Homebred by The Royal Cavalry of Oman, the 8-year-old entire, confidently ridden by Szczepan Mazur for Ibrahim Al Hadhrami, was winning for the third time, second on the Abu Dhabi turf. However, his previous victory was over 1000m on the dirt at Al Ain, under Mazur, in January 2019.

Mazur said: "This horse likes these sprint races and is versatile between 1000m and 1400m, so we were pretty hopeful though it was a strong field, especially with AF Majalis in such good form. However, my horse was always going well and then really quickened when I asked, so it was a good performance."

The curtain raising 1200m maiden, for horses foaled locally, was won comfortably by ES Rubban (Azzam Al Zobair x Jolie Du Cassou by Baco Du Cassou), continuing a good weekend for his trainer, Ibrahim Aseel, who had saddled his second winner of the season at Al Ain on Friday. Opening his handler's turf account for the campaign, on just his second racecourse appearance after a 1000m debut second on

the Sharjah dirt track where he is trained, the 4-year-old clearly relished both the extra 200m and change of surface. Homebred by Sheikh Abdulla bin Majid Al Qassemi, chairman of the Sharjah Equestrian and Racing Club, he was settled in about fifth behind Antonio Fresu before easing closer as the leaders stayed to enter the straight. They quickened to the front with about 250m remaining and it was soon apparent nothing was going to emerge to throw down a serious challenge.

Fresu said: "He seems a nice young horse who was a bit green when making his debut, but running well. This 1200m has really suited him and he clearly handles the grass as well as dirt."

Aseel said: "It has been a good few days and the horses are, in general, running well, so we hope we can add to these winners."

Source: Emirates Racing Authority



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Law Of Peace ridden by Tadhg O'Shea



Improving Munfared lands Al Ain feature after early Veron Double



Munfared ridden by Antonio Fresu

Racing at Al Ain on Friday, February 12, was officially highlighted by a 2000m conditions race, for horses who had not previously won twice, and the one to double their account was Munfared (TM Fred Texas x Safya by Akbar), making it two wins from just three starts.

Confidently ridden by Antonio Fresu for Ahmed Al Mehairbi and Al Rahmani Racing, the 4-year-old old colt actually looked likely to win comfortably when striking the front with about 450m remaining before Salb threw down a determined challenge throughout the final 300m, but always looked held.

Well beaten on his turf debut at Abu Dhabi in December, albeit in the Listed Abu Dhabi Championship, he then posted a determined 1400m maiden success here at Al Ain three weeks ago.

Al Mehairbi said: *"This is a nice colt who has improved with each start and we hope can*

continue to do so. We thought the extra distance was an advantage and he has, again, shown a battling, winning, mentality which is ideal."

The meeting kicked off with a handicap for horses in Wathba Stallions Cup for Private Owners Only over 1800m and a gutsy performance from Asif (Dhiaa Al Reef x Hayat by Gerbya) was enough to land the spoils, probably never headed under Fabrice Veron riding in the colours of Mohd Rashid Al Saadi for trainer Ibrahim Al Hadhrami.

Victorious on his debut over 1600m in Muscat, the 4-year-old colt was then well beaten on both his first two UAE outings, albeit in decent races and on the Abu Dhabi turf. However, he is now unbeaten after three dirt appearances and when partnered by Veron, the pair having won their previous start, a handicap over this 1800m Al Ain course and distance. That was



Asif ridden by Fabrice Veron

exactly a month ago. He actually showed a far better attitude in the race, fighting off what had looked a likely telling challenge from runner-up Dream De Montjoi, having arrived late at the start accompanied by an outrider and pony, minus Veron.

Al Hadhrami said: *"As I told you last time he is a nice little horse who loves dirt surfaces and is hopefully improving."*

Veron immediately completed an 1800m handicap double, this time sporting the silks of HH Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan aboard Qassim (AF Albahar x Tornade Du Loup by Tornado De Syrah) for Eric Lemartinel. Having just his fourth start and shedding his maiden tag in the process, the homebred 4-year-old colt hit the front a long way out, but had most rivals beaten off halfway up the straight with stable companion Muqtader staying on to claim second, but never looking likely to pass Veron's mount.

Raced only at Al Ain, he was well beaten on his first two starts before plugging on to take a remote fourth over this 1800m three weeks ago.

Lemartinel said: *"That was only his fourth run and he is improving with the experience each time which is pleasing. Obviously this was only a moderate handicap, but he can get*

better and we will look for another race back here at Al Ain."

Positive tactics have proved winning ones more often than not on Al Ain recently and that was the case again in a 2000m maiden for horses foaled locally in which Szczepan Mazur sent Kesra (Mahabb x Kasbanah by Djelfor) to the front and the pair stayed there for Al Ajban Stables and Abdallah Al Hammadi.

That rather simplifies the performance though as Mazur's mount was hounded by half of his 14 opponents early on, but that number slowly whittled down and, in the end, the pair won relatively comfortably. A 5-year-old entire, he was opening his account at the seventh attempt, fourth on dirt and was actually registering a first gold, silver or bronze medal in the process, a fifth on his only previous outing this season, at the end of October, the best finish he had managed previously.

Mazur said: *"That was a brave performance as he was not given an easy lead by any means, so all credit to the horse. He can improve again"*.

A 1600m handicap produced a grandstand finish with Elione Chaves riding his first winner of the season, after 14 fruitless attempts, delivering Amang Alwada (Abu Alemarat x Mela La by Sour) to lead right on the line to deny

Al Suhoj. Riding in the jazzy silks of Sheikh Hamed bin Khadim bin Butti for trainer Mohammed Al Shamsi, Chaves and the 9-year-old entire were actually probably second for 1598m, initially behind AF Mezmar and then the majority of the straight. However, they were in front when it mattered, Chaves seeming to know with a clench of the fist straight after the line.

The jockey said: *"It is nice to get a winner on the board and I was late getting here this season, so it was quite apt I was almost too late getting up, but I was pretty confident we had won, just."*

There was then a virtual carbon copy climax to the following 1400m maiden, only this time the winning line appeared just in time for Horganza (Josco Du Cayrou x Alcantara by Ker-

bella) and Sam Hitchcott, the pair clinging on grimly from Ares De Gion who was finishing at a rate of knots under Szczepan Mazur.

A 4-year-old filly with just her second start having finished third; over course and distance on debut three weeks ago, Ziad Galadari's silks were being carried to victory for the first time this season, after 13 unsuccessful forays. Never far off the pace, Hitchcott grasped the initiative early in the long straight and the filly galloped all the way to the line, having just enough left in the dying strides.

Winning trainer Ibrahim Aseel said: *"That is a big result for our whole team and the owner who is a big supporter of ours. We were quite hopeful though because she ran very well on debut and improved for that experience."*

Source and photos: Emirates Racing Authority



Qassim ridden by Fabrice Veron



Amang Awada ridden by Elione Chaves

Kesra ridden by Szczepan Mazur



De Vries helps Al Hammadi score in Arabian Triple Crown R1 with the unbeaten Hameem



Hameem ridden by Adrie de Vries

Abdallah Al Hammadi's unbeaten stable star Hameem (Valiant Boy x RB Burn Baby Burn by TH Richie) stretched his win streak to five races when winning the PA Listed Arabian Triple Crown Rd1 in style under Adrie de Vries at Abu Dhabi Equestrian Club on February 7.

Victory in the mile event was one of three on the night for Emirati schooler Al Hammadi,

whose seasonal tally is up to 14. Al Hammadi won three of the six races on the card scoring in successive races starting with the opening 1600m maiden for 4yos and older horses where Thabet Al Reef (Bibi De Carrere x RS Thaqiba by Ne Rien Prendre) ran out a massive four and a half-length winner under Bernardo Pinheiro.

Al Hammadi's second arrived in the first of

the handicaps, which was over the same 1600m trip and where Blue Diamond (Shadiyda x Mamlakah by Dayjur) prevailed by a neck in the hands of Pat Cosgrave.

The Listed Arabian Triple Crown Rd 1 saw Al Hammadi's Abu Dhabi Colts Classic and Abu Dhabi Equestrian Club Gold Cup winner Hameem turn up with one of the best performances of his career. The 4yo Valiant Boy colt was slow getting away and ridden at the back of the field by Dutchman De Vries, who has steered him to four wins this season.

Hameem looked like he would not make it to the front in time as Ernst Oertel's AF Alajaj took up the running briefly from teammate and stable companion AF Thayer as soon as the field turned for home.

Eric Lemartinel's Mujeeb and Ibrahim Al Hadhrami's Mutaqadim pounced immediately and left AF Alajaj behind. With 300m left, De Vries and Hameem still found themselves with traffic to negotiate, but the Dutchman expertly threaded his partner between horses and once finding space to run, Hameem flew to score by a length and a quarter from Mujeeb with Fabrice Veron up. Mutaqadim was a further length and

a quarter behind in third with Szczepan Mazur up.

Omani handler Al Hadhrami and Mazur of Poland then celebrated a consecutive double success with Shoja'A Muscat (Za'eem ASF x Noor Jahan by Gerbya) his head ahead of Ashton Tourettes to win the 1400m Wathba Stallions Cup for Private Owners. Al Hadhrami and Mazur then won the following 1200m maiden that followed with Heros De Lagarde (AF Albahar x Moubaraka by Djouras Tu), who ran across the finish with six and a quarter lengths to spare.

The only Thoroughbred affair on the card was a handicap contest over a 2400m trip and won by Musabbah Al Mheiri's Good Tidings (Teofilo x Nouvelle Bonne by Desert Style) with Antonio Fresu up. Finishing second a half-length in arrears was Blue Sovereign, for trainer Erwan Charpy and jockey Clement Lecoeuvre, while Jaber Ramadhan's Harbour Spirit took third a further neck back in the hands of Harry Bentley.

Source and photos: Emirates Racing Authority

Thabet Al Reef ridden by Bernardo Pinheiro



Al Nabooda and Oertel secure 1-2-3 places in Jebel Ali



The action kicked off at Jebel Ali on February 5 afternoon with a 1400m Purebred Arabian maiden (Dubai Real State Centre) which was totally dominated by horses saddled by Ernst Oertel for his main patron, Khalid Khalifa Al Nabooda, the pair combining with the first three homes.

The owner's retained jockey Tadhg O'Shea, who had six to choose from, was on the right one, landing the spoils aboard AF Soqrat (AF Al-salaam x Caline Du Loup by Manganate), chased home by stable companions AF Almoheeb and AF Muataq in a capacity field of 16.

Initially the second reserve, the 5-year-old homebred entire took full advantage of the late

opportunity, opening his account at the fifth attempt on his first public racecourse appearance at Jebel Ali. Settled in midfield, the pair made smooth to hit the front inside the final 375m and staying on strongly to beat debutants AF Almoheeb (AF Al Buraq x Elina Des Fabries by Dormane) ridden by Malin Holmberg and AF Muataq (AF Al Buraq x AF Mujdieh by Martin Al Maury) ridden by Gerald Avranche.

O'Shea said: *"His experience has really come to the fore there, it is crucial up this steep hill and we were able to bring him here last week for a gallop which was a great help."*

Source and photos: Emirates Racing Authority

Latam wins for the first time in the 31st Race Meeting Al Wajba Cup



Al Shaqab Racing's Latam (TM Fred Texas x Ajdabya) registered his first win Qatar when he landed the Purebred Arabian Novice Plate (4 Year Olds & Older) comfortably on the dirt track at Al Rayyan Park on January 11. Ridden by Tomas Lukasek in the 1900m run, the 6yo won on his ninth start in Qatar with the Ibrahim Saeed Al Malki trained grey horse winning by three lengths. Ivan Rossi ridden Al Rayyan was the runner up. It was Al Malki's third winner on Thursday.

Qatari rider Rashid Ali Al Marri rode his 12th winner of the season when he guided Ahmed

Hassan Al Malki Al Jehani's Shaweesh (Nizam x Mansourah ASF) in the Local Purebred Arabian Novice Plate on Thursday. In the 1700m run, the Hamad Al Jehani saddled 6yo put up a determined run on the straight to win comfortably.

Al Marri and his mount won by three lengths and a quarter in front of Khalid Al Balushi ridden Texas (T M Fred Texas x Al Moqawama). It was the trainer's second straight winner on Thursday.

