



Ronny Vosch

Lord of The Rings

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Interview by Urszula Leczycka
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Tutto Arabi: What do you like the most of being ringsteward?

Ronny Vosch: I especially like to meet new people, see famous foreign horses especially from close-look - quality of legs and hooves. To compare quality. Evaluate and learn about breeding decisions. Discuss my vision on Arabian horses with those of the judges panel.

Above all I like to get in contact with new cultures and ways of live.

I was for example very impressed by the quality of the horses and hospitality of our host during the first Golf Local Bred Show in Abu Dhabi, a multiple-day festival with showjumping, endurance, and "Arabian Horse beauty contest".

TA: It seems you seriously started the new specialization on Arabian horse shows scene – being probably the most popular ringsteward not only across Europe but also in the Middle East. Do you treat this task as a profession?

RV: One of the reasons that I'm frequent on the pictures is that I'm very flexible in my schedule. I have retired early in 2004 after a professional career in Mining Industry and Nuclear

Research. Nearly 35 weekends a year are to give a "helping a hand" in the horse scene, either show, endurance, showjumping or eventing. But anyway it is an unpaid "hobby" were I hope to get all my expenses back, which is not always the case. Roaming is quiet expensive and some show organizers are very slow to reimburse the costs of the officials. But as always things are improving, although sometimes slowly.

TA: One may have an impression that usually ringstewards are more or less accidentally picked up within the organizing teams of shows and let's say – their role is much more discreet then the others appearing in the ring. You have managed to bring the real "style and charisma" to being ringsteward – was it planned or it just happened by chance?

RV: Thank you for the compliments. Well actually nothing was planned. All started at an "Open House" at Jadem Arabians several years ago. Our eldest daughter Sarina used to help as a volunteer in her spare time, as we live only 20 minutes from that studfarm. They've asked me to help coordinating the presentation of their horses. Apparently I made a good impression as a couple of weeks later I was invited to be ringmaster at the first show in Fronville, organized by Olivier and Manou Delvaux from DB Arabians, breeders of Polish lines. Then came the first Egyptian Event Europe in Lanaken, organized by our

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Ffayietta

very good friends, the Oben family. And so came more and more. Big “breakthrough” was the invitation to the All Nations Cup, which of course opened a lot of doors afterwards. I really have to thank all people, especially Mr. Wolfgang Eberhardt, who gave me the chance to do this and who believed in me. It however took till one day before the European Championships last year to get approved on the ECAHO list of Ringmasters.

I missed the EC 2008 due to an earlier commitment at the World Championships Endurance for Veteran Riders.

TA: Do you have your own vision of performing as ringsteward, were there any special issues you brought yourself to this profession to make yourself “lord of the ring” or you would change anything in the rules that ringstewards should follow in their work? What makes you so popular not only in Belgium but also so far abroad?

RV: It just comes naturally. I just have to be my simple self. I however would like to point out that being a ringmaster is very easy if you have a superb team in the collecting ring and barn. Those are the ones that deserve all the credit. If horses are not ready to start the next class a show quickly gets boring. They have to make sure handlers and horses are ready to enter the main ring. There I try to give all horses and handlers more or less the same time to show to the public what they have to offer.

We have the trot, the stand and the walk. Preferable a long steady walk, not a short dancing style, were handlers try to hide the faults in legs or gate of their horse. Understandable of course, as it is part of the game. I prefer the “good old Polish trot”, we used to see in Aachen. I, and with me a lot of judges, hate the circling or the running around like a “chicken without a head” trot... if one can understand what I mean. This really has nothing to do with showing a horse. Looks more like: a lack of horsemanship.

But above all, ringmasters are there for the coordination of the show in a safe way, within a given (time) schedule. I would like to ask all show organisers to strictly minimize the number of photographers in the ring and have a “security zone” for photographers during prize-giving ceremonies. Also the number of people gathering the trophy should be limited. We don’t have to wait till a severe accident happens in the ring to decide this in general. Prize-giving ceremonies can be dangerous.

