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El Dorada

A farewell to the Mare
from the Golden Land

The mating of the Eukaliptus daughter Emigrantka and the representative of the Spanish-Egyptian „Golden Cross” son of El Shaklan, Sanadik El Shaklan, resulted in 1998 in the foaling of the charming **EL DORADA** at Michałów. Her name, alluding to the land of gold, foretold her future – not just the gold medals, but also “golden” transactions: although El Dorada’s produce was never sold at any prestigious sale, it still brought significant sums as a result of her lease, as former Director Jerzy Białobok informed the public opinion.





El Dorada

photo by Patrycja Umińska

El Dorada passed away on December 6th, 2016 after a long illness. She was the beloved charge of trainer Mariusz Liškiewicz. On the back of the plaque that hung over her stall through the years he wrote: "Gone to greener, heavenly pastures. It's a pity that we will no longer perform at championships together. We won often, losing just a few. You will always remain my Number One show horse. The first and last trainer and handler of El Dorada."

"She was definitely the horse of my life, my number one. There's no doubt about it", he tells us. "From the moment that we met for the first time – she was two years old when she came to me to be trained – she immediately answered with victories. But it was not her victories that made me so attached to her, but her character. The speed with which she learned and the bond that grew between us were one of a kind."

"She was ill for a long time, almost a year and a half. From the moment that the problem became known it kept on getting worse. She wanted to live, but after laminitis horses seldom get well. When I visited her in the mornings she was often laying down... We knew that the end was getting near", he adds.

Look at me!

What was so extraordinary in this mare? Mariusz Liškiewicz reminisces: "She had the undeniable beauty of the Arabian horse. But she looked different in the stable or on the pasture than she did at shows. She was a typical show horse. Lots of different things happen on the warm up arena, we always tried to stand far away from the noise. And she simply rested. I didn't have to warm her up, she loved the audience and understood what was expected of her. When she had to perform, she gave her all, I didn't have to force her. She enjoyed it. A horse that literally grows during the

performance, raises her tail, turns her head during trot looking right and left at the audience and commanding: look at me! Here I am! – must be aware of her beauty. El Dorada will always remain the number one horse for me."

Mariusz Liškiewicz's admiration was shared also by other Arabian horse enthusiasts. Arabian Horse World (December 2005) wrote about how the lease of El Dorada to Valley Oak Arabians (Brentwood, CA) of Manny Vierra came to be. The first meeting of these two took place in Paris a year earlier. „Manny found himself face-to-face with the biggest, most expressive black eyes he'd ever seen". Soon El Dorada showed herself in a breathtaking manner – exactly the way that Mariusz Liškiewicz describes it. Not much later she came to the US and took up a stall in the training stable of Greg Gallun. „On one side of the coin, she's one of the kindest horses I've ever been around", he said. "On the other side, she is unbelievably charismatic and flamboyant". Manny added: „She has a beautiful conformation. Beautiful body, straight long legs, long, well-set neck, great shoulder, strong through the hip... and her movement is big, bold. The biggest thing about her, though, is her charisma." Liškiewicz confirms these impressions: "Everyone admired El Dorada in the US. She was there together with Pianissima in Greg Gallun's training center at the time and they were both truly loved and adored for their gentle nature and friendliness towards people. There was never any aggression in them."

A title lost

As a two year old (2000) El Dorada first won at Białka, later at the Polish National Junior Championships at Janów Podlaski, then at the show in Blommeröd in Sweden and finally reached for the title of European Junior Champion Mare. The year 2002 brought her further successes: she won at Janów Podlaski, this time in the senior category and later became All Nations Cup Champion Mare and European Reserve Champion Mare. She was awarded with the title of European Senior Champion Mare in 2004, after which she headed for Paris. It was quite a memorable show. When asked about which of their performances he remembers most, Mariusz Liškiewicz answers without hesitation: Paris 2004. "Something like that cannot be forgotten! Once El Dorada and then Loubna, back and forth, were acknowledged as World Champions. It was her most spectacular showing – she should have won then and not only in my opinion."