Source: Qatar Racing & Equestrian Club. Photos: Juhaïm/QREC

AJS Berline wins Al Shaqab Racing Purebred Arabian Cup



Al Jeryan Stud's AJS Berline (AF AlBahar x Dormaline) went one better than her last outing to land her second victory of the term with ease on Wednesday. In the Al Shaqab Racing Purebred Arabian Cup - 4 Year Olds Only (Far Bend), the Hadi Al Ramzani schooled filly had Marco Casamento for company and the duo repeated a C&D result from her season opener back in November. In the process, the chestnut filly held off a duo saddled by Alban Elie De Mieulle for a two and a half-length victory at the post. Umm Qarn's MUQLA (Tabarak x Sarahmina) was ridden to runner up spot by Ronan Thomas while Noora Racing Limited's QUEPOS (Al Tair x Bonnett) was third under Soufiane Saadi.

H.H. Sheikh Mohammed Bin Khalifa Al Thani's Jamaiel (Dahess x Amandine De Ghazal) completed a double after following up her maiden victory last month with a handicap win on Wednesday. Like all her previous outings in Doha, Tomas Lukasek was in the saddle for the

Julian Colin Smart trained 4yo, and the filly impressed with a fine run despite a big step up in distance to 2100 in the Purebred Arabian Handicap (Far Bend) (80 & below). She won by one and a half lengths.

Al Shahania Stud's Zaman (Aziz ASF x Mansourah ASF) had shown promise his first two outings, finishing third over the two milers at Al Rayyan Park. On Wednesday, with Francois Herholdt in the saddle for the third straight time, the Julian Colin Smart saddled colt stepped up in distance handsomely, landing the Local Purebred Arabian Maiden Plate (Far Bend) (4-6yo) in a thrilling finish. A determined run on the straight saw the 4yo edge out Ronan Thomas ridden Black Pearl by a head for an exciting win in the 2000m run.

Source: Qatar Racing & Equestrian Club. Photos: Juhaime/QREC

Safi Al Zaman is a new winner for Sh Mohammed Bin Faleh Al Thani



H.E. Sheikh Mohammed Bin Faleh Al Thani celebrated a new homebred Purebred Arabian winner at Pau, France, on Tuesday, 2 February when Safi Al Zaman (AF Albahar x Gold Label by Akbar) lifted the Prix Magicienne Dedouble, a conditions race for 4-year-old and older Purebred Arabians.

The 4-year-old colt, who is trained by Elisabeth Bernard, did not have an easy race, as he was caught five wide from the rail with no cover in the early stages of the 2,000m race on the all-weather track.

Once in the back straight, apprentice jockey Gary Sanchez, who was claiming 3.5k, let him go forward to sit just on the outside of the leader, Jassous Tun (Majd Al Arab x Nemosie Al Maury by Kesberoy) also trained by Elisabeth Bernard and ridden by Anthony Crstus. They began to accelerate in the final turn and Safi Al Zaman took the lead in the straight, but with his rivals snapping at his heels.

Alghanny (Madjani x Ziva by Dormane - owned by HH Sh Hamdan Bin Rashid Al Maktoum and ridden by Valentin Seguy) came with a late burst of speed to challenge in the final strides, but Safi Al Zaman kept his head in front to win by short head.

Trainer Elisabeth Bernard commented: *"Luckily, I put a claiming jockey on board Safi Al Zaman, as there wasn't much between them in the finish. He didn't have a good draw, coming from stall number 10. He jumped badly and was five wide throughout. Considering these conditions, his performance here is a good one, especially as he is not a generous horse. He has done the job nonetheless."*

Safi Al Zaman was also bred by H.E. Sheikh Mohammed Bin Faleh Al Thani. He is out of the Akbar mare Gold Label and is her third winner, following Jenjal and Al Eshrah.

Source: JDG/QREC. Photo: Robert Polin

Umm Bab shines in the opening race meet at Al Uqda



Umm Bab ridden by Carlos Henrique

Noora Racing Limited's Umm Bab (AF AlBahar x Djelfa CS) made history winning the first race ever at the new Al Uqda Equestrian Complex on January 30, herself building on the promise she had shown on her debut in November at Al Rayyan Park to shed her maiden status in comfortable fashion.

Helmed by Carlos Henrique, the Alban Elie De Mieulle trained filly tracked early leaders in the 1300m Purebred Arabian Maiden Plate before Henrique got his mount to up the pace. As the field jostled for advantage on the home straight, Umm Bab managed to take an advantage 100m out and then went past the post one-and-a-half lengths in front of Michael Forest ridden Starlit D'Ibos (General x Starbella D'Ibos).

H.E. Sheikha Iman Bint Mohammed Bin Khalifa Al Thani's Saad (Munjiz x Massroua) made a handsome debut at Al Uqda's dirt track on Saturday. Trained by Julian Colin Smart, the 4yo had Francois Herholdt in the saddle in the 2000m Local Purebred Arabian Maiden Plate.

The grey colt went astray going wide coming off the final bend after tracking early leader Al Hoot for the bulk of the race. However, the jockey managed to keep Saad in line on outer rails to beat Ronan Thomas ridden Bakir (Amer x Zabieh), trained by Alban Elie De Mieulle, by a length at the post.

Al Gaiah Stud's Fajr (No Risk Al Maury x Al Anqa) landed his first career victory when he landed the Purebred Arabian Handicap (75 & below) in fine fashion on Saturday. Helmed by apprentice jockey Khalid Al Balushi, the Khaled Mohamad Alahmad trained 7yo bounced back from forgettable outing earlier this month at Al Rayyan Park when he finished tenth, to win the 1300m run on dirt with a length to spare. Ali Khalid Al Mosallam rode Badira (Al Tair x Moonlit) to runner up place.

Source: Qatar Racing & Equestrian Club. Photos: Ju-haim/QREC



Saad ridden by Francois Herholdt

Fajr ridden by Khalid Al Balushi



De Roüalle and Mullen with Ajjaj win The Al Ain Marathon Series for Yas Racing

Jean de Roüalle and Richard Mullen got this season's Al Ain Marathon Series off to a flier with victory in the 3200m first leg with Ajjaj (Tahar De Candelon x Shumoos by Djouras Tur) whose late burst saw him change the complexion of the race 300m from the finish, at Al Ain Racecourse on January 29.

Brought to the straight wide but slightly trailing leader Eric Lemartinel's Basmah (Bibi De Carrere x Nymphaea Du Paon by Mahabb), Mullen delivered a riding masterclass aboard the 10yo Tahar De Candelon horse, who moved to challenge for the lead as soon as he received his orders. Basmah tried to challenge under Fabrice Veron, but failed with stablemate and teammate RB Grynade (Burning Sand x Frynzy by Dormane) taking third a further five lengths behind under Tadhg O'Shea.

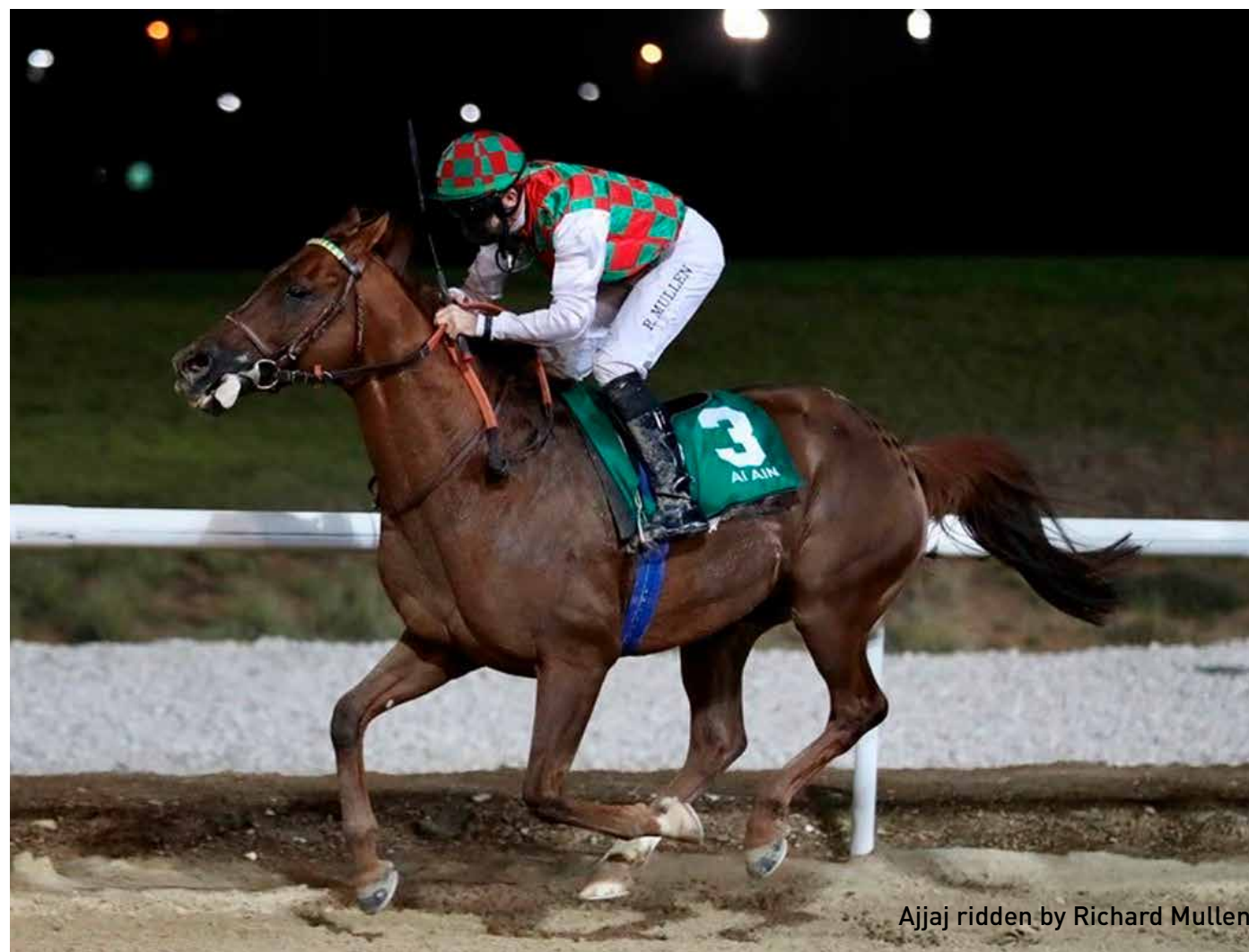
There were doubles on the card for trainers Ibrahim Al Hadhrami and Ahmed Al Mehairbi. The latter got his evening underway in the card

opening 1600m maiden for 4yos with the Fabrice Veron ridden Mrmr (Munjiz x Dahess Majan by Dahess) and doubled his scoring after Ullias (Dahess x Chanel De Faust by Mahabb) landed the 1800m maiden under Fernando Jara.

Al Hadhrami's first success was gained in the 1600m maiden for 4yos and above with the Szczepan Mazur ridden Jood (Nieshan x Iskra De Carrere by Coq Du Cassou), and the pair combined to win the 1000m handicap sprint with Arif (Azadi x Orphe Du Clos by Kerbella).

Ernst Oertel and Sandro Paiva also got on the scoresheet in the 2000m handicap with AF Es-haar (Marwan x Amjaad by Amer) who edged Lemartinel's Jesus Rosales piloted Taajer by a short head, while Veron picked up a second success on the card in the Wathba Stallions Cup for Private Owners 1400m handicap with Hazeem Al Raed (TM Fred Texas x Karizma CS by Kador De Blaziet).

Source and photos: Emirates Racing Authority



Ajjaj ridden by Richard Mullen



Mrmr ridden by Fabrice Veron



Ullias ridden by Fernando Jara



Jood ridden by Szczepan Mazur



Arif ridden by Szczepan Mazur



AF Eshaar ridden by Sandro Paiva



Hazeem Al Raed ridden by Fabrice Veron



Mon'nia ridden by Tomas Lukasek

Mon'nia and Tarek Du Soleil land the big ones on H.E. Sheikh Joaan Bin Hamad Al Thani Rifle Day

H.E. Sheikha Yasmeen MK Al Thani's Mon'Nia (Amer x Margouia) was expected to give a good account when lining up for the H.E. Sheikh Joaan Bin Hamad Al Thani Trophy (Gr3 Pa) (4yo & Older) on Thursday, January 28, having impressed in a fourth place in the Derby last month following her wins in the Guineas and the Oaks Trial earlier in the season. Julian Colin Smart trained mare did not disappoint as the 5yo entered the winner's circle for the seventh time overall. With Tomas Lukasek in the saddle, Mon'nia was in her elements on the home straight in the 2200m race as she went past the post three lengths in front of Al Shaqab Racing's group winner Al Naa-

ma (Majd Al Arab x Entisar), ridden by Soufiane Saadi for Alban Elie De Mieulle. Osama Omer Al Dafea's C&D winner GINKEAU (Divamer x Eauvation Des Cedres) was third under Alberto Sanna.

