

Long story of huge influence

"Path to Glory – the Rise & Rise of the Polish Arabian Horse" by Horsefly Films

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You look at those mares in that film, and they could go into a show ring today. That's how modern and how far ahead of the curve the Poles were, even in 1937. The Arabian industry in America has been on the shoulders of Poland for the last several decades. It's so important for me to say, look at this footage, people! This is where it all started", says Jen Miller (Horsefly Films) in an interview for The Cosmopolitan Review website. It explains a lot about the idea of one of very few if not even the first full length movie production dedicated to pure bred Arabian horse – "**Path to Glory - The Rise & Rise of the Polish Arabian Horse**". Its world premiere took place during 2011 Arabian Breeders World Cup in Las Vegas, unquestionably one of the best places to gather the full cinema theater of international spectators.



The Las Vegas premiere

Stud reviews with moving pictures of the big creators of Polish post war breeding – directors Andrzej Krzyształowicz and Ignacy Jaworowski enjoying their pupils. On the other hand, the number of details make "Path to Glory" a production for rather dedicated and patient auditor. The appreciation of (mostly American) audience during the Las Vegas premiere was expressed in happy cheers with every appearance of popular personas of nowadays show and breeding scene and those who made their tributes to pure Polish breeding in the past. The film includes many interviews, among others with current directors and breeding managers of Polish State Studs, also with Roman Pankiewicz – breeder at past Albigowa Stud, Izabella Zawadzka – honorary President of Polish Arabian Horse Society, George Z and foreigners impressed and influenced by Polish Arabian: Patricia Lindsay, Sheila Varian, Gene LaCroix, Wayne Newton, Mike Nichols, Scott Benjamin, Greg Gallun. They are all known not only for their big knowledge of Arabian horse industry but also for their perspective look on the past and present of the breeding scene. It would be great if the authors had asked them for some more difficult or wider range interpretation of the current most up-to-date problems and dilemmas. On the other hand I must admit that Jen Miller and Sophie Dia Pegrum quite bravely went through some controversial sentences about the fashion for pretty heads contrary to the versatility that – in the idea of the film – the ideal Polish Arab horse is a quintessence of. It also cleverly treats the difficult point of Polish against US versions of the history of Witeź II. The horse was taken as a war trophy (in Poles version meaning rather war robbery) by General Patton's army to the US where, how the film points out, Witeź II made the very first tribute as a great ambassador of Polish breeding. "I think I can still learn a lot from this movie", said Murilo Kammer, a well known breeder enjoying respect in Brazil, visiting the US premiere.

I think it is regrettable that the film does not show the current Polish breeding scene completely – today Polish private breeders (neglected in the film) no longer stay in the shade of their big state stud's master source and their horses successfully compete in Poland and abroad being sold for high amounts also at annual Pride of Poland auction. Even if I'd rather call "Path to Glory" a cup for connoisseurs rather than marketing way to get the new potential clients for Polish Arabian horse in the world of seeking for "product ready to go and win", this movie is an important lesson about our beloved breed evolving and roots. ■

