

Jaroslav Lacina



by Urszula Leczycka

■ photos by Renata Kolarova, Tereza Huclova

TuttoArabi – Judges profile interview with Jaroslav Lacina (ECAHO B-list judge, Czech Republic).

TuttoArabi: How your story with Arabian horse began?

Jaroslav Lacina: As a small child I was dreaming about having an Anglo-arabian horse and after some years my friend started importing Achal-Teke horses from Russia. They were very special, charismatic, energetic (what I like for riding), but I felt it still wasn't what I was looking for. This friend of mine had a colleague who was Purebred Arabian horse breeder. Later on we became a good friends and he asked me if I do want to train his horses what I

accepted.

That was the moment I fell in love with and found Arabians to be right horses for me because of their charisma, beauty of character, wonderful riding abilities and ability to communicate. One year passed and my friend offered me to manage his farm with about 20 Arabian horses and I agreed immediately. We were breeding horses, had a small riding school, we also trained some horses for Arabian races, which started to be quite popular at that time in Czech Republic and we were also watching the show scene... Finally, in 1999 we split and in 2000 I bought my first own Arabian stallion. Well, that was the start of my Arabian Horse story. Now me and my wife we owe nine horses at home.



TA: *What was the most interesting aspect of judging that made you deciding on attending the judge course?*

JL: *I was not focused on some special aspect of judging. I started this activity more out of necessity. After the third offer from my friend in 1996 I became Executive Secretary of Czech Purebred Arabian Horse Registry and member of the commission for stallion licensing as well. That was a governmental commission using mostly judges from warm-blood and shagya breeding. I did not agree with their conclusion in many cases, because they preferred more horses of the type they were interested in (more Shagya type). Therefore we decided to have at least one judge with an international status and I was elected. Now I am also serving as a consultant for our breeders, if they ask for advice.*

TA: *You are one of the youngest but also most popular judges in the European community – was it difficult for you as a newcomer judge to find your own place in the show world that is sometimes becoming a scene of hard battles between the most prominent breeders in the world, when a lot has been said about political aspects of judging..*

JL: *Oh, thank you! I am really not sure about the popularity, but the truth is that I was judging last year quite often. One of the reasons could be that the show organizers started to use more judges from the B-list containing a lot of good judges too. Maybe I was a little bit „exotic” for some of them as I come from the country living very long time behind the iron curtain. In fact I think I had more luck with people and I came in the right time. The time*

opened to changes. In every case I'd like to thank for these opportunities.

TA: *If you could point 3 most important features describing a good judge nowadays it would be....*

JL: *Hmm, quite difficult to say, but first of all I think one has to love horses of course, then need to be able to defend his judgment and be able to get the responsibility for it. For me it is also very important to stay apolitical...*

TA: *Who is your biggest judging authority?*

JL: *I have some favorites, but I do not want to name anybody. I very much appreciate every judge coming to the ring. From that moment his ideas become public, which is not every time easy and I prefer those who are able to make an objective and unprejudiced judgment.*

TA: *What is the hardest point of judgment in your opinion?*

JL: *To judge horses in your own country. It sometimes brings a risk that you will lose your „friends“. When you are judging objectively you have to prefer a better horse, but some breeders take it very personally. That is why I try to eliminate my judging in the Czech Republic.*

TA: *...and what is the most satisfying?*

JL: *... to be so close to so many beautiful Arabian horses from all over the world.*

TA: *Are there any aspects with which the current European judging systems could be improved in your opinion?*

JL: *I think that every system is good enough when is used the right way. ECAHO have now quite a lot of systems which the show organizers could choose from. Some should be just „updated“, some are good enough for the purpose of a show category. For example I spent a lot of time thinking about the classic system use (five topics with 20-points). Why it is not used in the whole schedule? That's why we would like to try to do so this year during our Czech National show and we will see what will be the results. However I think the possibilities are good.*

TA: *One may have an impression that in the modern show horse breeding is mostly about the shape of the head and expressive movements as the most important, also some of the judges seem to pay the most of their attention in judging those features that in consequence pushes a lot of breeders to run for the pretty heads only. Do you think this is true and so how the show horse breeding will be developing in the future or how it should be?*

JL: *Yes, sometimes it is happening, people are following just a „fashion“ and are not thinking about anything else. I prefer harmony in horses much more, with very good body and legs even if the head is not so dishy. We should not forget, that Arabian horse was more riding horse than anything else and he still has to be able to be used as riding one. This is why we used to organize show jumping*



J.L. as show organizer

or dressage competitions during our National Championships. People have to know and see versatility of Arabian horse, especially when it is a Champion of the show.

TA: *Was there any particular horse you have been judging that especially came to your memory?*

JL: *Of course, many of them! I think I remember minimum one or two horses from each show I have ever judged. I remember particularly one I have been judging in Israel at the Egyptian Event, there was one outstanding black mare in the senior female classes. She had an unbelievable big, dark eyes, wonderful head, harmonic neck, very good body, fantastic movement and huge charisma. I have never seen her before, I was just thinking if it's HER or not... - Yes, that was! The Vision herself! Later on when I talked with her owners they informed me that it was her last show ever. And I had the chance to meet her.*

TA: *Do you have any show that you particularly like to judge and why?*

JL: *Every show is very special to me and I try to get some new ideas for our show and to learn something more from the different mentalities. I like for example shows in Poland, where the people's hospitality is unbelievable, shows in Italy, where the atmosphere is absolutely unique, shows in Belgium, where is also a lot of other classes, etc. So I do not have any favorite show, because you can find wonder-*

J.L. with his stallion Uriash



J aroslav L acina

ful horses and something or someone special everywhere.