Qatari jockey Faleh Bughanaim rode his seventh winner of the season when he guided Hassan Ali Alabdulmalik's Tarek Du Soleil (Dahess x Musique Du Soleil) to his first victory in Qatar on Thursday. Placed on his first two outings, the Deborah Amanda Clare Mountain trained colt tracked early leaders early on in the H.E. Sheikh Joaan Bin Hamad Al Thani Trophy (4yo P/A) before Bughanaim whipped his mount to up the pace. Marco Casamento and his partner Hadji-

ra De Flauzins (Josco Du Cayrou x Ishraf) gave chase in the final 50m but Tarek Du Soleil held on to his position by a neck for a fine win. Ronan Thomas ridden First Class (Dahess x Toppofthe-class) was third.

Mohammed Bin Ahmed Bin Mohammed Al Attiya's Ateej (AF AlBahar x Sahara Croixnoire) had won a big Gr 3 sprint earlier this month before finishing a fair second in a PA conditions. On Thursday, back up on trip to a mile, Gassim Ghazali trained horse had Marco Casamento for company in the H.E. Sheikh Joaan Bin Hamad Al Thani Trophy (P/A). Casamento and Ateej were at the back of the pack early on, before making the move on the outside coming on to the straight. Al Shaqab Racing's Al Efreeta tried staying toe to toe with 8yo Ateej, but the latter managed to edge her out by quarter of a length for a fine win. Tomas Lukasek ridden Methgal was third behind Ronan Thomas and Al Efreeta.

H.H. Sheikh Mohammed Bin Khalifa Al Thani's Khatafaynee (AF AlBahar x Fifth) showed some

amazing turn of foot on the home straight win for the second time this season around Al Rayyan Park. Helmed by Tomas Lukasek, th Julian Colin Smart trained 5yo landed the seven furlong Local Purebred Arabian Novice Cup after making up ground on his rivals coming off the final bend and winning by a length at the post.

Ali Bin Thamer Bin Ali Al Mehshadi's Khanoor (AF AlBahar x Ultimome) had shown promise on her racecourse bow when fourth last month over C&D. The Zuhair Mohsen trained filly built on that performance to land the Local Purebred Arabian Maiden Plate on Thursday. In the mile long race on turf, Marco Casamento ridden 4yo made full use of her weight advantage to make it home with one and a half lengths to spare. In the process, the filly led a one two for Mohsen after Michael Forest rode Mubadir to second place.

Source: Qatar Racing & Equestrian Club - Photos: Juhaime/QREC

Tarek Du Soleil ridden by Faleh Bughanaim



Yas Racing and de Roüalle celebrate a quick double and Al Nabooda the main race

Seven races at Abu Dhabi on Sunday, January 24, evening were highlighted by the 1200m Group 3 Al Ruwais and a penalty was not enough to stop the class act in the race, AF Alwajel (AF Al Buraq x Samira De Carrere by Djouras Tu), from running out a decisive winner.

Trained by Ernst Oertel for his main patron Khalid Khalifa Al Nabooda, the homebred 6-year-old, penalised for his success in the 1600m Group 3 National Day Cup on his penultimate start and previous visit to the capital, had finished third in the Group 1 Al Maktoum Challenge R1, also over 1600m, but on the dirt at Meydan, in between these Abu Dhabi victories. Runner-up in this last year, he followed that by winning the 1400m Group 2 Bani Yas, so has now won each of his three most recent visits to the capital's turf track. However, he appears unlikely to try and defend that crown this year.

Oertel said: "As we know he is a very good

horse, but I was not going to come here tonight and was waiting for Al Maktoum Challenge R2, but decided he perhaps was not prepared enough for that longer trip. So we decided to come here before he goes to the 2000m for Al Maktoum Challenge R3 and, hopefully, the Kahayla Classic."

O'Shea added: "It was a tough choice between this and Meydan next week because he is equally as good on dirt. He won the National Day Cup, so well here we came back and that looks the right choice now but he will be back on dirt next time."

A 2200m conditions contest, the HH The President Cup Prep, over the same course and distance as the Group One feature itself, was contested at a pedestrian pace until the race finally developed at the top of the short straight. It was here that early leader and local debutant Jugurtha De Monlau (Al Mamun Monlau x Amina De Monlau by Monsieur Al Maury set sail for home under Ryan Curatolo, immediately hassled by



AF Alwajel ridden by Tadhg O'Shea

Darius Du Paon (No Risk Al Maury x Safira Du Paon by Akbar. In behind, top weight, Somoud (Munjiz x Wadya by Akbar, conceding weight to his eight rivals, had cruised into contention under Richard Mullen and the race looked over when they grabbed the initiative just inside the final 200m.

However, Tadhg O'Shea aboard fellow Group One winner BF Mughader (Falak x Watan by Musaed) had tracked Mullen through and they finished fast and late, failing by a quickly diminishing short-head. The third Group One winner among the nonet was also finishing with purpose and snatched fourth, behind Jugurtha De Monlau, from Darius Du Paon in fifth.

Now in the care of Jean de Roüalle, Yas Racing's homebred 5-year-old Somoud actually won the Group 1 Emirates Championship, also over this 2200m, last March. On his debut for De Roualle he won the Jewel Crown prep, again over course and distance, but could not land a blow in the main event.

That was seven weeks ago and De Roüalle said: *"This was a prep race and that slow pace really does not suit my horse, but he has shown his class under a big weight in a race not run to suit him."*

Mullen added: *"I knew we had just held on, but the race did not go to plan behind such a slow pace, so I had to commit earlier than I wanted, but we survived with the line coming just in time!"*

Owner and trainer were soon celebrating a rapid double, this time combining with Curatolo who was aboard Harrab (Mahabb x Habaib by Al Sakbe), smooth winner of the following 1600m handicap. This was a third career success for the homebred 7-year-old entire, all since joining De Roualle and each one on the Abu Dhabi turf. He also won for Ryan Curatolo, over 1400m, on his previous starts five weeks ago and was winning for a second time over the track and trip.

A 1600m Prestige affair for horses born in the UAE, the Abu Dhabi Equestrian Gold Cup attracted a select field of just six, but in reality, from the moment Adrie de Vries sent Hameem (Valiant Boy x RB Burn Baby Burn by TH Richie) to the front 400m out only one horse mattered. The only 4-year-old in the race, he was receiving weight from his five older rivals and is now unbeaten after four starts. The least experienced runner he, as was half the field, was saddled by Abdallah Al Hammadi for Al Ajban Stables, the same connections who won this in 2018 with Al Tiryaq, a 4-year-old then, but well beaten in sixth this time.

After landing a 1600m dirt maiden at Al Ain on debut under Jose Santiago, he has since been partnered exclusively by De Vries at Abu Dhabi, winning a conditions race over this course and

distance before dropping to 1400m to land the Abu Dhabi Colts Classic, another Prestige contest.

That was in the middle of December, five weeks ago, and this was the first time he had clashed with his elders since that successful Al Ain debut.

De Vries said: *"He was a lot more mature today because last time he had a good look around in front and he is just improving all the time."*

"He could be a special young horse and he will have to come up in class now, I would imagine into the Triple Crown races."

The action was underway with a 1000m maiden for horses foaled locally and jockey Fabrice Veron continued his recent good form with a smooth victory aboard Mumayaza (Majd Al Arab x Wycked by Burning Sand), saddled by his French compatriot Eric Lemartinel and a first winner to carry the silks of Sheikh Khalifa bin Sultan bin Khalifa Al Nahyan. It was just a seventh runner for the owner, all this season. This 4-year-old filly was second on her debut; over 1200m here in the capital, a fortnight ago and, having tracked early leader Alfatih (Josco Du Cayrou x Mela La by Sour), went to the front easily and was never in danger thereafter.

Veron said: *"She made a very good debut having missed the break and learned a lot from that. She is very quick, but stayed 1200m first time and 1400m should not be a problem moving forward."*

For horses in private ownership, a 2200m handicap was turned into something resembling a procession by Pat Cosgrave and Sharkh (Majd Al Arab x Siheme by Dormane), a tenth winner of the campaign for Helal Alalawi. Settled in mid-field, Cosgrave crept his mount closer on the home turn before the pair hit the front 300m out and stormed clear.

Owned by Abu Dhabi Racing, the 5-year-old colt was having just his sixth career outing, third on turf, doubling his career tally in the process and is now a winner on both surfaces having opened his account in an Al Ain maiden over 1800m.

Raced twice in France, that Al Ain success was actual on his local debut and this was his second Abu Dhabi appearance having finished fourth, over this 2200m, on his penultimate start.

Cosgrave said: *"He is a nice young horse and seemingly improving. His first run here was a messy, rough, race when, with a bit of luck, we could have won, so we were pretty hopeful coming here this evening and he did not let us down."*

The finale and only Thoroughbred race on the card, a 1400m maiden, proved the perfect opportunity for local debutant Nibras Passion (Iffraaj x Poppet's Passion by Clodovil), the only 3-year-old among the 14 runners, to register



Somoud ridden by Richard Mullen

Harrab ridden by Ryan Curatolo



a first success at the fourth attempt. Trained throughout his fledgling career by Ismail Mohammed for Saeed H Al Tayer, the Iffraaj colt was fourth on his third and final outing in Britain, his best effort, posted over 1400m at Doncaster.

He could not have made a better start to his local campaign, careering to the front about 200m out and powering clear under Bernardo Pinheiro.

Source and photos: Emirates Racing Authority



Sharkh ridden by Pat Cosgrave



Mumayaza ridden by Fabrice Veron



Nibras Passion ridden by Bernardo Pinheiro



Hameem ridden by Adrie de Vries

Applause for Jara after winning three races in Al Ain



Munfared ridden by Fernando Jara

Racing at Al Ain on Saturday, January 23, was highlighted by the concluding 2000m conditions contest and class undoubtedly prevailed with the enigmatic Sauternes Al Maury (Mahabb x Savavit Al Maury by Dormane) registering his third career success for Doug Watson and Sheikh Hamdan bin Rashid Al Maktoum on what likely will be his swansong.

