



Jaroslav Lacina

ECAHO PRESIDENT CANDIDATE'S WORD

Interview by Urszula Leczycka
photo: R. Kolarova, Erwin Escher, Tereza Huclova

On 6th March 2011 at ECAHO General Meeting the new President's election will take place. Unexpectedly and unlike the years before this year's voting is being preceded by the public actions of some ECAHO board members that couldn't be left uncommented. Following these actions, the atmosphere before the upcoming General Meeting and expectations of ECAHO members, supporters, and Tutto Arabi readers for whom the future of European Arabian horse "industry" scene is not without a weight, we dedicate our pages to give the voice to those, for whom the future and directions of ECAHO are important. We would like to start with introducing one of the two candidates for ECAHO Presidency in the upcoming election – Jaroslav Lacina, long time ECAHO structures member, Czech Association for Purebred Arabian Horses (ACHPAK) President and one of the Stud Book establishers in this country, at last but not least – since over 10

years well known and respected judge and show organizer, whose knowledge, objectiveness and personal skills has been proven and appreciated by the invitations to judge several A rank shows in Europe and Middle East.

Tutto Arabi: Jaroslav, could you - as respected President of Czech Arabian Horse Organization representing your country in ECAHO membership as well as long term ECAHO judge and ECAHO affiliated shows organizer, explain to our readers the most important ideas and duties of ECAHO that in the matter of your understanding this organization is or should be representing and providing its members with?

Jaroslav Lacina: I came to ECAHO for the first time more than 14 years ago. I still remember that moment like today. Because at that time our organization was quite new (established as independent in 1993) our membership there was for us very important. We were looking for the way how to



motivate our breeders to do something more with their horses. Until that time they were used more or less as a breeding horses, some of them as a racing ones and in a few cases for distance riding. Before they were judged only by warm-blood horse judges and we felt that they are going a different way. Because we liked the idea of ECAHO Arabian horse shows, we decided to organize similar competitions also in our country. ECAHO, at that time under the leadership of Major Pat Maxwell, helped us a lot and in 1999 we organized our first Arabian horse show affiliated by ECAHO. Thanks to this experience we have got a huge respect and appreciation to ECAHO. In my opinion the same should be ECAHO representing today. Of course the main idea of protection of Arabian horses at shows and their welfare have to be still the basic topics, however willingness for cooperation and help to all members of ECAHO, old or new ones, have to go hand by hand with it. I apprehend ECAHO as the main supporter of the show scene around its member countries trying to keep the fair-play game for everybody.

TA: In December 2010 by quite unexpected letters appearing also in the public press the rumor amongst the ECAHO members has been made asking for the extraordinary meeting of ECAHO Executive Committee asap. Can you explain us what – in your opinion has happened so urgent to make this decision and what were its further consequences?

JL: Yes it is true. Several countries including also Czech Republic seriously requested for the Extraordinary General Meeting of ECAHO with proposed date and place in Paris during the World Championships. The main agenda was the removal of ECAHO current President. Very interesting is, that until now nobody asked for the real reason of that request. The problem we had was not the question of any personal spite and not even any attempt to influence the show scene or ECAHO itself. The true is in fact opposite. During the current President term there were a lot of his small offences which have been slowly accumulated. We found several demonstrations of undemocratic and aggressive behavior, tendency to influence independent judgment of Appeals Committee and disdain of the work of EAHSC. All these have been the result of demission of several officials of ECAHO during last four years. Everything culminated during the EAHSC Meeting in Morselle, where we found that some of the main shows are missing in the 2011 show calendar. Not only missing financial profit from those