TA: *During the past few years a lot of smaller B and C ranked shows were cancelled due to the lack of entries. On the other hand it is extremely difficult especially for young or small breeders to compete against the world leaders on the big and prestigious events. How do you think the show scene should evolve nowadays?*

JL: *ECAHO tries to eliminate this problem with the pyramid system which should support smaller shows. In my opinion it is the best way, because the strong basics of that pyramid are starting at the bottom. Breeders should start with their horses at C shows and then go slowly to the higher level. The biggest problem is when they win with the horse at C show and then go straight to A or Title one. Then, of course, they are losing their confidence and don't want to participate anymore. The next step can be supporting home-bred horses, newcomers, lower fees etc. These steps are more in the hand of show organizers.*

TA: *There were a lot of newcomers graduated at several national level judge classes throughout Europe last year; most of them will probably apply to start their career as international judges in the near future. What would be your advice to the newcomers at the judges panel in Europe?*

JL: *Not so long ago I read the interview with Mr. Ferdinand Huemer in your magazine. He described the problem of young judges very well there. They have to be ready to make their judging public, which sounds very easy, but it is not so easy to do. They have to forget the stress and have to be concentrated just on a horse and judge what they see. It is also important not to be nervous because other judges have different preferences. To be yourself.*

TA: *You represent Czech Republic – is the Arabian horse popular in your country as a show/sport horse?*

JL: *We are quite a small country, where the Arabian horse breeding has not so long history. First 10 horses were imported to Czechoslovakia to the National Stud in Topol-*



J.L. and his wife with friends and Imperial Baarez Aachen 2008

cianky in 1973 from El Zahra Stud in Egypt. The main breeding was running there until the 1989 and it was not possible to breed Arabian horses privately. After the revolution in 1989 some breeders started buying Arabian horses from the state stud and created their own breeding programs. In 1993 after the division to the Czech and Slovak Republic the Czech Association of Purebred Arabian Horses was established, because the Stud in Topolcianky belonged to Slovakia. We have had at that time about 40 horses. Nowadays our organization registers nearly 260 living horses, which is a very small herd. However the Arabian horse is very popular in our country. It is used mostly for distance riding (about 20% of population), for shows (about 8%) and for other sport disciplines – jumping, dressage, cross country (about 5%). The rest of the horses is used for breeding purposes or is a young stock.

TA: Czech Republic is going to organize its first international show soon... Could you, as a president of Czech Arabian Horse Breeders Association reveal some details of this new event on European show stage?

JL: Oh, the news travel fast! Well, everything is still in the process of planning. We would like to organize the international show in 2010 in Prague. We already organized three National shows there so we hope an international one could be also successful. When we will set an exact date up, you will be the first to know. I promise!

TA: What are the advantages of Czech Republic as the host of such international show?

JL: In my opinion, we have a very good location for the Eastern part of Europe - very close to Poland, Slovakia, Austria, Hungary, Germany... Our infrastructure is also very good and Prague is beautiful and very special city. Hope you will see it soon!

We are looking forward to it then and good luck, thank you. □

**J.L. and Ubaha
Exhibition race-Pardubice 2008**



© R. Kolářová

Jaroslav Lacina

©Tereza Huclo

Judging career listed :

2001

06/ 2001 – Austria, C international show (Königstetten)/AT
11/ 2001 – Israel, National Championships N /ISR

2002

30.-31.3.2002- Italy, C national show Marina Di Pietra Santa/IT
1.-2.6.2002 – Poland, C national show Bialka/PL

2003

1.11.03 - Israeli Nationals N, Israel/ISR,

2004

23.-25.7.04 - Danube Arabian Trophy C, Wiener Neustadt/AT,
15.-16.5.04 - Capannelle Arab Horse Show B, Rome/IT,
1.5.04 - VIBA National C Show, Bryne/NO,

2005

27.-28.8.05 - Danube Arabian Trophy C, Wiener Neustadt/AT,
24.7.05 - C national Show, Heiloo/NL,
18.-19.6.05 - Belzyce Arabian Horse Show C, Belzyce/PL,
29.9.-1.10.05 - Middle Eastern Championships A, Amman/JOR

2006

05/ 2006 – Italy, C national show Citta di Castello, IT
06/2006 – The Netherland, C national show Alkmaar, NL
1.-2.7.2006 – Belgium/Brecht, C international show, BE
13.-14.10.2006 – Arab Emirates, C national Ramadan show Ajman, UAE

2007

08/ 2007 – England, A international show Towerlands, GB
09/ 2007 – Israel, Egyptian Event, ISR
11/ 2007 – Italy, European Champ. Verona , IT
12/ 2007 – Qatar, C national show Doha, QT

2008

26.-27.4.2008 – Israel, Spring show, ISR
21.-22.6.2008 – Rectors Trophy, C-int., BE
2.-3.7.2008 – Emerald Trophy-Brecht, B international show, BE
9.8.2008 – National Championship, Exloo, NL
16.-17.8.2008 – Sweden, National Champ., SWE
11.-12.10.2008 – Stallions licencing, Liege, BE
25.-26.10.2008 – Belgium, European Champ., BE
31.10-1.11.2008 – Egyptian Event, Sharjah, UAE