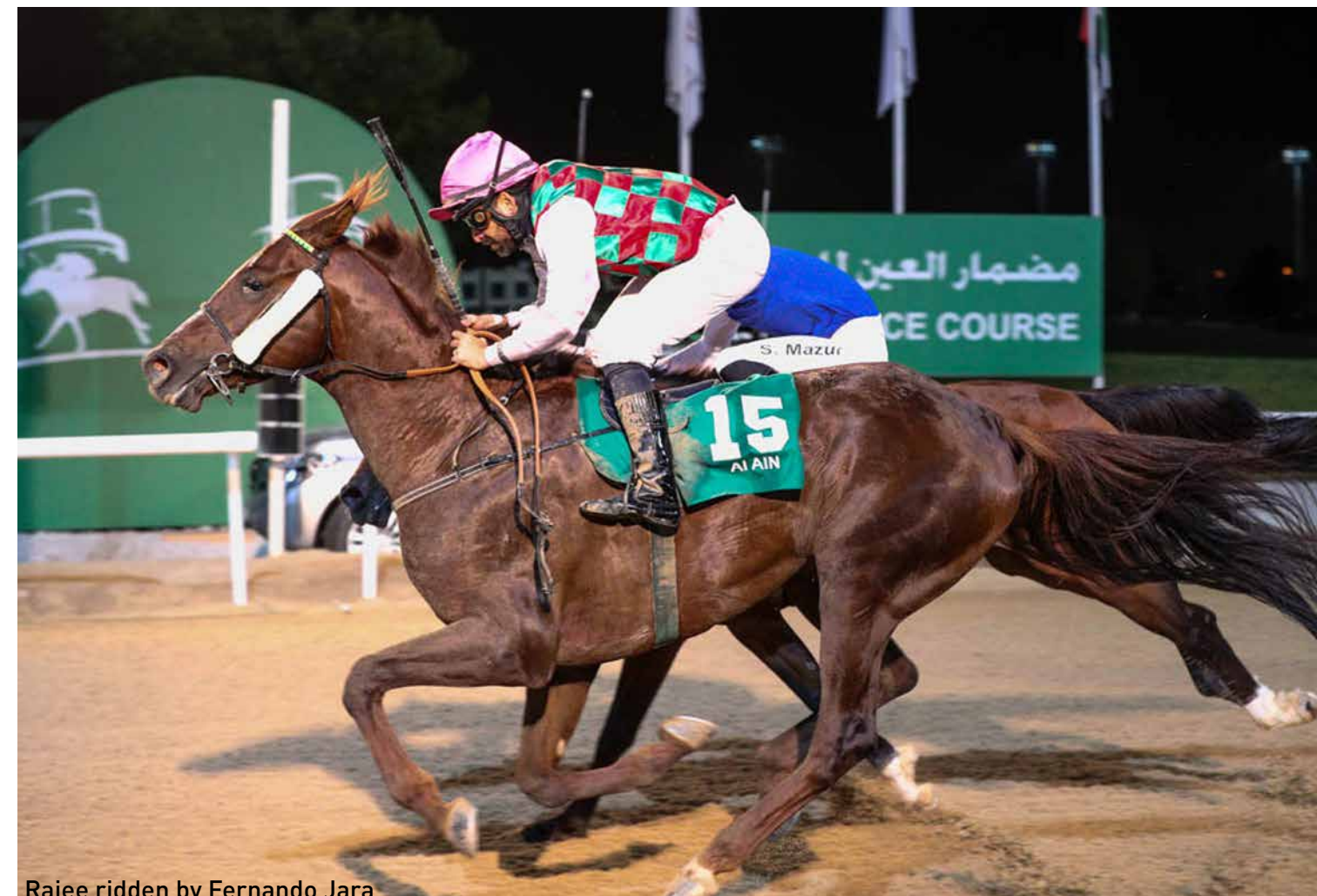
With an official rating of 96, the 9-year-old entire was by far the one the remaining ten had to beat and he was always travelling strongly under Dane O'Neill, retained by the owner. They eased to the front with about 525m remaining, immediately challenged by Salb (Dormane x Nahdhah by Amer), ridden by Szczepan Mazur, who proved a persistent challenger until the final 150m when Watson's charge was well on top.

The horse actually won two of his first three career outings, both at Al Ain, landing a 1400m maiden on debut in January 2016 and a 1600m handicap in the November of that same year. Two

runner-up efforts were the best he had mustered since, but he was plying his trade in a good quality of races, including four times tackling Group One Company.

Watson said: "He was entitled to win that and it is nice to see him get his head back in front. He has always had plenty of ability, but has not always been the most straightforward. I imagine we will retire him now."

The curtain raiser, a 1400m maiden for 4-year-olds in private ownership, was contested by a capacity field of 15, but very few ever threatened with the final 700m developing into a duel between Munfared (TM Fred Texas x Safya by Akbar), ridden by Fernando Jara, and Al Mansour NF (Tabarak x Rolly Polly by Falina Des Fabries), ridden by Patrick Cosgrave, who just could not get past his determined rival. This was just his second career start, having finished well beaten on turf in the Listed Abu Dhabi Championship five weeks ago, the winner showed a battling



Rajee ridden by Fernando Jara



Kerless Del Roc ridden by Fernando Jara

attitude under Fernando Jara, riding in the predominantly yellow silks of Al Rahmani Racing for trainer Ahmed Al Mehairbi.

"That was a real battle and my horse has really responded well on just his second start. The runner-up had already run four times, so had much more experience, but I had a very willing and game partner", said Jara.

Denied a double then, Jara only had to wait 30 minutes to complete his brace although his mount, Rajee (Munjiz x Rakha by MahabbE), looked a most unlikely winner in the 1800m handicap in which he was virtually last as the field exited the home turn. However, the 4-year-old colt responded to Jara's urgings, appearing fast and late to snatch the spoils from Pharitz Oubai (Daheess x Laila by Tahar De Candelon) who would have been a second winner on the card for Mazur. Previously a maiden after five starts, four in the UAE the Yas Racing homebred was taking full advantage of the weight he was receiving from his 14 rivals for trainer Majed Al Jahoori.

The handler said: *"He was third, then second in two starts here over 1600m, staying on too late to get to the winner each time so we thought this extra 200m would suit him, but all credit to the*

jockey who was working hard from a long way out."

Normal service was then somewhat resumed over 1800m in a conditions race for horses who had not prevailed more than once previously with Jara aboard the exciting Kerless Del Roc (Daheess x Kerlia Des Pins by Kerbella (FR), ridden by Fernando Jara, locked in a war with Ottoman (Valiant Boy x Caviyar by Calin De Louve), ridden by Szczepan Mazur, soon after entering the straight.

However, on this occasion, the battle was brief before Jara's mount shot clear to follow up his track record winning effort of just last Friday, completing the jockey's treble and doubles for Al Rahmani Racing and trainer Al Mehairbi. Beaten a long way on debut, in the aforementioned Abu Dhabi Championship, the exciting 4-year-old is unbeaten on dirt with his two victories over this track and trip.

A delighted Al Mehairbi was almost purring after the race and said: *"That was another very good winning performance from a horse, we hope, is going to be extremely good. He learned a lot at Abu Dhabi the first day as he showed last week, but that was only a maiden whereas this was a much stronger race. We will have to think*

about where to go with him now, but we will have to think about stepping him up in class."

The 1600m handicap, for horses foaled locally, was a virtual carbon copy, this time dirt debutant, Sawt Assalam (Mahabb x Prime D'Or by Dormane) who had led virtually from the outset under Szczepan Mazur, always seemingly holding the constant, but ultimately fruitless, challenge of AF Mukhrej (AF Al Buraq x Warda Al Maury by Kudor), throughout the long home straight. Mazur's mount, a 4-year-old colt having just his fourth career start, now boasts a 50% record after making all, for Mazur, in a 1400m maiden on the turf at Abu Dhabi before suffering two defeats at the same venue. Homebred by Ben Shahwan Arabian Horse Stables, he is trained by Ibrahim Al Hadhrami, saddling his sixth winner of the season, all bar one here at Al Ain.

Mazur said: *"The horse likes to be ridden positively and enjoyed himself out in front before digging deep when challenged throughout the closing stages."*

A definite theme was developing, this time it was Ullias (Daheess x Chanel De Faust by Mahabb), ridden by Fernando Jara, representing the same connections as Munfared, and Dergham Athbah (AF Albahar x Mandragore Al Maury by

Dormane) who were embroiled in a two horse war throughout the final 600m in the 1800m maiden that followed. The one difference was that the latter, under Pat Dobbs, actually passed the former to open his account at the fifth time of asking. That said, winning trainer Mohamed Daggash must have endured the final 100m when Jara persuaded Munfared to rally, but the winning post appeared just in time for Dobbs' mount, a 4-year-old colt homebred by Athbah Stud and Racing. Second on his final of two runs in Britain, both on the all-weather, he was fourth, under Dobbs, on his local and turf debut at Abu Dhabi in the 1600m Listed Abu Dhabi Championship. He went on to find only Kerless Del Roc too strong on his dirt bow, over this 1800m course and distance, just eight days ago. That race was run in a track record time so was obviously strong form.

Daggash, saddling his seventh winner of the season and enjoying by far his best ever campaign, said: *"He deserved to get his head in front after two good efforts for us. The jockey was very pleased with the way he battled."*

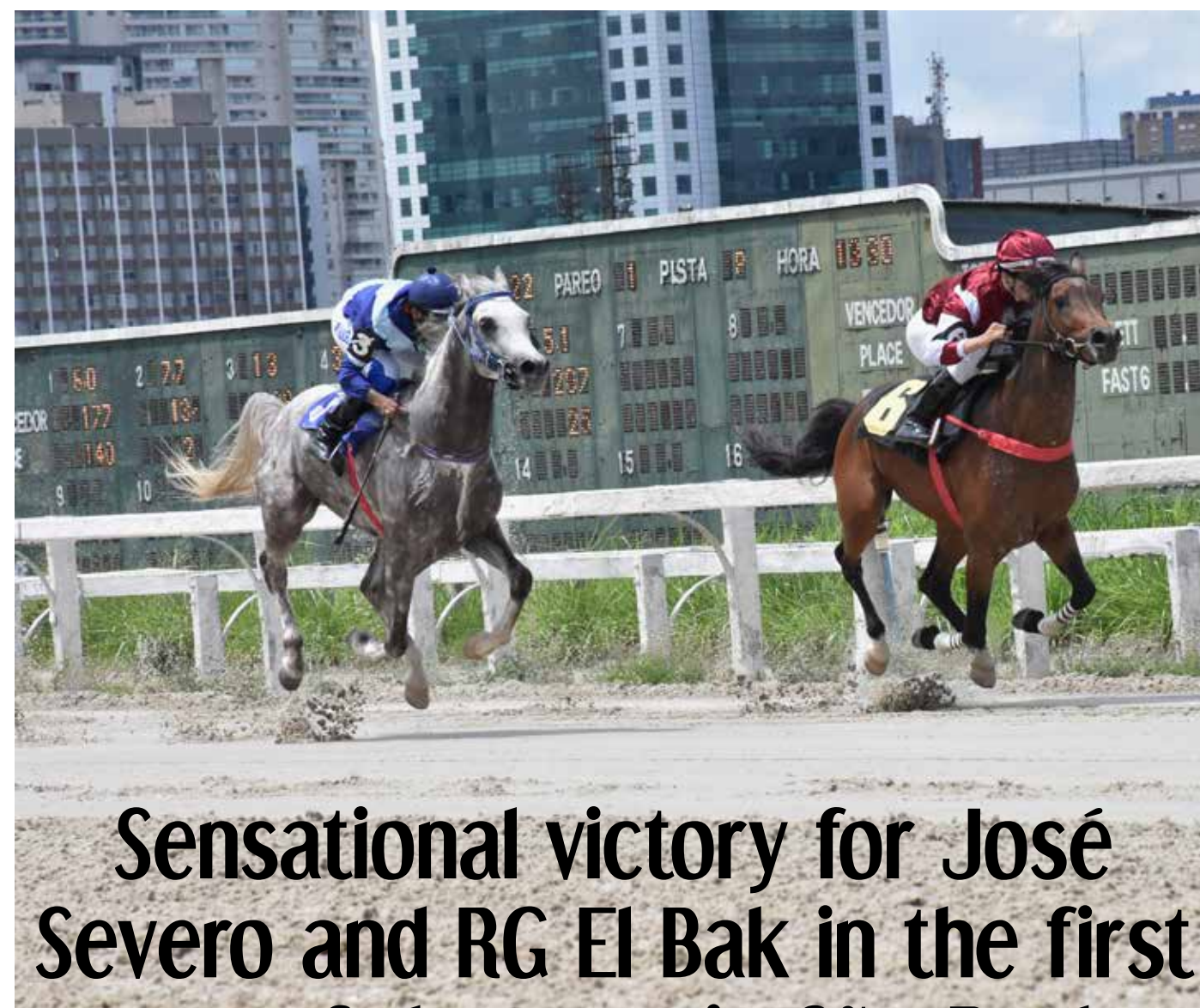
Source and photos: Emirates Racing Authority



Sauternes Al Maury ridden by Dane O'Neil



Sawt Assalam ridden by Szczepan Mazur



Sensational victory for José Severo and RG El Bak in the first race of the year in São Paulo

RG El Bak wins after Graccus Rach dominates until the final 200 meters of the Prêmio Augusto Maurício Wanderley, at 1100m maiden on dirt for 3-year-olds and up, held on January 16 at the Hippodrome of Cidade Jardim, São Paulo Jockey Club.

After a balanced start, Graccus Rach (Veracious Rach x Gracyara HCF by LD Halston) mounted by Fernando Larroque takes the lead and opens three lengths of advantage over Zarmacja Rach (*Sarmata x Zahara Rach by *Ekspor) and Revelation Rach (*Ekspor x Rapunzel Rach by Voltaire Rach) fighting for second place. Three animals bred by Rach Stud Agropecuária Ltda and owned by brothers Paulo and Ricardo Saliba.