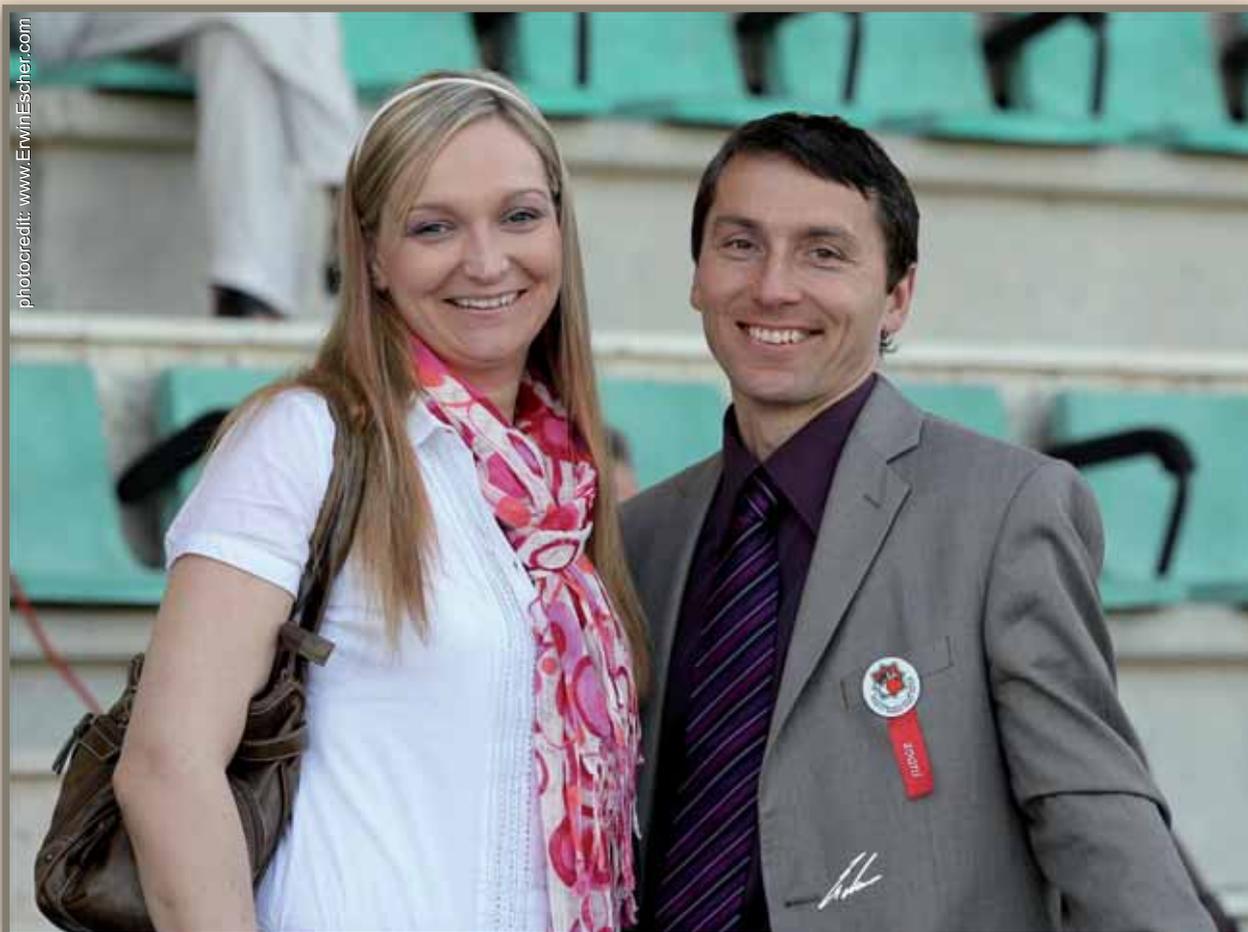
shows, but also quite indispensable decrease of good quality horses on ECAHO scene and establishment of a new rival organization could be the result of such a step. We expected some action from the EC group and the President, unfortunately the only trial was an aggressive attack on the delegate of so-called „rebel“ country. In normal life such situation should motivate a leader to try making his maximum to keep the stability and integrity of its company. NOTHING like this in ECAHO! Because of this unprofessionalism, our “rebel” countries decided to request the Extraordinary General Meeting as soon as possible on the occasion of Paris show, where most of representatives are usually coming, and try to calm down the situation before the end of the year. Unfortunately EC group decided, and we accepted their reason as justified, to organize the Extraordinary Meeting in January 2011. That was too close to the normal Annual one and we did not want to increase the costs of our members, so we decided on the informal meeting in Paris to withdraw our request and wait until the official Annual General Meeting in March.