TA: The show attendants who know you from the middle of the showring may not know that you are also passionate breeder and endurance judge. Can you tell us how your story with breeding has started?

RV: I’m less a breeder than my passion for the breed would like too, due to lack of time and space. We even decreased slowly the number of horses the last years. I came along an Arabian mare

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in 1986, started riding her, learned all about the original imports, pedigrees and visited some studfarms in the late 80's. Having a partbred Arabian mare in the beginning, it was until 1991 when I bought my first own mare at the Gucci Sale during the EC in 's Hertogenbosch, Netherlands: Farinosa (Pronounce x Fazleta by Gai Gaspacho), who unfortunately got killed in a truck accident on the highway when we were travelling to the Worldchampion Stallion Carmargue in the UK.

Immediately after the accident, I bought a pure Spanish mare Kar Naos (El Tabal x Abha Naora by Jacio), together with her filly foal Jabisa A by the Strike son Liryk. With these mares I participated in endurance rides. To fill the gap of endurance officials the federation asked me to attend some judges courses. I've organized a dozen of endurance rides at National level in the last decade.

I've always had an eye for performance horses. The above mentioned mare Fazleta has good endurance offspring in Jordan. El Tabal is meanwhile a sire and grandsire of several top endurance horses. We used to own the stallion Jaro d'Eversam (Warandes Pascha x Bint Shaklana by Malik), who passed away a couple of years ago. Jaro was an allround performance horse, competing in endurance, showjumping, three day eventing and Arabissimo. As a showhorse he proved himself being the Danish National Champion Stallion in 2003. Also a Gold winner at the Belgian stallion license, in the good company of

Khidar, Extreme, Eternity Ibn Navarrone-D and his nearly 7/8th brother in blood: AS Natsir Apal.

Jaro's sire has several good offspring in international racing and is the grandsire of many top endurance horses. Jaro combines performances with excellent points in conformation and movements. Pity that he passed away too early as we really believed in him. His offspring is doing well. Homebred Ffazeerah is a CCI* winner, Ffayamara won Gold in last year Ridden Class in Belgium and Silver at the EC in Moorsele.

Both are offspring out of Perola (Persimmon x Indian Spring by El Shaklan). Again a line that combines all one would like to find in an Arabian horse. Perola was Classwinner in Paris in '88 and has very promising offspring. She is also the dam of Ffayietta (by JK Catalyst), an International B-show classwinner and a CEI*** qualified mare. Ffaramir (by Valerio Ibn Eternity VI) is currently one of the best 6yo endurance horses in Belgium.

TA: Are there any particular bloodlines you especially admire at Fox Farm and why?

RV: As you see, all mixed bloodlines, although we have a few Pure Polish on the farm. We look at each individual before selecting a partner. Find the strong points and see what needs to



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Chief Steward at the CEI of Nettersheim in Germany 2010

improve. We like lots of substance, bones, correct legs, well laid shoulder, strong muscles and great movements rather than a “pretty face only Arab”. So mostly a mixture of Golden Cross, with Padron Psyche, Bask, Bey Shah and old Crabbet, a strong line which I think doesn’t get the credit it deserves. Our Polish mare Femia traces back to the outstanding mare Forta. We have two homozygous black sons of her, both by the Wachlarz son Ferryt. The eldest Ffanatik is doing very well in showjumping with his 13 years old rider Mirthe Ramaekers. In March they won the final of the Belgian Ponycriterium and finished the winter season as second out of 133 combinations. They’ve finished also some lower endurance qualifiers at this young age. Ffasttrak will follow soon. For the future we concentrate on Ffaludjah, a homozygous black Ffanatik filly out of Nerissa by Premier, on the one hand. And on the other we might consider embryo-transfers from our best endurance mare Ffayietta, currently prepared by Kristel van den Abele, former European Champion, for her first 160 km (Easton Park, UK). If all goes well, she still has a long performance career to go, so I can’t wait to see some offspring of her. Gorgeous mare. In my opinion, all Arabian horses with good confirmation, great movements and a sound mind should be capable to perform well in endurance. Every individual has his or her limitation, but in combination with the rider, they should get quiet far. Look for example at the French studfarm “de Florival”. Several of their best endurance horses descent from Rein de Saba, a former Worldchampion mare. Combined with the blood of Nadir I or with Ibn Estopa Son, they’ve created great performance horses. Better start with the best, instead with the “rest”, meaning “those who are not show winners”.