Manny Vierra would definitely agree, as it was then that El Dorada enchanted him. And he was definitely among those that gasped

when El Dorada lost her title, having enjoyed it for just several minutes. This is what we wrote back then on our website: „We heard the Polish national anthem twice today, but the second time was rather dramatic. While announcing the World Senior Champion Mare the organizers made a mistake twice. First Loubna (Imperial Imdal – Imperial Kalatifa/ Imperial Al Kamar) from Israel was announced champion and the Polish El Dorada reserve. However, just after the national anthem of Israel was played it was announced that a mistake had been made and Loubna is reserve and El Dorada – champion. Unfortunately, just after changing the garlands on the mares and playing the Polish anthem it was announced again that the first verdict was correct!” Those mistakes were very unfortunate, but they did not contribute to El Dorada losing her fanbase. She left for the US and won, among others, the US National Championships and a silver medal in Scottsdale (2006).

The year 2007 brought more shows, more successes, but also more disappointments. „The way in which Mariusz Liśkiewicz presented El Dorada and Kwestura made a phenomenal impression on all those gathered. He is without a doubt one of the best handlers in the world. El Dorada stood during the evaluation as a statute, receiving 5x20 from the judges and a total score of 94,1 (one of three such high marks awarded today)”, we wrote about the Paris show. “Stepping off the ring El Dorada received a loud ovation from the VIP sector. A moment later, also with Mariusz Liśkiewicz, Kwestura made her appearance in the ring – also receiving a score of 94,1 points and six 20s!”. In the end Kwestura won the World Championships, with El Dorada going home with “just” a Top Ten. Quietly everyone was counting on having two Polish representatives on the podium.

Her second medal from Paris – a bronze – El Dorada won under the banner of the Saudi Athbah Stud in 2012, receiving a full set of top marks for type. She lost to Janów’s Pinga by one point (564:565), who became champion. The silver went to FT Shaella. Not long after El Dorada won silver for her lessee in Riyadh (PSAIAHF 2013). Earlier, in the 2012 season, she was honored with the silver at the All Nations Cup in Aachen and a silver at the European Championships in Moorsele (in the hands of her lessee, Athbah Stud).

Finally, in 2015 at the show in Menton El Dorada – though absent on the arena – was awarded with the Best Dam of the Show trophy. Mariusz Liśkiewicz cheered on his favorite every time. “I saw her performances in the States, in Europe”, he recalls. “Sometimes I look at other people presenting “my” horses. They often do so very well and when they win, I am very happy. Training systems

differ, everyone has a different body language, different gestures, communicates with the horse differently, requires different things. I never enforced the American training method, which prefers the “halt” position, onto “my” horses. In my opinion a horse should have some freedom and bewitch the judges with that, not with unnatural poses.”

However El Dorada knew how to do both. When she stood, she looked like a statue. When she trotted, the audience were swept off their feet.

Nabor mares and the Spanish-Egyptian Golden Cross

El Dorada represented the reputed line of Milordka. Professor Krystyna Chmiel wrote in her book “One tworzyły piękno” (“They created beauty”) about El Dorada’s granddam Emigracja: “Her beauty earned her the title of 1991 Polish Reserve Champion, but she also passes it on to her daughters, granddaughters and great-granddaughters (...). We can say that this is a true “production line of champions”.”

Emigracja, Janów Podlaski 2006



photo by Ewa Imielska-Hebda

And so, El Dorada's dam, Emigrantka by Eukaliptus, born in 1985, was crowned Polish National Champion and European Champion. In 1991 she produced the stallion Emigrant (by Ararat), who was awarded with the title of Polish National Champion in 2002 and who later went on to become a superb sire of numerous get, especially daughters – first in Poland and later in the US, where he was sold to in 2008 (Valley Oak Arabians). Emigracja, as well as her daughter Emigrantka and granddaughter El Dorada, descended from the subline of Estokada 1951 (Amurath Sahib – Saga/Hardy). Roman Pankiewicz, the breeder of Bask, who passed away on the same day as El Dorada, recalled that Estokada was "large, in frames, but of very correct conformation and good movement". Prof. Chmiel emphasizes that with racing stallions she produced racing foals and with handsome stallions – handsome foals. Beauty in her foals came mainly from Nabor 1950 (Negatiw – Łagodna/Posejdon), with whom in subsequent years, since 1960, she produced three daughters, commonly known as "the Nabors": Eskapada, Estebna and Edycja. They "concentrated in them maximum beauty and finesse associated with the Saklavi type (...) All turned milky-white at an early age and black skin could be seen from under the white hair around their eyes and nostrils. They also had small, dished heads; large, black, widely set eyes; long necks, great dryness and impressively set tails, especially in movement". Emigracja was a great-granddaughter of Eskapada and the embodiment of her best traits.