TA: As we were informed, this will be held on 6th March. You are one of the candidates nominated and accepted to stand for next ECAHO Presidency however your way to this point was also without a tough talks. Can you tell us about your career in ECAHO and how did you arrive to the decision and final acceptance of your person as the ECAHO President candidate?

JL: As I mentioned above I am representing our country in ECAHO regularly since 1998. I was at that time the Secretary of our association responsible for the whole progress of Arabian horses in Czech Republic. The same year our organization was also accepted as a full member of WAHO on the basis of our 1. volume of the Stud Book, which was also mine job. Several years ago I have been elected as the President of ACHPAK CR (Czech Association for Purebred Arabian Horses). In 2001 I passed ECAHO Judges Course in Poland and was accepted as official B judge. I started to organize National Arabian horse shows in 1997 and two years later they became affiliated by ECAHO. For quite a long time I was dreaming also about the international show in Czech Republic that became real last year when I organized the first B international show in Prague. Everybody who knows me can confirm that in case I decide to do something I put all my efforts in it. I have been trying all my life to play a fair game with everybody. In all organizations I have been acting at till now I

have learned that every coin has two sides. With this admittance I am trying to deal with any problem. The ability to keep my mind independent for every decision I should make, is very important for me. I used those skills several times also during ECAHO meetings and was able to bring some broken discussions back on the table. During such a meetings I have never been anxious to get any profit for my own. Anyhow once I was treated by our current President nearly like a criminal. That happened three years ago after I was legally elected as a Chairman of the Registration Committee of ECAHO. Without any notice or discussion the President announced, before my confirmation by the AGM, that together with the EC group they decided to not accept that election and postpone it to the next year. It evoked a massive disagreement of the delegates and huge discussion. Finally I calmed whole assembly and stepped down even if all delegates asked me to stand for. I was thinking it was just a mistake of the President, because it happened during his first Annual General Meeting, but later on I recognized it was a sign of his possible future acting. From that time some people were treated very similar way and as I told you before they finally resigned. All those circumstances brought me quite a long time ago to think about the new personality which could be able to take over the President function. It was not an easy task and I was even more surprised when some delegates asked me for. First of all I refused but escalated problems of ECAHO made me to think about. Very important for me personally was the fact



that I was able to name the problems which ECAHO is going through right now and have also at least partly the vision how to resolve those things. The next was that I received support from quite a lot of ECAHO member countries to which I would like to thank a lot. Finally I could not forget support from my family, so when I asked them for it they kept their promise and I really very appreciate it. After that I decided to accept my nomination.

TA: *What are, in your opinion, the most urgent matters that should be undertaken immediately within ECAHO structures, board members and duties of the organization to meet the current people's expectations?*

JL: *For me the most important thing right now is reunification of whole ECAHO. During last few months you could have observed some calls for leaving ECAHO focused on unsatisfied countries and mainly in UAE. The worst attack you can find in the President's interview, which he made for two Arabian horse magazines. I personally called that interview: „About ETHIC without any ETHICS“. The main duty of the President of such an international organization should be to keep organization running without unnecessary discrepancies and hassles. The above mentioned articles are making a real opposite and could be also causing boundless consequences for our breeders. Just imagine the loss of the Middle Eastern market*

and its removal to other continent, where the breeders are ready to overtake it. So we have to stop such a possible determination. The next very important thing is the trial of simplification of certain rules making them more useful in practice. Also the constitution of ECAHO could be maybe a bit reconsidered, because there are still a lot of actions that need to be checked by the lawyer - causing an increase of costs. Another important point is to establish the communication with trainers and handlers who could have the representative present at particular ECAHO meetings. In my personal opinion ECAHO should also reconsider a question of prize-money at European shows, because in this case we cannot fully control and protect horses in these competitions. In one point I particularly agree with the current President, the show commission is too big to work on some technical problems. However contrary to his opinion I cannot agree that during last 4 years Show Commission have not been efficient. This is only disparagement of the work of those people trying to do their best to ECAHO. Very helpful in this case could be establishment of the technical committee (consisted 4 members) under the Show Commission. Absolute utopia is for me the idea of a pool for sponsorship. This sounds for me like reincarnation of the communist ideology. Who will be responsible for the money dividing, which criteria there should be, who will be collecting the money and who will decide all about? Isn't it just this real corruptible plan? With this system should ECAHO start