José Severo leads RG El Bak (RG Karat X *Endora by Wojslaw, bred and owned by Cláudio Ribas) with mastery advances from the outside and overtakes Zarmacja Rach and Revelation

Rach and approaches Graccus Rach who keeps two lengths of advantage.

The two jockeys, Larroque and Severo, demonstrate excellent mastery and close to the final 200 meters the positions change. Graccus Rach que dominou a corrida por dentro abre espaço para RG El Bak se aproximar.

Trained by Estanislau Petrochinski, RG El Bak teams up on the inside with Graccus Rach who resists the attack. Even losing the whip, José Severo manages to dominate the horse and in the last meters opens a body of advantage to win the race.

"It is the first race of RG El Bak and mine with him and when Graccus Rach started very fast I waited for the right moment to attack, as I felt he had everything to win. And this moment was in the final straight. Just before I lost the whip, I had already felt that he was a little scared of Graccus,

as it was his first race, so I started hitting him in the neck to give him more confidence and with that we managed to win with one length advantage over Graccus Rach, who is an excellent horse", said Severo.

"We started the 2021 season with nine horses, three new from Cláudio Ribas' bred, and it was a race with an exciting ending. I would like to emphasize that this year we will have more than 20 races until December and we are looking for new sponsors because we believe that Arabian horse breeding in Brazil and our animals are able to compete at an international level", said Almir José Ribeiro, ABCCA's Director of Racing.

The 2020-2021 Calendar started on October 24, 2020 and will end on December 4, 2021, comprising 27 races.

The Prêmio Augusto Maurício Wanderley is organized by the Brazilian Arabian Horse Breeders Association in partnership with the Jockey Club de São Paulo.

RESULTS

RG El Bak

Graccus Rach (Veracious Rach x Gracyara HCF by *LD Halston) – F. Larroque

RG Kemir (*Zapal x Campanha CSM by *Eksport) – R. Mendonça (Ap 3)

Zarmacja Rach (*Sarmata x Zahara Rach by *Eksport) – P. Jesus (Apprentice 2)

Revelation Rach (*Eksport x Rapunzel Rach by Voltaire Rach) – I. Silva (Ap 2)

RG Kansas (*Zapal x RG Kasja by Cáceres CSM) – M. Silva

Zendaya Rach (*HS Titian x Zoe Rach by Mister Eros HX) – A. R.

Maísa Do Bagdá (*Magic Shadeedeh x Katyusha LM by *Shahllenger) – O. Pereira

Lalaland Rach (Voltaire Rach x Larenda Rach by Mister Eros HX)) – A. F. Matos

Texto: Cidinha Franzão. Fotos: Porfírio Menezes



Ebraz, Barra and AJS Al Moheeb winners of 28th race meet Al Areeq & Khor Al Adaid Cup



Ebraz ridden by Tomas Lukasek

H.H. Sheikh Mohammed Bin Khalifa Al Thani's Ebraz (Amer x Massamarie) started the Purebred Arabian Conditions on Thursday as the favourite and he stayed true to the status with a fine win in the 1850m race. Helmed by Tomas Lukasek for trainer Julian Colin Smart, the 8yo chased the leader Jabalah, ridden by Soufiane Saadi, down on the home straight, taking the advantage a 100m out to win for the second time in Qatar this season.

Patrice Alexander Nicolet's Barra (Munjiz x Daniah) had not finished outside the frame this season so far, including a conditions victory over seven furlongs last month. In the the Local Purebred Arabian Conditions, the Alban Elie De Mieulle trained 8yo was partnered by Rashid Ali Al-Marri for the first time and two put up a fantastic show as they bagged the six furlong sprint

with five lengths and three quarters to spare. It was Barra's sixth career win.

Mohammed Bin Ahmed Bin Mohammed Al Attiya's AJS Al Moheeb (Amer x Gabie De Carriere) had a bunch of promising results last few outings but a trip to the winner's circle had been elusive since December 2019 and that changed on Thursday. The Gassim Ghazali trained gelding won the Local Purebred Arabian Handicap (85 & below) in a thrilling finish, as Marco Casamento rode his second straight winner of the day. The 8yo edged out Rashid Ali Al Marri ridden Shaweesh by a head at the post for his fourth career win.

Source: Qatar Racing & Equestrian Club. Photos: Ju-haim/QREC



Barra ridden by Rashid Ali Al-Marri

AJS Al Moheeb ridden by Marco Casamento



Roberto Perez riding Tallaab Al Khalediah to victory in the inaugural Obaiya Arabian Classic at The Saudi Cup 2020



\$2m Obaiya Arabian Classic Upgraded to Listed Status for The Saudi Cup 2021

World's richest race for Purebred Arabians reaches new milestone

King Abdulaziz Racecourse, Riyadh, January 19, 2021: The USD\$2m Obaiya Arabian Classic will be run with Listed status on Saudi Cup Day after receiving an upgrade from the International Federation of Arabian Horse Racing this week.

The 2000m dirt contest, which saw a prize money increase from \$1.9m to \$2m following its inaugural running, is the world's richest race for Purebred Arabians and is staged as part of a \$30.5m eight-race card on Saudi Cup day, February 20, 2021.

It is the first Saudi Cup race to receive black type status and HRH Prince Bandar Bin Khalid Al Faisal, Chairman of the Jockey Club of Saudi Arabia, was hopeful it was a sign of things to come for the thoroughbred races on the card, including the \$20m Saudi Cup.

"This is an incredibly exciting announcement for The Saudi Cup. We are delighted to have attained this achievement for the Obaiya Arabian

Classic race in such a short time," he said.

"Our goal is to continually improve international racing in the Kingdom, attracting the best Purebred Arabian and thoroughbred horses in the world. Having Listed status for the Obaiya Arabian Classic in only its second year is a great first step towards realising our ambitions of having international Group races across the card and seeing Saudi Arabia promoted to a Part I racing country by the International Federation of Horseracing Authorities."

Entries for the 2021 Obaiya Arabian Classic were announced last week and are headlined by the Group 1-winning Messi (BEL), trained by Timo Keersmaekers in Belgium and last year's winner Tallaab Al Khalediah (KSA), trained locally by Mutlaq bin Mushref.

For a full list of entries:

https://thesaudicup.com.sa/sc2021_entries.pdf

Source: The Saudi Cup. Photo: Jockey Club of Saudi Arabia/Doug De Felice

Again Al Nabooda, Oertel and O'Shea win double victory



AF Mouthirah ridden by Tadhg O'Shea

The trio Nabooda, Oertel and O'Shea again took centre stage at Abu Dhabi on Sunday evening, January 17, when they won the first two races of the card.

A 1600m rated conditions stakes for mares kicked off the action and the spoils went to AF Mouthirah (AF Al Buraq x AF Kalrami by Ouragan Du Cayrou) who benefitted from a very positive ride from Tadhg O'Shea, but only just. Riding for his main employer, Khalid Khalifa Al Nabooda and the UAE Champion Owner's owner principal trainer, Ernst Oertel, O'Shea was soon in front and committed for home fully 600m out. That manoeuvre had the vast majority of their 13 rivals beaten off before, entering the final 100m, she started to tire. That gave Ryan Curatolo a glimmer of hope aboard RB Dixie Honor (Majd Al Arab x RB Dixie Diva by Burning Sand) and they flew home, but the line came a stride too early to thwart their challenge.

Homebred, the 5-year-old mare was registering a fourth career success on what appears likely to be a victorious swansong.

"She is a very nice mare and one we have always liked a lot so we were very keen to get another win with her because that is probably her

last start as she will be off for breeding now. As I keep saying it is a real privilege to ride in these colours and for Ernst who is such a good trainer of these Purebred Arabians and has been in good form all season. Long may it continues", said Oertel.

Half an hour later connections were celebrating a double after the very impressive debut victory of AF Alajaj (AF Albahar x Hathrah by Makzanr), clearly held in high regard by the team, in a 1400m maiden. Drawn widest of all in 13, the homebred 4-year-old colt was far from quickly away, but was soon on the coattails of the leaders, O'Shea sat motionless. The Champion Jockey slipped his mount an inch of rein entering the short straight and the race was basically over, the pair quickening clear and galloping on strongly all the way to the line.

O'Shea said: "This is a smart colt and has been from the first day he came to the yard. He has improved every week in his training and that was a very good performance from a bad draw. That is his first time on grass and he works very well on dirt, so we hope he is going to be a very good horse for us."

For horses in private ownership, a 1400m

handicap produced a landmark first victory, after 47 previous attempts, for trainer Abubakar Daud after Connor Beasley was able to weave through rivals aboard, Hawafez (Al Nasr x Early Morning by Johnny Onthe Spot), the pair hitting the front entering the final 200m and winning fairly comfortably. An entire 8-year-old, it was a fourth victory for Beasley's mount, all at Abu Dhabi and thrice over this 1400m. His original success was registered for Eric Lemartinel before Beasley won twice on him when he was trained by Ridha ben Attia, most recently in February 2019.

Beasley said: "I've won here twice on this horse before and he certainly seems to save his best for the grass and the bend here, as opposed to the Jebel Ali straight really helps him. He ran ok at Jebel Ali the last time, but there was no suitable race for him here at the time so it was worth chancing but these are his optimum conditions. They went a decent gallop today which also suited and I was able to find the gaps when I needed them so it all went perfectly."

The Al Asayl team combined to land the 2200m maiden for horses foaled locally, Fabrice Veron performing the steering aboard Tair (TH Richie x Ana Dhabiania by Tidjani) for his French compatriot Eric Lemartinel and the trainer's main patron, HH Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan. Previously a maiden after five starts, the homebred 5-year-old entire always looked to be going nicely under Veron and, once asked to challenge, swept to the front inside the final 175m with the race soon in safekeeping.

"I like this horse and am very pleased to have now won on him. This was his only his second turf start and he has done it nicely. We had a good draw and I was always travelling well, so was pretty confident most of the way around, then he picked up when I needed. It was a nice effort", said Veron.

Richard Mullen has ridden plenty of winners over very many years for Jaci Wickham and the pair added to that tally in a 2200m handicap, also for those foaled in the UAE, in which Wakeel W'Rsan (Nitagor x Wadouda W'Rsan by Heir Apparentt) registered a gritty success. A maiden after eight starts before opening his account on his previous outing, in a maiden over 1700m at Sharjah, the 6-year-old entire had more of his 11 rivals ahead than behind entering the short straight. However, he finished with real purpose, leading just past the 200m pole and then clinging on grimly from both AF Abahe (Al Kesbe x Kerouane by Tidjani) and Maaly Al Reef (Bibi De Carrere x Matheela by Tibet), the first three separated by a pair of necks.

"He is not easy this horse and can be a bit of a monkey, but Richie gets on really well with him and knows how to ride him. He needs holding up and to be produced with a late run which Richie has done perfectly. He is a nice versatile horse with regards to both trip and surface, so I am glad I persevered with him because, to be honest, I nearly gave up on him at one stage because he was a real monkey", Wickham said.



AF Alajaj ridden by Tadhg O'Shea

Source and photos: Emirates Racing Authority

Arif lowers track record with easy in Al Ain feature race victory to star in Al Hadhrami double



Arif ridden by Szczepan Mazur

Seven races at Al Ain on Friday, January 15 evening were officially highlighted by a 1400m handicap which was turned into a procession by Arif (Azadi x Orphe Du Clos by Kerbella), one of several winners on the card to benefit from positive tactics and second to break a track record.

Szczepan Mazur, sporting the silks of the Omani Royal Cavalry for trainer Ibrahim Al Hadhrami, was content to track Marzaga for the opening 500m, but then grabbed the initiative before committing for home a long way out, the race in safekeeping entering the final 300m. Homebred, the 8-year-old entire was registering a fifth career victory, third on dirt and second over 1400m having also won over the trip on the Abu Dhabi turf in March 2017.

"I actually won on this horse over a 1000m last season and was then second on him to the very good Jayide Al Boraq. He obviously has plenty of natural speed which I was keen to utilise, but he also stays 1400m well, so I was keen to ride him handily and was happy to attack early. Everything went perfectly!" said Mazur.