But it was not just El Dorada's damline that contributed to her being one of the most beautiful mares in the world. The source of Sanadik El Shaklan's siring successes came from his Egyptian and Spanish combination of bloodlines, as told by his breeders Jay and Sigi Constanti from Om El Arab International at Santa Ynez, CA. As we wrote in 2008: "We really don't breed „Spanish Arabians", they told Arabian Horse World in March of this year, "but rather we incorporate the Spanish qualities and gene pool as part of the basis of our breeding program." They emphasized that Sanadik, similar to his sire El Shaklan, is a 50/50 percent mix of Spanish and Egyptian blood. "Sanadik represents our ideal of the classic Arabian stallion. He possesses exotic type, balanced conformation, and has a kind and personable character." In their opinion it was Estopa, the founding mare of Om El Arab International, who passed on to her descendants the most coveted qualities. "If it can be said that one individual horse put a breeding program on the map, it's a true statement about Estopa", they emphasized. Estopa was the dam of El

Shaklan, who was born out of her mating with the Morafic son Shaker El Masri. Also Sanadik's dam, Mohena, is an Egyptian-Spanish "Golden Cross" – as a daughter of the Nazeer son Hadban Enzahi and Morisca V.

Sanadik bewitched the Parisian judges and audience already as a weanling, gaining the title of World Champion Colt Foal in 1983 – the year of his foaling. His owners were offered 175 thousand dollars for him, a huge amount for a horse that was not even a year old. However the offer was refused. Sanadik was never sold. He died in 2008 at the age of 25, leaving many successors, including Om El Shahmaan (out of Om El Shaina/Camargue), Ffatal Attraction (out of Falling In Love/Kaiyoum) and Om El Extreem (out of Om El Bint Shaina/Shareem El Sheikh). Sanadik's daughter, Om El Sanadiva (out of De La Reina/Kaiyoum), produced the stallion FS Bengali (by Kubinec), who after years of successes found his way to Poland and was used in private breeding. The son of Om El Shahmaan and Om El Benedict by Sanadik El Shaklan – Om El Bellissimo – was also present in Polish breeding, being leased to Janów Podlaski.

El Dorada's produce across the ocean

El Dorada was leased twice. During 2005-2006 she stayed at Valley Oak Arabians, where she produced four foals: the colt El Forno VO 2005 (by Grafik), who arrived in the States in utero, Elle Dorada 2006 (by Enzo), El Euphoria VO 2006 (by Ecaho) and the colt El Palacio VO 2006 (by Al Lahab).

Elle Dorada found her way to Haras Meia Lua in Brasil. This is what Wojciech Kowalik said about that purchase in 2007 (he died three years later): „There are breeders who can spend large amounts on the purchase of a good Arabian, as was the case with the filly El Dulcinea by Enzo out of El Dorada, bought by Mrs. Lenita Perroy from Brazil". In Brasil the filly's name was changed to Elle Dorada. "I was very lucky to have the chance of acquiring her", tells us Lenita Perroy. "She was a spectacular 8 months old filly and I thought she had the pedigree that would do well with the Jamaal line. Elle Dorada's pedigree is a breeder's dream, her mother is a US National Champion, Polish National Champion, and her mother Emigrantka is one of the most important mares of the „E" family of Michałów. And Enzo, also a US National Champion, a great sire of the Padron sire line – his mother is one of the most beautiful daughters of Bey Shah."

Lenita Perroy is convinced that Elle Dorada is one of the best daughters of El Dorada and very much resembling her dam:

Sanadik El Shaklan



photo by Darryl Larson (Tutto Arabi archive)

Emigrant



photo by Patrycja Umińska

"They have very good proportions, excellent attitude and beautiful trot." Elle Dorada is already a dam of eleven produce at Haras Meia Lua. Lenita Perroy most values the filly Elzunya Meia Lua 2014 (by El Jahez WH), owned by Al Shahania Stud, 2015 US National Reserve Yearling Mare from Tulsa and the silver champion in the junior mares category from Scottsdale in 2016. Her sire El Jahez WH is the grandson of Dębowiec, son of Monogramm and Michałow's Dębówka by Eternit. Elle Dorada was bred to El Jahez several times. Her other partners were, so far, Enzo and Ludjin El Jamaal (by Ali Jamaal), grandson of El Shaklana.

