



▲ Celestina / NZ

# halter.

BY CARI ALFORD

## JUNIOR TO HANDLE

**T**he Halter division kicked off on a sunny Thursday morning in the legendary Wendell arena with the future generation of the sport in the Junior to Handle division. Beginning with Purebred Gelding classes, the 15 entries and their junior handlers were narrowed down to one victorious chestnut gelding from the 3-and-Under class. Muskan Sandhu handled Versailles PCF for Highland Pride Arabians to the Championship title and the first set of roses for the division.

The 4-and-Over Purebred Mare class had 10 entries, including a U.S. National Champion. One noticeably proud parent on the rail was David Boggs, as his youngest child, Jake Boggs, confidently presented Anna Marie BHF to a second-place finish in his first-ever Halter class. This sixth-generation horseman and son of a Halter trainer was not alone in the arena, as there were two other exhibitors whose parents also are professional trainers. Taking home the Championship title

One of the most eagerly awaited appearances of the show was in the second-to-last class, 6- and 7-Year-Old Stallions. There was palpable anticipation in the crowd as they waited for the internationally acclaimed 2015 World Silver Champion Junior Colt, Equator, to make his first show ring appearance on American soil. Photographers clamored for their spot on the rail to capture the Polish sensation in action as he loomed across the arena with effortless perfection. Glenn Schoukens was the privileged handler chosen to lead this stallion to a first-place win.

The final day of International classes began with the National Anthem and flag presentation by SSG Katie Ferencik and her Half-Arabian Horatio SF. The excitement of comparative Championships in the intimate setting of the Aljassimiya South Hall Arena was electrifying.

Greg Knowles secured the first Gold Championship of the afternoon unanimously with Lark RCA for owner Debra Mitchell in the Egyptian Heritage Junior Colt Championship. Debra was surrounded by supporters on her way into the ring for the celebratory photo, where she and the bay colt shared an emotional embrace. The Egyptian Heritage Junior Filly Championship was captured by Rodolfo Guzzo and Maari Al Magnifico, a Marwan Al Magnifico filly bred by John Blincoe and owned by Royal Arabians. Two grey Qatari-bred horses unanimously won the Egyptian Heritage Senior Championships. The 10-year-old stallion Monther Al Nasser was led to the Gold title by Belgian handler Glenn Schoukens for Aljassimiya Farm, followed by 7-year-old mare Hadeel Al Shaqab, presented to Gold by Brazilian handler Dagmar Gordiano for breeder/owner Al Shaqab-Member of Qatar Foundation.

The Straight Egyptian Championships were irrefutable, as all four Gold titles were awarded unanimously. The 2-year-old colt Thee Dominio, owned by Daniel Heithold of Misty Valley Arabians and presented by Luis Paniagua, started things off by becoming the Junior Champion Male. The Junior Champion Female was Sofiyas AA, an Israeli-bred beauty on lease to Aria International from Ariela Arabians and presented to her first United States title by David Boggs. The Senior Champion Male was the

alluring Al Ayal AA, bred and owned by Ariela Arabians, on lease to Aljassimiya Farm, and presented by Giacomo Capacci. The Gold Champion Senior Female title was awarded to Makeda DB, presented by Greg Knowles. Proud owner Virginia Gober led the rose-covered mare on a victory pass out of the ring.

The International Yearling Filly Championship was one of the most competitive and highest-quality classes of the entire show. Narrowed from a field of 31, eight fillies battled for the Gold Champion title. As they came through the black curtains and entered the ring, the energy in the arena brought the spectators to their feet. This collection of exceptional yearlings comes from an equally impressive list of sires, including ML Mostly Padron, Vitorio TO, QR Marc, Harry Al Shaqab and Vegas DPA. As the judges made their way around the ring, each handler skillfully drew every ounce of perfection out of their filly. In a class that easily could have gone in a variety of directions, one filly's performance stood out enough to earn her a Gold on four of the five judges' cards. Celestina INZ, by ML Mostly Padron and out of



International Yearling Filly Championship ▲



Andy Sellman and Vangelis MI ▲

Serenitee, bred by Frances Butler, was presented to the Championship by Ted Carson.

Celestina's owner, Suzann Vince, recalls the first time she laid eyes on the gorgeous chestnut filly. "It was right after Region 12 in 2015 at Butler Farms, and Ted [Carson] presented four or five young fillies to myself and a representative for an agent in the Middle East," she said. "When I first saw her, she gave me goose bumps. I got into Arabians with Russian-bred horses, so the Padron in her pedigree was very attractive to me, as it has always been something I've loved. Having SF Veraz on Celestina's dam side, a stallion that I've come to know and love over the past two years while standing at stud at Butler Farms prior to his exportation to Brazil, this filly just seemed to be the perfect blending of the two stallions. When I saw her, she stole my heart, and she spoke to me just like my other two mares did. So on the 19th of May, I made the decision that she would be the filly to complete my trio."