The fixture kicked off with a handicap over 1800m for horses in private ownership with Asif (Dhiaa Al Reef x Hayat by Gerbya) recording a relatively comfortable success under Fabrice Veron, riding for Ibrahim Al Hadhrami in the colours of Mohd Rashid Al Saadi, celebrating his first UAE winner with his ninth runner. A 4-year-old colt, he was doubling his career tally on his fourth start and remains unbeaten on dirt, winning his 1600m debut at Muscat in March before two Abu Dhabi turf outings in December. Never far off the pace, he took up the running as the leaders entered the long Al Ain straight and was involved in a duel with top weight RB Double Down (General x RB Madymoisse by Majd Al Arab), ridden by Hugo Leboc, until that rival cried enough with about 150m left and surrendered second place to Amirah in the closing stages.

Al Hadhrami said: "He is a decent little horse who won well first time in Muscat and has not been disgraced in better class races at Abu Dhabi. That was only his fourth start, so he is open to plenty of improvement and he showed a deter-



Kerless Del Roc ridden by Fernando Jara

mined attitude which was very pleasing."

A capacity field of 15 may have gone to post in the 1800m maiden, but the vast majority may as well have stayed at home and only one mattered entering the final 500m when Fernando Jara kicked Kerless Del Roc (Daheess x Kerlia Des Pins by Kerbella) clear after which the race, as a contest, was basically over. The track record was lowered in the process. Jara, sporting the predominantly yellow silks of Al Rahmani Racing aboard the 4-year-old colt trained by Ahmed Al Mehairbi, went straight to the front and had the vast majority beaten entering the home turn and the race was in safekeeping halfway up the home straight. This was just the winner's second career start, having made his debut in the Listed Abu Dhabi Championship over 1600m on the capital's turf track almost a month ago.

"This is a horse we really like and that was impressive. He has relished the dirt surface and clearly stayed well. Hopefully there is more to come from him", said Al Mehairbi.

The only Thoroughbred race, a 1600m handicap, developed into a thrilling finish after Minitaurist (Shamardal x Herboriste by Hernando), soon in front under Brazilian jockey Bernardo Pinheiro, fought off numerous challenges throughout the length of the straight, only to be joined in the final stride by Dress Coat, challenging quite wide under Szczepan Mazur. They flashed past the line seemingly locked together but the line had arrived just in time for Pinheiro's mount, a gelded

8-year-old son of Shamardal saddled by Ahmed Al Shemali for Saeed Musabbeh Al Mheiri. It was a third career success for the horse, second in the UAE and this season, this victory supplementing a 1700m Sharjah handicap score he achieved on the last day of October.

Al Shemali said: "That is two wins and a third from three runs this season, so he has been in good form throughout. He has shown a real battling attitude today and just had enough left at the line."

A 1600m maiden restricted to 4-year-olds foaled in the UAE was another race contested by the maximum allowed 15, but in which very few were able to get involved. Rahi (Nieshan x Barasti by Robbie), ridden by Patrick Cosgrave, led throughout the first half of the race before passed by AF Al Ahkaf (AF Al Buraq x Ezaya by Tornado De Syrah), ridden by Tadhg O'Shea, who was stalked by Dane O'Neill aboard ES Rahmani (Azzam Al Zobair x Maradjane Du Monteil by Madjani) and once asked for his effort the latter soon put the race to bed for Ibrahim Aseel and Sheikh Abdulla bin Majid Al Qassemi who also bred the colt who was making it third time lucky. Fourth on debut over 1000m at Sharjah where he is trained, he was then third, over 1400m on the Abu Dhabi turf in the Abu Dhabi Colts Classic, ridden by O'Neill for the first time.

"He stayed on well for me at Abu Dhabi, so I thought the trip would suit and he has really travelled strongly here before quickening nicely. They



AF Hajeej ridden by Hugo Lebouc

have finished at long intervals in behind which is a good sign and this horse looks the type to improve with his racing and extra experience", said O'Neill.

A fast start propelled Lamhat Al Khalediah (Laith Al Khalediah x Saba Al Khalediah by Dormane) into an early advantage in a 1000m maiden after which she probably never saw any of her 14 rivals, blitzing down the centre of the sprint chute and then the main course to win easily under Pat Cosgrave. Trained locally by Helal Alalawi, the 4-year-old filly was making her dirt debut on just her second racecourse appearance having shown blistering early speed in the 1600m Listed Abu Dhabi Championship before fading dramatically over the final 500m. This drop in trip and surface switch clearly suited and she provided her owner, Musaad Abdullah Alothman a maiden winner at the second attempt, this being the only horse he has raced thus far.

Alalawi said: "We were pretty hopeful because she is naturally very quick, so we thought conditions would be ideal and so it has proved."

The concluding 1000m handicap was landed in similar fashion, this time apprentice Hugo Lebouc was the jockey concerned, always prominent aboard AF Hajeej (AF Alsalaam x Khouteez by Khoutoubia) before storming clear at halfway after which they were never going to be caught for Ernst Oertel and Khalid Khalifa Al Nabooda. Like so many of the Champion Owner's runners, homebred, the 6-year-old entire was doubling his career haul on his eighth start, his previous success having been achieved on debut, over 1200m, at Sharjah in November 2018.

"Riding for these connections you always know you have a chance in this kind of race and I was actually second on this horse over 1000m at Sharjah last time when we finished strongly after a poor break, so I knew he had plenty of speed. I am delighted to ride a winner for Mr Al Nabooda and am very grateful to him and Mr Oertel for the opportunity", said Lebouc.

Source and photos: Emirates Racing Authority

Jamaiel, Goldamer, Ginkeau, AJS Al Aredh, Hilona D'id and Ghanayem shine in Doha



Jamaiel ridden by Tomas Lukasek

H.H. Sheikh Mohammed Bin Khalifa Al Thani's Jamaiel (Dahess x Amandine De Ghazal) played no role in the Gr3 Qatar Derby last month but bounced back over C&D on turf on Thursday, January 14. In the Purebred Arabian Maiden Plate (Div 1), Julian Colin Smart trained filly once again partnered with Tomas Lukasek and the 4yo entered the winner's circle for the first time in her career after winning the miler with two and a half lengths to spare.

Mohammed Bin Fahad Al Attiya's Goldamer (Amer x Nacree Al Maury) raced to a double when the 5yo landed his second straight handicap over C&D on Thursday, January 14. Helmed by Soufiane Saad for the third straight outing, the Alban Elie De Mieulle trained grey horse had the advantage at the business end of the mile long Purebred Arabian Handicap (95 & below) with Marco Casamento ridden Maghamir Des Forges close behind. Goldamer however held on for a fine with with three quarters of a length to spare.

Osama Omer Al Dafea's Ginkeau (Divamer x Eauvation Des Cedres) had strung together a promising run of results including fifth place finishes in two Group 2 runs in the last month. On Thursday, the grey horse entered the longest run of his time in Qatar, the 2250m Purebred Arabian Novice Plate, with Alberto Sanna in the saddle for only the second time. Almost two and a half minutes later, the duo had gone past the post one and a half lengths ahead of the rivals, adding to Ginkeau's six furlong maiden victory in March last year.

Al Ghazali Stud's AJS Al Aredh (Majd Al Arab x Karreema) registered his second career win when the 6yo bagged the Purebred Arabian Claiming Race (60-90) in a thrilling finish. Helmed by Saleh Salem Al Marri in the seven furlong race, Mohammed Ghazali trained gelding had last won over C&D in October of 2019, and on Thursday, managed to hold off a spirited challenge from Rashid Ali Al Marri ridden Seddik at the business end of the race to win by half a length. Train-

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er Mohamed Khaled Elahmed claimed the sixth placed Full Risk De Lassos for QR 40,000 after the race.

Khalifa Bin Sheail Al Kuwari's Hilona D'id (Mister Ginoux x Chine Orientale) had finished mid-field twice over C&D last month but on Thursday, the filly shed her maiden status on her third start. Helmed by Qatari jockey Meteb Ali Al Marri in the Purebred Arabian Maiden Plate (Div 2) (4-6yos), the Mohammed Hussain Afroz trained 4yo made good use of her weight advantage (51.5kgs) to win the mile long run with three and a half lengths to spare.

Abdullah Bin Ali Bin Khalifa Al Attiya's Ghanayem (AF AlBahar x Hebob Al Naif) was well held in the Oaks last month on only her second outing. However, Owaida Salem Al Hajri trained mare made amends in comfortable fashion when she topped the Local Purebred Arabian Maiden Plate (Fillies & Mares). Helmed by Qatari jockey Meteb Ali Al Marri in the 1850m race; Ghanayem won by two lengths and three quarters to shed her maiden status.

Source: Qatar Racing & Equestrian Club. Photos: Ju-haim/QREC



Ginkeau ridden by Alberto Sanna



Hilona D'id ridden by Meteb Ali Al Marri

Double win for Injaaz Stud with Lekhraib and Muthhil



Lekhraib ridden by Ali Khalid Al Mosallam

Injaaz Stud's Lekhraib (AF AlBahar x Grace T) improved his strike rate this season, racing to his fourth victory from six outings these terms so far. His latest win was in the Purebred Arabian Conditions on Wednesday, January 13, where he partnered with Ali Khalid Al Mosallam. Saddled by Mohammed Ghazali, the 7yo chestnut landed the six furlong sprint with ease finishing a dominant five lengths ahead of Soufiane Saadi ridden Ateej, showing versatility, having landed a 1700m feature last time round.

Injaaz Stud's Muthhil (Amer x New Princess) led a one-two for trainer Gassim Ghazali when the Qatar bred 6yo bagged the Purebred Arabian Handicap (80 & below) in a fine finish to the 1700m run on Wednesday. Helmed by Qatari apprentice jockey Saleh Salem Al Marri, the grey horse went one better than his last start to enter the winner's circle for the second time this season. Muthhil beat Marco Casamento ridden Anees by two lengths at the post for the victory.

Abdulaziz Hamad Al Marri's Lama (Hatteen x

Ahazeej) bounced back from a forgettable outing last time round to win for the third time this season, with all of the victories for the mare happening under Ali Khalid Al Mosallam. The win in the Local Purebred Arabians (Fillies & Mares) (4yo & older) was the apprentice rider's second yesterday. In the six furlong sprint, Lama beat Saleh Salem Al Marri ridden Qoot by two lengths and three quarters for a comfortable entry.

Qatari jockey Saleh Salem Al Marri continued with what has been his best season so far when he rode his 15th winner of the season on Wednesday. In the Local Purebred Arabian Novice Plate, the apprentice rider guided Khalid Rashid Al Mohannadi's Stam Al Naiff (Djelmidor x Hadab Al Naif) to a fine victory. Rashid Al Jehani saddled 9yo had last won in the April of 2017 over C&D. On Wednesday, the bay horse won the six furlong sprint with one and a half lengths to spare.

Source: Qatar Racing & Equestrian Club. Photos: Ju-haim/QREC



Muthhil ridden by Saleh Salem Al Marri



Lama ridden by Ali Khalid Al Mosallam



Stam At Naif ridden by Saleh Salem Al Marri

High Class Entries Revealed for The Saudi Cup 2021



Jockey Frankie Dettori celebrates as he crosses the line on the Allan Smith-trained Dark Power to land the 1351 Turf Sprint at The Saudi Cup on Saturday February 29, 2020 at King Abdulaziz Racecourse
Foto Jockey Club of Saudi Arabia/Doug De Felice

31 Group 1 winners and 19 countries represented by over 400 international entries for second running of The Saudi Cup meeting in February

The second staging of The Saudi Cup meeting, headlined by the \$20m Saudi Cup, has attracted a star-studded list of entries from across the globe.

After a successful inaugural event last year, the two-day meeting, held at King Abdulaziz Racecourse in Riyadh on 19 and 20 February, has been expanded significantly in 2021 with increased prize money and a new race, resulting in an even stronger list of entries than 12 months ago.

The highlight will once again be the \$20m Saudi Cup, the world's most valuable race. The 1800m contest has attracted some high-profile entries, such as Kenny McPeck's top-class Preakness winner Swiss Skydiver (USA), 2020 Breeders' Cup Dirt Mile winner Knicks Go (USA) and Charlatan (USA), the winner of the Grade 1 Malibu Stakes.