El Euphoria VO, owned by Al Khalediah Stables since 2011, placed second in the two year old fillies class in Scottsdale in 2008. Upon entering the arena she caused loud ovations with her wonderful movement. As an Ecaho daughter she proved to be a strong argument during the sale of this sire to the stud of Gilbert and Jennie De Cardenas in Santa Ynez Valley, CA. As Raymond Mazzei told us, the contract was concluded in Scottsdale after the successes of Olita (reserve championship) and El Euphoria. It is rumored that the new owners paid almost a million dollars for Ecaho.

El Palacio VO is another produce of El Dorada who is currently writing his own chapter in breeding history. Purchased by Al Khalediah Stables, he is covering mares of his owner. Last season he has been made available to other breeders for the first time. Among his daughters are Bint Hazy Al Khalediah 2013 (out of Hazy Al Khalediah/F Shamaal), silver junior mare medalist from Paris 2015, who under the banner of her new owner, Al Khashab Stud from Kuwait, claimed the bronze medal of the 2016 World Championships. In turn the stallion Loay Al Khalediah Al Thani 2013 (out of Llayla/El Nabila B) was crowned junior stallion champion during the international show in Doha (Qatar) in 2015.

Estopa



photo by Sigi Constanti (Tutto Arabi archive)

A gold medal from Prague in the junior mare category belongs to Lamis Al Khalediah (out of Laha Al Khalediah/Galba). El Palacio VO himself, often shown, also has a decent collection of titles to his name: golds from the international shows in Doha, Abu Dhabi and Dubai in 2009, silver from Sharjah 2009 and a bronze in the junior stallions category from Paris 2009, among others.

El Dorada was leased for the second time in 2012 to Athbah Stud (Saudi Arabia). Apart from show successes she gave her lessee two produce by EKS Alihandro in 2014: the filly Wajeeha Athbah and the colt Wajeeh Athbah, who in Menton 2015 was awarded for best head in his class, similarly to his half-brother El Palacio VO.

El Dorada's produce in Michałow

While the abroad-born produce of El Dorada is doing very well, Michałow's foals clearly remained behind. "To be honest, I would've expected something better", admits Mariusz Liškiewicz. "I will always look out for what El Dorada passed on to her granddaughters,



El Medonia

photo by Ewa Imiejska-Hebda

Wajeeh Athbah



photo by Erwin Escher (Tutto Arabi archive)

El Dorra & El Dorana



photo by Ewa Imielska-Hebda

Expressja TV



photo by Ewa Imielska-Hebda

Bint Hazy Al Khalediah



photo by Sylwia Ilenda



photo by Sylwia Ilenda

because her daughters disappointed me a bit. As much as I loved El Dorada as a partner in my work, she performed averagely in the breeding department. But perhaps in the subsequent generations her worthy successors will turn up. Oftentimes mares of the highest quality, winning prestigious championships, do not turn into good broodmares. Sometimes it's the "stable Cinderellas" that produce extraordinary foals."

Today there are three daughters of El Dorada at Michałów and seven granddaughters.

The oldest of her daughters, El Medina by Gazal Al Shaqab, born in 2004, with quite a show career (she always placed in the top five of her class and acquired around 91-92 points) has already produced four daughters: El Media 2011 and El Marina 2012, both by Ganges, Expressja TV 2013 (by El Omari), whose name was chosen by a TV audience in a contest, as well as El Medonia 2014 by Shanghai EA. Next up El Dorra 2010 (by QR Marc) is the dam of two daughters: El Azja 2015 by Ekstern and El Dorana

2016, also by Ekstern. The third, El Dorella 2011 (by Eden C) has one heir – El Dorena 2016 by Medalion. Expressja TV, who is very impressive in movement (what we could observe in Białka 2015), returned in the autumn from the race track and will be put to breeding. El Medonia also drew attention in Białka 2015: she received a high score and second place in her class. Hopes are associated with the very pleasant El Dorena. And soon Michałów will welcome a representative of another generation of this line – El Marina is in foal to Ascott DD, meaning that in February the first great-grandfoal of El Dorada will be born in Michałów.

And even if there won't be any mares among the current descendants of El Dorada with predispositions and show talent that their dam and granddam had in abundance, we can remain calm about the legacy of Estokada and Emigracja. The line of Milordka is known for its diamonds like the famous Golkonda – an inexhaustible source of gems. Sooner or later it will produce another valuable jewel. 🐾