



Al Rayyan, Doha, Qatar

Thursday, 19 February 2015

## **H.H The Emir 24<sup>th</sup> International Equestrian Sword Festival underway**

Under the patronage of H.H Sheikh Tamin Bin Hamad Al Thani the Emir of the State of Qatar, the region's most expansive celebration of the horse gets underway today (Thursday) at Al Rayyan, Doha.

Hosted by Qatar Racing & Equestrian Club the eight-day event culminates in the running of Qatar's richest race day which boasts total prize money in excess of EU 2.5 million and features two Group 1 races in the H.H The Emir's Sword for Purebred Arabians and the H.H The Emir's Trophy for Thoroughbreds.

International visitors can look forward to a full programme of events beginning with the 24th Qatar International Arabian Horse Show which takes place in the outdoor arena of the Qatar Equestrian Federation, an open house event at Al Shaqab, the 5th Qatar Straight Egyptian Arabian Horse Show and a visit to Al Shahania Stud from where trainer Julian Smart has sent out three of the last four winners of the H.H The Emir's Sword.

A formal opening ceremony will take place this evening hosted by international racing celebrity Derek Thompson who will be presenting all three days of next week's race meeting.

Qatar Racing & Equestrian Club Chairman H.E Sheikh Mohamed Bin Faleh Al Thani said, 'H.H The Emir 24th International Equestrian Sword Festival is a celebration of our passion for the horse and in addition to helping raise the State of Qatar's international reputation as a business, leisure and sporting destination, provides us with an opportunity to welcome representatives of the international racing community.'

Last year's winners of both feature races are set to line up again this year. Dubday, formerly trained in the UK by Sir Michael Stoute, is bidding for back-to-back victories in the H.H. The Emir's Trophy following after winning the 2014 renewal for trainer Jassim Al Ghazali and Frankie Dettori while trainer Julian Smart will be hoping that Assay can provide his fifth winner of the H.H The Emir's Sword since 2005.

**Ends.**

**For enquiries about media accreditation during the H.H. The Emir 24th International Equestrian Sword Festival please contact the Press Office:**

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## Qatar Racing and Equestrian Club

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## Notes to Editors

### **About the H.H. The Emir 24th International Equestrian Sword Festival**

Staged under the patronage of His Highness Sheikh Tamin Bin Hamad Bin Khalifa Al Thani, Emir of Qatar, the HH The Emir 24<sup>th</sup> International Equestrian Sword Festival officially launches on Thursday, 19<sup>th</sup> February.

The event is staged by the Qatar Racing & Equestrian Club and comprises five days of International Arabian Horse Shows followed by three days of high quality racing for Purebred Arabians and Thoroughbreds with a total prize money value in excess of Euros 5 million.

More than 400 international visitors will attend the HH The Emir 24<sup>th</sup> International Equestrian Sword Festival including members of the International Federation of Arabian Horse Racing Authorities (IFAHR) and the European Conference of Arab Horse Organisations (ECHAHO).

### **About Qatar Racing & Equestrian Club**

The Qatar Racing & Equestrian Club was established in 1975 and operates under the Chairmanship of H.E. Sheikh Mohamed Bin Faleh Al Thani. General Manager and Secretary General of the Board of Directors Sami Jassim Al Boenain is also Chairman of the International Federation of Arabian Horseracing Authorities (IFAHR).

Located in New Rayyan, Doha, it has the mission of developing Thoroughbred and Purebred Arabian horse racing events, organising Arabian horse shows and providing support to owners and breeders.

Due to its state-of-the-art facilities Qatar Racing & Equestrian Club is one of the most enviable horse training centres in the world. Racing events take place every Wednesday and Thursday from October to May with over 60 race meetings held annually.

Since 2008, Qatar Racing & Equestrian Club has been the official sponsor of Qatar Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe weekend, held at Longchamp, Paris during the first weekend of October; an agreement which extends until at least 2022.