More than 100 horses from nine countries and a total of 17 Group 1 winners have been entered

for the feature race on the dirt and they also include last year's Saudi Derby runner-up Mishriff (GB), while Japan's recently crowned Dirt Horse of the Year (2020), Chuwa Wizard (JPN), is another who could be set to line up having gained an automatic spot for The Saudi Cup when winning last month's Champions Cup.

Gronkowski (KSA), now in the care of Abdulaziz Khalid in Saudi Arabia, has been entered to run in the meeting's highlight again after finishing 10th last year under Frankie Dettori. The locally trained winner of the 2020 Dirt Sprint, New York Central (KSA), has been entered in The Saudi Cup this year as has local hero, Alzahzaah (KSA), trained by Shaleh Alotalbi, winner of his last four starts, the latest being the domestic Grade 1, the Crown Prince Cup last month.

The \$1.5m Saudi Derby has also attracted a host of well-regarded types, including multiple Grade 1 winner Jackie's Warrior (USA), last seen finishing fourth in the Breeders' Cup Juvenile, as well as the horse that finished two places ahead of him that day, Doug O'Neill's Hot Rod Charlie (USA). Group 1 Prix Marcel Boussac winner Tiger Tanaka (FR) is also entered for the race.

The 2100m \$1m Middle Distance Turf Cup entry list includes Bill Mott's four-time Grade 1

winner Channel Maker (USA) as well as Dubai Warrior, Extra Elusive and Sangarius (all GB). Port Lions, trained in Bahrain by Fawzi Nass, is also entered as he bids to win the race for a second year running.

Channel Maker could also line up in the \$2.5m Long Distance Turf Handicap, run over 3000m, which boasts over 100 entries from around the world and also includes the 2020 victor Call The Wind (FR), international globetrotter Prince Of Arran (GB) and English St Leger runner up Berkshire Rocco (GB).

Group 1 July Cup winner Oxted (GB), trained in the UK by Roger Teal, is entered in both the 1200m \$1.5m Dirt Sprint and \$1m 1351 Turf Sprint, where he could face the Godolphin-owned Space Blues (GB). Neil Drysdale's Grade 1 Jaipur Stakes victor Oleksandra (GB) is also entered in the Turf Sprint along with last year's winner Dark Power (BAH), trained by Allan Smith.

Justin (JPN), who earned an automatic spot for the Dirt Sprint when winning the Grade 3 Capella Stakes last month could line up in that race, while the Purebred Arabian entries in the 2000m \$2m Obaiya Arabian Classic are headlined by the Group 1-winning Messi (BEL), trained by Timo Keersmaekers in Belgium and last year's winner Tallaab Al Khalediah (KSA), trained locally by Mutlaq Bin Mushref.

This year's meeting, which starts on Friday 19 February, sees the addition of a new race, the \$500k Saudi International Handicap, specifically designed for horses trained in IFHA Part II or Part III countries.

There are horses entered from nine different countries including Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Qatar, Spain, Italy, Sweden, Norway, the Czech Republic and Greece.

The race will form part of Friday's proceedings where riders from across the globe will compete for the International Jockeys' Challenge, won last year by Sibylle Vogt who is coming back to defend her crown.

Tom Ryan, Director of Strategy and International Racing for the Jockey Club of Saudi Arabia, was excited by the quality of talent entered for this year's event.

"We are absolutely thrilled with the final entry list for this year's Saudi Cup meeting, especially given the challenges everyone has been faced with over the past 12 months."

"Considering this is only the second year of a new international racing event, both the quality and depth of entries has grown significantly, and there is some really strong momentum behind the meeting. We have seen marked improvements across the board but most satisfying to us is the support that our turf races and the Saudi Derby have received."

"The Saudi Cup itself is fascinating with exciting entries from the USA, Japan, Europe and the Middle East, while we are delighted with the response to our new race, The Saudi International Handicap, which gives an opportunity for horses trained in part two and three racing countries to compete on the global stage."

About The Saudi Cup

Organised by the Jockey Club of Saudi Arabia and run at the King Abdulaziz Racetrack in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, The Saudi Cup is a two-day festival of international racing headlined by the USD\$20m Saudi Cup – the world's most valuable race.

Established in 2020 with the second renewal set to be run on Saturday February 20, 2021, The Saudi Cup day card carries a total prize purse of \$30.5m and features dirt and turf races for the highest calibre of racehorses in the world.

A full card of racing on the preceding Friday includes an International Jockeys Challenge which sees seven female and seven male jockeys compete as individuals as well as the \$500,000 Saudi International Handicap for horses trained in IFHA-registered Part II and III racing countries.

The Saudi Cup is charged with raising awareness of horse racing in the country, encouraging participation among men and women. It also aims to promote Saudi Arabia at international level, acting as a marker for the Kingdom's transformational journey, encouraging tourism and investment.

Source: The Saudi Cup



Double victory for Nabooda, Oertel and O'Shea in Abu Dhabi

AF Sumoud ridden by Tadhg O'Shea

The meeting at Abu Dhabi Equestrian Club on Sunday evening, January 10, kicked off with a 2200m handicap, arguably the best of the Purebred Arabian races on the card, in which a slow start proved no hindrance to Jawal Al Reef (Bibi De Carrere x Darffa by Kesberoy) who ran out a relatively comfortable winner under Fernando Jara. Unfazed by missing the break, Jara settled his mount in second last of the 14 runners until the pair made stealthy headway at the end of the back straight, closing on the leaders as the field turned for home. Once in the short straight, they hit the front about 275m from home and never looked in danger afterwards, the 8-year-old entire repeating his course and distance victory of his previous start, a month ago.

It was a fifth career success, from just 16 starts, for the horse who was saddled here by Ahmed Al Mehairbi for Saif Asheer Ali Sulaiman Al Mazrouei.

Al Mehairbi said: "I was not worried by the slow start because he did that last time and still won. Fernando Jara is a world class jockey who did not panic and rode a great race. We are all delighted."

A capacity field of 16 may have contested a 1600m handicap, but at least half of them were never able to land a blow in a race that devel-

oped into a duel over the final 50m between old rivals Dassan DA (Majd Al Arab x Froda DA by Altis Del Sol) and AF Seven Skies (Murhib x Khute by Djouras Tu). The former denied the latter, over course and distance a month ago but AF Seven Skies gained his revenge, leading in the final strides under Bernardo Pinheiro. After 16 starts without a win, the 7-year-old entire was finally getting his head in front, thrice finishing runner-up his best previous efforts, and he clearly delighted connections who greeted him enthusiastically. Owned by Humaid Amhi Al Mansouri, it was a first winner of the season for him, at just the fourth attempt, and second for trainer Qaiss Aboud.

Pinheiro said: "We were second to today's runner-up last time but had a weight advantage this and that time was my horse's first run of the season, so he improved fitness wise. I have been going to Sharjah regularly to ride these horses, so it is nice to get a winner for the trainer."

For 4-year-old fillies foaled in the UAE, a 1200m maiden was won fairly comfortably by Almahroosa (Majd Al Arab x No Frylls by Dormane), soon in front under Fabrice Veron and, once ridden clear early in the straight, never in any real danger of defeat for Eric Lemartinel and

Sheikha Alyazia bint Sultan Al Nahyan. Second on both her first two racecourse appearances, beaten a neck on both occasions over 1400m, the homebred grey then seemed to find 1600m too far, albeit in a better race, here in Abu Dhabi on each occasion.

Veron said: *"She ran very well the first time and is a nice filly who should be competitive in handicaps at least. She has plenty of speed as we saw again tonight. You can forgive the third run over a longer trip and we went too quick early on because she is all about speed."*

The equivalent race for colts and geldings was a virtual carbon copy only this time it was Tadhg O'Shea who was never headed, riding AF Sumoud (AF Al Buraq x So In Love by Sample Copy) who was making it third time lucky for the jockey's main employer, Khalid Khalifa Al Nabooda and the owner's principal trainer, Ernst Oertel. This was a turf debut for the homebred colt, something of a rarity for a Purebred Arabian as he is officially black, who was well beaten on debut before finishing fourth, both previous outings over 1000m at Sharjah.

Oertel said: *"This is a nice horse who has always shown plenty of speed and we were keen to try him here on turf which has clearly handled well."*

Source and photos: Emirates Racing Authority

O'Shea added: *"Both owner and trainer have always really liked him and we know why now. He is a lovely looking horse who has plenty of speed and, hopefully, could be useful."*

Connections were soon celebrating a course and distance double after the following 1200m handicap for horses in private ownership, albeit in a totally different fashion with Tadhg O'Shea producing the hat-trick seeking AF Majalis (AF Albahar x Khute by Djouras Tu) to lead in the final strides. For the majority of the race it appeared Veron was again to make every post a winning one aboard Jinjal, but O'Shea was never far away with his mount inching closer throughout the final 100m, eventually leading when it mattered.

A thrice raced maiden at the start of the season, the homebred 5-year-old entire has now won half of his six starts, adding this success to victories in a course and distance maiden and a 1600m Abu Dhabi handicap. He has only raced on turf.

O'Shea said: *"That was a very good performance under a big weight and he is a good, progressive Purebred Arabian and a horse the team have always liked. To complete a hat-trick like that is never easy and he has shown a really good, battling, attitude over a trip probably short of his optimum."*



AF Majalis ridden by Tadhg O'Shea



Jawal Al Reef ridden by Fernando Jara



AF Seven Skies ridden by Bernardo Pinheiro (right)



Almahroosa ridden by Fabrice Veron

Oman claim GCC Cup success with Al Roba'A Al Khali



Al Roba'A Al Khali ridden by Al Moatasem Al Balushi

Restricted to horses foaled in the GCC, the inaugural running went to Saudi Arabia when Mubasher Al Khalediah (Laith Al Khalediah x Fiha Al Khalediah by El Saqr) landed the spoils with Shareq Al Khalediah (Khalid El Biwaibiya x Dalina Des Fabries by Dormane) not beaten far in fourth having held every chance entering the short straight.

The GCC Cup, a 1700m conditions contest with Prestige status, was the highlight of the race meeting at Sharjah Longines Racecourse on Saturday, January 9, and the prize went to Oman, courtesy of Al Roba'A Al Khali (Za'eem ASF x Salia De Ducor by Akbar).

A 5-year-old entire, homebred by Hamed Salim Rashed Al Balushi, he has now won four of his five career appearances, suffering his sole reversal on debut when second over 1600m at Muscat, the scene of three subsequent victories, twice over that trip and most recently over 2000m a month ago.

Settled in midfield by Al Moatasem Al Balushi, the pair made smooth progress on the home turn when Saudi Arabia's Shareq Al Khalediah was making his bid for glory. Al Balushi's mount soon hit the front though, but did not appear to be helping his jockey much, briefly giving the ever growing chasing pack a glimmer of hope. He eventually stayed on well, going further clear at the line.

He is trained by Younis Al Kalbani, a regular visitor to these shores two seasons ago, when he saddled 14 UAE winners, but having his first local runner since April 2019.

Al Kalbani said: *"The UAE has been very lucky for me in the past, so we were very keen to target this prestigious race and thought this was the ideal horse with which to do so. We think he is very smart and is still a big baby, as you could see at the top of the straight he was having a good look around, but in the end, he has won nicely. We have to be delighted with that and, hopefully, this*

is a horse who has more big prizes in him."

For horses foaled in the UAE, the opening 1000m handicap went the same way as the curtain raiser at Jebel Ali on Friday afternoon, Omani apprentice Saif Al Balushi again combining with owner and trainer Khalifa Al Neyadi, AF Mozhell (Al Kesbe x Al Saleel by Hatteen, bred by Khalid Khalifa Al Nabooda) emulating the exploits of Al Sujooj just over 24 hours earlier.

Having chased the early pace, Al Balushi drove his mount to the front just inside the final 200m with the pair staying on strongly. The 6-year-old entire was doubling his career tally in the process having previously landed a 1400m Al Ain handicap in January 2019.

Al Neyadi said: *"Thankfully the horses are running well and in good form. Al Balushi is a promising young jockey who rides well and I like to use on some of my horses because the apprentice claim is a big help."*

A 2000m maiden was certainly not the best quality race on the card, but it was a thrilling spectacle with the lead constantly changing hands throughout the short Sharjah straight. Initially stablemates AF Ramz (AF Albahar x Sanha Du Paladin by Djouras Tu) and AF Mukhrej (AF Al Buraq x Warda Al Maury by Kudor) the advantage at regular intervals before, with about 225

remaining, Taajer looked to have delivered the telling challenge under Fabrice Veron.

