

MICHAEL HARRIS ~ ENGLAND

Michael's interest in horses began with thoroughbreds and he bred race horses long before he turned to breeding Arabians. The most successful of these was the Newmarket 6 furlong track record holder, "Welsh Blossom". There were also many top flight three day eventers and show hunters.

The Arabian stud was started 35 years ago and Michael's first mare, Holly Blue, bought as a foal became world famous during her lifetime and won the Princess Muna Saddle of Honour twice for outstanding progeny. Many of Michael's horses have won national championships in the show ring and he owns the only world champion stallion in the UK – an elegant and dynamic Polish horse called Rumak who has had a great influence over his breeding program.

Michael has always believed that a horse must have excellent conformation first and foremost and many of the horses bred at Combe Farm have excelled in the endurance world – a discipline that tests stamina and soundness to the limit - as well as a generous temperament. Michael is very proud that this year's Arab Horse Marathon winner and last year's junior ridden champion endurance horse were both bred at Combe, along with many hundred mile gold series horses and fifty mile race ride winners.

A past president of the Arab Horse Society and director and show trainer of the Royal Stud of Oman for Sultan Qaboos, Michael has been a National Judge for over 25 years, judging eight of the main classes at the National Arab Show at Malvern last year and judging at the National Championships in both Jordan and Switzerland this year.

Michael is looking forward to his visit to Australia enormously. He knows that there are wonderful horses 'down under' and he sees it as a real privilege to judge at our National Championship Show in March.

When asked what his pet hates are, Michael responds that he hates to see any fear of the handler in the horses; frozen over stretched poses with heads held unnaturally high and excessive shanking on the bridle/halter. He also hates to see an inability in the horse to walk calmly (rather than jog) when asked.