TA: What do you particularly love about endurance competitions and why did you decided to follow it by a judge career? It seems so different from halter performance that you enjoy to “organize” while being a ringmaster... or do you see any connections?

RV: *An endurance competition, especially on the international level is an event over several days. The ride itself is from early morning till late afternoon, sometimes evening. A whole crew is closely involved with the horse. Before, during and after the ride the horse is the athlete and therefore in the picture. Of course there is the combination of rider and horse. Teamwork is crucial and the appreciation is tremendous. Tears of joy after each new step towards a higher level. And all this with a happy and healthy horse. We often miss this item in the show circuit. Concerning the halter classes I would like to see more weight in the notes for excellent movements and show attitude than for the pretty faces. The contrary however is happening. Luckily I’m not a judge in the show ring. I’ll probably be not “nice” enough.*

My judging career in endurance came more by necessity, as mentioned before due to lack of officials. Speaking and understanding several languages is a benefice. And most of all: you just have to love it. As long as I am allowed to enjoy it, I will be available in both the endurance- and show scene. Being a Chief Steward in endurance can partly be compared with the task of a ringmaster.

TA: Do you think we may have a chance to protect it and promote the practical use of an Arabian as performance

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horse... This season we hear that European Championships for Arabian Horses are to be cancelled due to the lack of entries... Isn't it frightening?

RV: Very sorry to hear that, as this should be supported as much as possible and should be created in every country. If prize-money would be there it might boom.

I am convinced that presenting nicely ridden Arabians in various disciplines to the public, especially the Warmblood-lovers, will create an interest in the breed. The harmony of a rider and his or her Arabian horse is a beauty to see and all horsepeople will appreciate it. Their reservation towards the hot-tempered Arabian will go away and they'll open their hearts for our horses. This can bring a boost to the industry. Therefore I am a big fan of ridden competition, especially on good level. If Arabian horse owners would put the same amount of money and efforts in the ridden performances of their horses, the whole industry would flourish again. It might be a great idea to add "performance classes" in the halter show scene... where proven performance horses can compete separately in their own class, similarly as at the Dubai show. It could be a good idea to do this at some bigger European shows.

TA: **What are your most important plans for 2011 season – regarding breeding program, judging and ringmastering career and other that we have the opportunity to curiously ask about...?**

RV: Our Polish mare Femia is leased out and currently in foal to the black Straight Egyptian stallion VH Cadaar; a Bouzніка son. Ffarinosa II, a 7 yo grey mare of mixed bloodlines will join the endurance training barn of Kristel van den Abeele. And we'll keep our fingers crossed for the first 160 km with Ffayietta. If that goes well she'll compete at the two days of Montcuq, a ride over 200 km in France in November. Unfortunately the show at Monte-Carlo and the A-show in Denmark were cancelled (or postponed till next year) and I will not be present at this years' All Nations Cup due to other commitments. Same reason counts for some invitations for shows in Italy and the UAE. At least I'll



Ronny & Ffarinosa II

be present at the 5th Edition of the Egyptian Event Europe in Lanaken and the 2nd Intercup in Prague, both shows with "family&friends teamwork".

But most important... getting married with Marleen... finally. One never knows what's still to come after that.

TA: **Wishing you all the best for your professional – but most – for your private plans. We also wish you will have the best "Steward in Chief" to run such an important event of your own wedding!**