However, with the winning post looming Szczepan Mazur conjured a withering late run from Majdi (Mijdadd x Pradore by Dormane), the pair grabbing the spoils in the final few strides. Saddled by Abdallah Al Hammadi for his main patron, Al Ajban Stables, it was a case of third time lucky for the 4-year-old colt after two Al Ain outings, finishing a distant fourth on debut before dumping the unfortunate Sam Hitchcott when performing a pirouetting u-turn as the stalls opened more recently.

Mazur said: *"Connections were hopeful that this trip would suit him and they were right; he has stayed on very strongly and, on that evidence, is going to appreciate going further."*

A 1700m handicap for fillies and mares foaled locally was dominated by Ernst Oertel and runners representing his main patron, Champion Owner Khalid Khalifa Al Nabooda, with AF Tathoor (Mahabb x Lacy-Jay by Burning Sand) and AF Athabeh (Al Kesbe x AF Zam Zam by Amer) settling down to fight out the finish after sweeping past stable companion AF Rawiah (AF Al Buraq x Fattakah by Makza) the 300m pole.

The owner's retained jockey, local champion Tadhg O'Shea, picked correct with AF Athabeh



AF Eshaar ridden by Bernardo Pinheiro

surging clear in the final 100m to register just her second career success, supplementing her victory in a 1600m Al Ain maiden, on just her second career start, in February 2018.

Like the vast majority of the Al Nabooda string, the 7-year-old mare is homebred and then he said: *"Winning races is always good, but it is extra special with the homebreds, especially fillies. As I say regularly I have a great team behind me, a great trainer and Tadhg is a great jockey, so I have the right people behind me."*

An identical contest, but for colts and geldings followed, this time Khalifa Al Neyadi supplying the 1-2 with both horses sporting the trainer's own silks as he completed a double on the card. Saif Al Balushi, seeking a brace of his own, hit the front of Inthar (Kaolino x Mar Wahack by Elios De Carrere) with about 175m remaining in

what appeared a perfectly timed challenge, only to be snared by Bernardo Pinheiro aboard stablemate AF Eshaar (Madour x AF Meghirar by Bengali D'Albret).

Always travelling well under the Brazilian, the 7-year-old entire was short of racing room on the home turn and entering the straight, but once pulled out of traffic, finished with real purpose to double his career tally. His previous visit to the winner's enclosure was in a 2000m Sharjah maiden in February 2019.

A delighted Al Neyadi said: *"What a great result that is for our relatively small team and it has been a great afternoon, one we can really enjoy."*

Source and Photos: Emirates Racing Authority

On Friday afternoon, January 8, the meeting at Jebel Ali Racecourse kicked off with the only Purebred Arabian race on the card, a 1400m handicap for horses foaled locally in which very few of the 12 runners were ever able to get involved in the Dr Hussain Habib Al Reda Trophy Sponsored By Shadwell.

Bernardo Pinheiro and JAP Hadad (AF Al Buraq x Mutakahin by Big Easy, owned and bred by Sh Saeed bin Maktoum Al Maktoum) were soon in front, tracked by eventual runner-up AF Musannef and, at halfway, the race looked likely to develop into a duel.

However, shortly afterwards handicap debutant Al Suhooj (Al Waqqad x Aneefa by Monsieur Al Maury, owned by Khalifa Matar Mohd Matar Al Neyadi) and Omani apprentice Saif Al Balushi

emerged from the remainder to throw down a challenge.

Just as AF Musannef (AF Al Buraq x Nasemah by Kaolino, bred and owned by Khalid Khalifa Al Nabooda) managed to pass JAP Hadad, Al Balushi's mount loomed large, hitting the front inside the final 150m and staying on strongly. It was a first career success for the 5-year-old entire, owned and trained by Khalifa Al Neyadi, having his seventh start and whose best previous efforts had been a trio of thirds.

Al Neyadi said: *"We were keen to try him here as we hoped the hill would suit and we also took him out of maiden company for the first time. That was very pleasing."*

Source and photo: Emirates Racing Authority



AF Athabeh ridden by Tadhg O'Shea and AF Tathoor ridden by Gerald Avranche

Debutant Al Suhooj wins in Jebel Ali



Arabian Jockey Club announces sponsorship of AJC TV by Paul & Kathy Smoke



from around the world.

"Thanks to the partnership of Paul and Kathy Smoke," said Horowitz, "AJC TV will grow to offer more race coverage and tell more stories from around the world."

AJC TV has reached over 66,000 people in 2020 alone from its monthly broadcasts, with an audience that spans the globe.

"After years of working to make it clear that 'Yes, Arabians race,'" said Kathy Smoke, "the AJC realized that we needed a broadened marketing approach to spread that word that Arabians can be competitive in the sport of racing. AJC LIVE was born, followed by AJC TV. These two marketing entities now enjoy a global presence. It has supported and grown our sport. Paul and I are firmly committed to seeing that these marketing platforms continue. It is in our national interest that we work together for the good of all breeders and owners who love the sport of horseracing. I fervently hope that others will see the importance of sponsoring both AJC LIVE and AJC TV for the betterment of us all."

Kathy not only is a prominent and successful breeder/owner through Mokee Arabians but also served as AJC president, followed by her current vice-presidential role to Susan Meyer. The Smokes are also proud members of the Arabian racing partnership, Goldensands Racing LLC.

"Paul and Kathy have been incredible supporters of Arabian racing both financially and through Kathy's service as President and Vice-President of the Arabian Jockey Club," said Susan Meyer, AJC President. "They, of course, have also been active participants in Arabian racing as breeders and owners producing and running many successful horses. That they continue to step up, time after time, is not surprising and is a testament to how fortunate Arabian racing is to have them as part of our community."

For more information on AJC TV and AJC LIVE, visit www.ArabianRacing.org.

The Arabian Jockey Club is a nationally chartered non-profit organization dedicated to the promotion & education of the Arabian racing industry in the United States and serves as the U.S. representative to the International Federation of Arabian Horse Racing. For more information, visit www.ArabianRacing.org.

Aurora, CO – The Arabian Jockey Club (AJC) is widely considered one of the leading digital promotional platforms on the global scale of Arabian horse racing. One of its most widely followed broadcasts, AJC TV, is now being sponsored by Paul & Kathy Smoke of Britton, Michigan. The Smokes are widely regarded for their unwavering support of Arabian racing for over two decades, with several homebred graded stakes winners and Darley Champions included in nearly 350 starts.

Launched in 2019 by Jonathan and Ashley Horowitz for the Arabian Jockey Club, AJC TV offers monthly broadcasts that visually showcase racing coverage, stories from the turf, and historical material that make Arabian horse racing one of the most majestic global sports. Due to the length of their careers, how often they race, and how much they travel within and between countries, Arabian racehorses develop fan followings and rivalries that AJC TV captures in each episode. Over the last two years, AJC TV has expanded its coverage on a global level to cover Arabian horse racing with reporters and stories

Brraq won in determined fashion the Group 1 Al Maktoum Challenge R1



Racing at Meydan on Thursday evening, January 7, the first UAE fixture of 2021, was highlighted by the only Purebred Arabian race on the card, the opening 1600m Group 1 Al Maktoum Challenge R1 presented by Longines and won in determined fashion by Yas Racing's Brraq.

Brraq gave trainer Jean-Claude Pecout his first significant local victory as a trainer. Ridden patiently by Adrie de Vries, the son of Mahabb won for the third time in nine starts.

An eye-catching performance saw Fettah du Loup finish second, three-quarters of a length back and 3 1/2 lengths clear of race favourite AF Alwajel. The final time for the 1600m was 1:47.07

Settled in midfield by Adrie de Vries, the 8-year-old entire made smooth progress to chase the leaders leaving the home turn before swooping down the outside to grab the initiative about 250m out. He would stay on strongly to deny the challenge of Fettah Du Loup. Home-

bred by Yas Racing, Brraq was providing a dream first UAE winner, after 13 previous attempts, for Frenchman Jean-Claude Pecout who trains on the racecourse at Al Ain.

Pecout said: *"To have my first winner in a Group One is amazing and a lot of credit to Jean de Roualle who trained him before and told me this is a very good horse. As we all know, Jean is a very good judge and has, as so often, been proved correct."*

Previous trainer De Roualle was on hand to support and represent owner HH Sheikh Mansoor bin Zayed Al Nahyan, adding: *"He's not an easy horse to train and Jean-Claude did a marvelous job. To be honest with you, he decided to run at Meydan and obviously I would not have done it--so congratulations to him."*

Source: Emirates Racing Authority with inputs of Cidinha Franzão. Photo: Dubai Racing Club



Aahil ridden by Ronan Thomas

Aahil, Tayf, Eaz Qatar and Ateej shine on HH Sheikh Abdullah Bin Khalifa Al Thani Trophy Day

Umm Qarn's Aahil (Munjiz x Daniah by Al Mouwaffak) defended his crown in H.H Sheikh Abdullah Bin Khalifa Al Thani Trophy (Local Purebred Arabians – 4 Year Olds & Older) in a dominant fashion at turf track at Al Rayyan Park on Thursday, January 7.

Umm Qarn's Tayf (Amer x Djelmila by Mangate) followed up his spectacular Qatar Arabian World Cup in Paris Longchamp with a fantastic win in the H.H Sheikh Abdullah Bin Khalifa Al Thani Cup (Gr2 PA) (Purebred Arabians 4 Year Olds & Older). Alban Elie De Mieulle's ward had missed out on winning the event for the last two years finishing third in 2020 and runner up the year before.

On Thursday, however, the 9yo, with Ronan Thomas in the saddle, had little trouble landing the mile long run comfortably, winning with three lengths and a quarter to spare. The quality race saw H.H Sheikh Mohammed Bin Khalifa Al Thani's Ebraz (Amer x Massamarie by Tidjani),

winner in 2019, finishing second under Tomas Lukasek, edging out Salman Mohammed Alemadi's Djalnor (No Risk Al Maury x Djalmina by Dormane) by a neck.

The mile long finale of a top quality meeting saw Ronan Thomas helm the Alban Elie De Mieulle trained 7yo and the duo led a one-two for the colours and the trainer. Entered twice before this season, the grey horse progressed well even as he kept stepping up in distance from a 1100m sprint to seven furlongs last month and now a miler on Thursday, showing his versatility.

Thomas and his mount beat Umm Qarn's Sealine (Amer x Jalalah), ridden by Soufiane Saadi, by four lengths and a quarter to spare. The latter managed to edge out H.H. Sheikh Mohammed Bin Khalifa Al Thani's Ghali Al Athman (Harran ASF x Al Nefor), ridden by Tomas Lukasek for trainer Julian Colin Smart, by a short-head for the runner up spot.

H.H. Sheikh Mohammed Bin Khalifa Al Thani's

EAZ Qatar (Amer x Djainka Des Forges by Kerbella) beat a group of colts to land her second career win in three starts on Thursday. Helmed by Alberto Senna for the third straight time, the Julian Colin Smart-trained filly topped the H.H Sheikh Abdullah Bin Khalifa Al Thani Silver Cup (Purebred Arabians 4 Year Olds Only) in a close finish.

Running her longest distance in her short career so far at 2200m, Eaz Qatar edged out Umm Qarn's Derby winner Antar (Al Mamun Monlau x Al Dahma), ridden by Ronan Thomas, by a half a length at the post. Another Smart ward, Dawi (Amer x Djamour Des Forges) completed the top three under Francois Herholdt, also in the silks of H.H. Sheikh Mohammed Bin Khalifa Al Thani.

Mohammed Bin Ahmed Bin Mohammed Al Attiya's Ateej (AF AlBahar x Sahara Croixnoire by Ala Croixnoire) built on a couple of credible performances this season when he landed his fifth career victory on Thursday. In the Majd Al Arab P/A Sprinter Championship (Gr3 PA) (4yo & older), the Gassim Ghazali trained 8yo had Marco Casamento for company and the duo, who had finished second together in the bay horse's season opener in October, won the 1100m sprint in fine fashion. Ateej won by a length and a quarter at the post in front of JP Guillambert ridden Kasser.

Source: QREC. Photos: Juhaime/QREC



Tayf ridden by Ronan Thomas



EAZ Qatar ridden by Alberto Senna

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