HALTER

SCOTTSDALE ARABIAN

Ted remembers being in the barn when she was foaled. "She was beautiful from the very beginning," he said. "Her sire ML Mostly Padron does three things consistently: tail carriage, eyes and nostrils, and she has all three." Suzann and Ted went on to explain that debuting Celestina in Scottsdale had not been planned. When evaluating horses before the show, Ted was convinced that of Suzann's three fillies, Celestina was the one who was ready to "bottle for Gold," and he was right.

The Yearling Filly Silver Champion honors went to the refined bay filly Frisina LD, by Vegas DPA, presented by Jeff Schall for owner Les Van Dyke. Bronze Champion went to Angel Of Vitorio ORA, a stunning Vitorio TO filly bred and owned by Oak Ridge Arabians and presented by Aldices Rodrigues.

The Yearling Colt Championship was an exciting victory for Versaces Eros and the Versaces Eros Partnership, as they bowed into the ring with joy for their celebratory group photo. The black colt is by Versace and out of Jumeriah Rose SWF, and he was presented to Gold by Sandro Pinha.

The Junior Filly Championship went to breeder/owner Manuel Durini's bay filly MD Mirka, handled by Mike Wilson. Junior Colt Gold Champion was awarded to the charismatic Australian stallion Vangelis MI, sired by DA Valentino, and presented by Andy Sellman for Mulawa Arabian Stud. Senior Mare Gold Champion went to Honey's Delight RB, shown by David Boggs and led on a victory lap by owner Masterpiece Arabian Partners' managing partner Jeff Sloan and Jeff's young son, Ryder.

In the Senior Stallion Championship, one name was on everyone's mind: Equator, by QR Marc and out of Eklipyka, bred and owned by the Michalow State Stud in Poland, on lease to Aljassimiya Farm. Equator was led to his first American Championship on Monday evening by Glenn Schoukens.

Bart Van Buggenhout of Aljassimiya Farm remembers the first time he saw the exceptional bay colt. "He was 2 years old when I first saw him, and he won the European Championships in Belgium," he said. "I was very impressed with him. He just came in and owned the arena. He was the kind of horse that's in your mind, in your dreams, and the reason that we do all of this."

Early last year, Bart and owner Sheikh Jassim Bin Khalifa Al Thani decided to start looking for the next stallion to introduce into their program. Bart wanted a good Marwan son and had QR Marc in mind, as to him, he is one of the best in the world. "I am a person who comes from a straight Egyptian background, so it needs to be pretty or I'm not going to love it," he said. Because QR Marc was not available for lease, Bart decided to turn his attention to a QR Marc son.

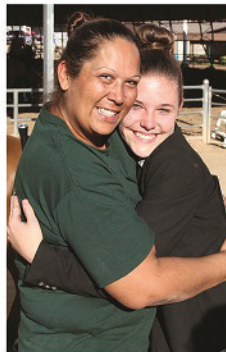
In the spring, Bart traveled to Poland to look at a mare who was in the sale, and also to see what other horses were available. He went to look at Equator, who he hadn't seen since he was a 2-year-old. "They brought him out, and I loved him," he says. "Prior to this, I had only seen him from the rail, and you can only fully appreciate him up close. I thought to myself, wow, this is a nice horse." He then went to evaluate Equator's foals on the ground, and found they all had solid conformation and possessed "all the qualities that are important for a breeding program," he explained.



Shirley Poppelwell and RO Armando ▲

## A Dream Come True for Carly Senter

BY ASHLEY GALLUN



▲ Heather Cano and Carly Senter celebrate Carly's show ring debut

13-year-old Carly Senter was introduced to Arabian horses by her grandma and grandpa who gave her riding lessons with Sam Hernandez of Beon Farms for Christmas last year. Upon showing up to the ranch for one of her first lessons, Carly was offered the opportunity to show her yearling Bred A Dream, owned by Ken and Susie Molvan, at Scottsdale in the Halter Geldings class. Carly had dreamt of showing horses since she was a little girl, and she explained, "I was so excited that I couldn't stop smiling for hours." Shortly before the show, Sam fell ill and had to have heart surgery, forcing the Beon team to work together to prepare Carly and "Champ" for their debut appearance. "I was nerve-racking but I knew I could show everyone that I could do it," says Carly about the Junior to Handle Class: 3-and-Under Geldings class. While on the rail and only one horse away from having to present to the judges, Champ's throatlatch broke. "I was so scared that I was going to be disqualified, but it made me want to do anything to get it fixed so I could continue to show," Carly said. In just the nick of time, the throatlatch was fixed and Carly and Champ continued on for a beautiful presentation. With six horses shown and having the highest number in the class, Carly was uncertain about how many horses would make the Top 10 and anxiously listened to the names and numbers being called forward until hers was finally announced. "It was exciting to know that I got Top 10, and it was hard to believe I had actually won! After getting that award I knew that everything our farm had been through was all worth it."