organize shows itself. As show organizers we are responsible for the success of the shows and also for their economical stability so it is our right to choose the cooperation with whoever we need. I see in such proposals only a wrong, unrealistic illusions. I do not want to comment all the talks that have been made, because most of them are for me just a speculations with only one result – to discredit those who does not agree with the current President. I think this should not be the agenda of the President. There is maybe only one more interesting point I would like to mention. Few of our bargaining points from the Paris informal meeting, later on appeared in the program of current President although he has never mentioned these points before. This all brought me only one question: „Can ECAHO survive without current President?“

TA: What would you say to those talking about your young age and in consequence – shorter experience in ECAHO structures? There were also some voices speaking toughly about the last ECAHO events in Czech Republic – are you ready to force these arguments openly and publically?

JL: As you have read above I am not so short experienced in ECAHO structures. Maybe more than our current President (smile). From his past career we do not know anything else then just a ring master job. The true is that he is maybe longer involved with Arabian horses then me, but my nearly 19 years experience with Arab horses does not make an outsider from me (smile). Now a bit more serious. To be young is nothing bad. It is true that for somebody it could be an invincible resistance, but ECAHO needs in my opinion a new and young people. They can bring in a lot of fresh ideas. Without them there will be no progress. ECAHO should appreciate and support all those who are able to work for it. Not like in the case of our show. I could not believe that the President took an example of Prague show in his interview. The most elusive thing in it is, that he was never visiting our National shows in the past and not even the international one, which he tried to denigrate. The only truth is that one of our sponsors brought his horses in the show and finally won three gold titles. However, what is wrong in the fact, that the best horses won? Everybody watching the show have to agree with this argument and with the final placing (except some of those participating that always happens in the competition). All winning horses already showed their qualities

in previous or consecutive shows. For the Czech breeders the show was very good experience even if amateurs recognized that the quality of their horses was not enough to win. But we did not forget them and we officially evaluated the best Czech Arabian Horse. It's also necessary to point out that winning sponsor was not the main sponsor of the show! The competition got such a big glance thanks to a huge group of sponsors where you could find companies like Hermés, Swarovski, Audi, Selva, Hotel Mandarin Oriental, etc. There is also one more thing that our President does not know. Prague show was organized with financial support of the Czech Ministry of Agriculture and under the patronage of the Chairman of Senate. During a present-time we are actually discussing this year show patronage with the Czech President Office. What to say at the conclusion? Prague Intercup show was organized under the rules of the Blue Book of ECAHO. There was 6 members of the DC committee (including 2 assistants) – 2 of them from the DC list + 2 veterinarians. So in case of any indication of corruption such a big group of DC's could easily recognize it and include in the report, which was sent to ECAHO few days after the show. But you will not find anything like this in the official report. For me taking such as example of our show was only a trial to blemish the work of President's opponents. Very good illustration of ECAHO's President work and strategy. God bless to ECAHO.



TA: *If you would make a brief summary of the direction in which ECAHO and its members should be going during the next Presidency period and how it should work for its individual as well as member countries in the future then?*

JL: *There is a possibility to change a lot of things. However, we have to still keep in our minds that ECAHO can change its direction as much as its members will be able and willing to. In my opinion we should first of all bring a real democracy back to ECAHO and to make economical revision together with fixed budget for the following years. It is really necessary to stabilize the whole organization so the open discussion with those unsatisfied members is needed. Show organizers and handlers would be also priority. The public call for leaving ECAHO has to be forgotten. We have to focus on the real support of the whole*

Arabian horse „industry“ that is ECAHO's basic life and without that it cannot survive. As the last thing I would like to inform everybody that Dr. Francesco Santoro stepped down from his nomination for the President position and will stay only for the EASHC Chairman election. Because of that on-coming Annual General Meeting President election will be taken only between two nominated. This would not be a personal fight of two candidates, but the fight for the future of ECAHO and his members. So I hope that all voting delegates will be present and will vote for the best of this international organization. Do not forget there could be the only one loser – ECAHO! Good luck!

TA: *Thank you for this talk and we also wish all the best to the future of ECAHO.*