

## Tips galore for jockeys on weight control

**27 May 2016, Rome, Italy ~ It was an important and highly educative day at the HH Sheikh Mansoor Bin Zayed Al Nahyan Global Arabian Horse Flat Racing Festival's first of the three-day World Arabian Horse Racing Conference (WAHRC) in Rome, Italy, on 26 May 2016.**

Thursday's opening session on **Breeding** of Purebred Arabians zeroed in on '*compatibility*' as the key word in finding a match between mares and stallions. The afternoon session saw trainers and owners agree that there was no single framework to success in **Racing and Training**. The last session of the day tackled the crucial subject of **Weight Loss Control** for jockeys where the Festival-sponsored research by the Liverpool John Moores University unveiled an industry-specific nutritional education package for jockeys.

Popular UK race commentator **Derek Thompson** chaired the session on **Breeding** with panelists Veterinarian **Dr. Stefano Daneri** (Italy/UAE), nutritionist **Catherine Dunnett** (UK), **Dr. Andrew Daghli** (Scotland/UAE), trainer **Ilka Gansera-Leveque** (UK), Breeder **Kathy Smoke** (US), ANICA President **Analisa Landuci** (Italy), Geneticist **Csaba Pribenszky** (Hungary) and Breeder **Ezzeldine Sedrati** (Morocco).

**Dr. Daghli** stressed the need for the right mare in the search for good race breeding while Dr. Daneri said it was important to study what the stallion has produced before choosing for your breeding program, and specifically to research if those qualities work for your particular mare choice.

**Ilka Gansera-Leveque** again spoke of the compatibility of types when choosing stallions for mares while Kathy Smoke confirmed that is necessary to do a lot of homework as there is not a great deal of specific information yet for the still-young Arabian racing industry.

**Landuci** mentioned the need for patience as it takes a few years to prove a breeding will produce a winner while Dunnett stressed the nutritional factor in raising young horses as every bit of nutrient is important in producing horses that will rise to their highest capability.

Moroccan **Dr. Sedrati** urged for an International Stud Book to help identify the results of Arabian breeding to the universal audience and highlighted the benefits of Artificial Insemination and Embryo Transfers as methods of broadening the gene pools.

Hungary's **Dr. Csaba Pribenszky** unveiled his study on Gene Preservation and said it was a remarkable tool for breeding. "Sperm Cryopreservation procedures have been well established for decades and can be used in Arabian breeding. A newer method, PTAT – Pressure Triggered Activation of Tolerance technology ensures better preservation of the genetic material, improves

semen quality, increases spermatozoa survival and supports cell function. **PTAT** treatment is an 'add-on' technology, inserted into the standard procedure of stallion sperm processing and freezing which is proving a positive aspect to breeding of Arabian horses," he said.

**Val Bunting**, Secretary of the World Arabian Horse Organization (WAHO) clarified to the delegates that cloned horses and all foals by IVF will not be recognized for registration.





## Racing and Training

Moderating the afternoon session on Racing and Training was the UAE's **Faysal Alrahmani** with participating panel members: **Mussabah Al Muhairi** (UAE), **Pat Buckley** (Ireland/ UAE), **Mathew Cain** (Aus), **Thomas Fourcy** (FR), **Marco Oppo** (It), **Mark Powell** (US) and **Mohammed Al Hashmi** (Oman).

Panel members agreed that each trainer adopted his own method of training and also workouts leading up to a big race though most felt four years was an ideal age for Purebred Arabians to start racing. Mark Powell said horses are affected by travel and added that he kept the same training pattern when traveling and racing away from home. Speaking of how to choose a winning foal, **Pat Buckley** offered that it was through experience that one can pick up signs of a potential winner. *"That is why connections pay huge amounts at Yearling auctions for they do see something in these untested young horses,"* Buckley, the 1963 Grand National winner said.

## Weight Loss Control

In the late session, Jockeys **Linda Meech** (AUS) and **Xavier Ziani** (FR) spoke of the challenges a jockey faced in keeping his weight which was moderated by popular racing commentator **Gary Capwell**. Germany's **Kai Schirmann** spoke of his role helping the Apprentice and Lady jockeys who take part in the Festival's races while the experienced **Christopher Watson** of Australia spoke of the strict monitoring of the weight loss methods by Aussie jockeys. **Dr Jamal Houth** said one had to have knowledge of his or her metabolism which decides weight loss or gain. *"Determine the food that is allergic to you and avoid them,"* he said. But it was the HH Sheikh Mansoor Festival-supported research by the Liverpool John Moores University that was explained in detail by **Dr Georges Wilson**, **Dr. Philip Pritchard** and **Dan Martin** that had the delegates in rapt attention.

*"Food restriction, laxatives, sweat suits, saunas, diuretics, vomiting and flipping are some of the*

*current strategies that jockey adopt to shed weight and this has an effect on the physiological, psychological and hormonal/immuno health of the jockey,”* Martin said with the help of a power point presentation.

According to **Dr Wilson** who has led the research for over two years now the anticipated benefits of the research are enhanced nutritional knowledge and awareness, less reliance on information being passed down from senior/retired jockeys, jockeys able to make and maintain weight safely, less reliance on current weight-making practices, and improved physical, physiological, and mental health. The study also highlighted the eight principles of **Racing Nutrition - Plan regular meals, Be Carb-Smart, Think Protein, Daily Calcium + Vit D, Stay hydrated, Eat to recover, Avoid back-loading, and Don't forget fruits and vegetables.**

## **Lancers of Montebello thrill WAHRC delegates**

The delegates and the envoys who attended the Conference were hosted later in the evening by the **Lancers of Montebello**. Dinner was eaten on the lawns in front of the jumping field at the military base where The Battle of Montebello was fought on 20 May 1859. The dinner extravaganza continued with a number of native singers and dancers but only after a parade and horse show of over 60 horses by the Cavalrymen.

On Saturday the final day of the **WAHRC 2016**, a session on the **Future of Arabian Racing** will be followed up with a **WAHRC Conference Workshop** followed by Sunday's three Festival flagship to be held at the **Capanelle** race course.

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