



**QATAR GOODWOOD FESTIVAL 2018
RACENEWS RACECOURSE SERVICE
SECOND DAY, WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 1**

**MURAAQIB THE BEST ARABIAN MILER IN THE WORLD, SAYS WINNING
TRAINER ROHAUT**

A jewel in the crown of Arabian horse racing took place on the second day of the Qatar Goodwood Festival.

The (Arabian G1) Qatar International Stakes, run over a mile and worth £400,000 in total prize money, was won in runaway style by six-year-old Muraaqib, carrying jockey Jim Crowley in the familiar colours of Sheikh Hamdan. Trained in France by Francois Rohaut, the winner scored by one and a half lengths and two lengths from Ebraz (9/4f), who was following up his second place in the same race last year, and Lightning Bolt (5/1).

There is a £1m bonus for any horse who wins the Arabian Triple Crown, comprising today's race plus legs at Longchamp on Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe Sunday in October, and at Doha in Qatar in February, but Rohaut does not expect Muraaqib to take in the French race, which is over 2,000 metres (about 10 furlongs).

Rohaut said: "He has been in my yard for four years now and in my eyes has always been a champion. He is the best Arabian horse I have trained and probably right now he is the best in the world, certainly at a mile.

"He was wearing blinkers for the first time today and it made a big difference - he was beaten last time out, but we wanted to keep them for today's race. I don't think he'll go to Longchamp because he is so good over a mile, unless Sheikh Hamdan wants him to run there. He will go to Abu Dhabi [for a G1 race] in November."

Alison Lidderdale, sponsorship and commercial director of the Arabian Racing Organisation, said the sport is gaining traction in Britain, although other countries give the Arabian horse greater opportunities. Lidderdale said: "I hope this race has done a lot for gaining the Arabian horse greater recognition in Britain - we are working hard to make the Arabian feature within the thoroughbred world, by working with the BHA, and a race like this helps in that promotion.

"Coming off the back of the amazing weekend we have enjoyed at the Dubai International [at Newbury] I believe people will see we have a right to be there.

"The very generous prize money on offer is down to sponsorship from Qatar. The Arabian horse is their heritage, over and above the thoroughbred horse, and is their celebrated horse. Other countries around the world offer a much bigger programme of races to the Arabian, and it is our job to build that here.

"We have three full race meetings at Chelmsford this year, we have run a Group Three race at Windsor and will be running Group One races there and at Doncaster, while the Newbury meeting is one of the best in the world."

CROWLEY DOES THE BUSINESS ON MURAAQIB

The Francois Rohaut-trained Muraaqib captured the £400,000 G1 Qatar International Stakes for Purebred Arabians over a mile.

Owned by Sheikh Hamdan Al Maktoum and partnered by his retained rider Jim Crowley, Muraaqib benefitted from the addition of first-time blinkers as he registered a length and a half-success.

Crowley said: "It was the first time I sat on him since he won in Abu Dhabi in November. The blinkers were a big help for him today.

"I was just waiting for the gap to appear and when it did, he won well. He travelled on the bridle and it is a great feeling to win this race."

5.20pm £400,000 Qatar International Stakes (Group 1 - Purebred Arabians) 1m

1 MURAAQIB (HH Sheikh Hamadan Bin R Al Maktoum) Francois Rohaut FR 6-9-08 Jim Crowley 5/2

2 Ebraz (HH Sheikh Mohammed Bin Khalifa Al Thani) Julian Smart QTR 5-9-08 Theo Bachelot 9/4 Fav

3 Lightning Bolt (Mr L Waterland) Karin Van Den Bos NL 6-9-08 Adrie De Vries 5/1

10 ran

Time: 1m 48.00s

Distances: 1½, 2

Breeder: SNC Shadwell France

Breeding: ch h Munjiz (FR) - Tashreefat (GB)