



## AL SHAQAB GEARS UP FOR CHI AL SHAQAB 2017

*Prestigious equestrian event to promote Qatar as top sporting destination*

**Doha:** Top international riders and members of the public will come together to celebrate Qatar's rich equine heritage when Al Shaqab hosts the fifth edition of CHI AL SHAQAB, its top international competition, from March 2 – 4 2017 in Doha, Qatar.

CHI AL SHAQAB 2017, sponsored by ExxonMobil Qatar, is one of only four international annual equestrian competitions that showcases three or more equestrian disciplines in one event. The prestigious competition will see top-ranking local, regional and international riders compete in Show Jumping CSI 5\* and 3\*, Dressage CDI 5\*, and Para-Dressage CPEDI 3\* at AL SHAQAB's impressive grounds.

Alongside the equine competition, visitors to AL SHAQAB will be treated to a host of entertainment and cultural activities that aim to promote a legacy of appreciation for the sport.

Speaking at a press conference held today at Al Shaqab, Omar Al Mannai, Event Director of CHI AL SHAQAB, said: "In just five years, CHI AL SHAQAB has established itself as one of the top events on the international equestrian calendar, attracting equine enthusiasts from across the globe. The event attracts a great deal of international interest, which sheds a light on Qatar as a nation with a sporting legacy we can be proud of."

"We look forward to hosting top riders, members of the business community and public, who will be given an opportunity to learn more about Qatari culture and traditions and the rich Arabian equine heritage."

A number of high profile guests will attend the much-anticipated equestrian event, including members of the Qatari royal family, and local and international VIPs within the equestrian sport and business world.

"ExxonMobil Qatar is delighted to sponsor CHI Al Shaqab for the fifth year, and to help promote Qatar as a premier sports event destination with our partner Al Shaqab. CHI Al Shaqab has positioned itself as a flagship international equine event with its world class facilities and support from the highest levels in the country. Year after year, attendance at CHI Al Shaqab has grown, inspiring residents in Qatar as well as attracting riders and equestrian enthusiasts from across the globe," said Alistair Routledge, President and General Manager for ExxonMobil Qatar.

"We are also very proud to continue our support for the Al Shaqab Equine Education Center, which is helping bright young students reach their full potential. Initiatives such as this one are the key to building a confident and skilled generation, one that will sustain the future knowledge-based society that His Highness The Emir envisions for Qatar."

Top ranked riders will be competing at CHI AL SHAQAB including Sheikh Ali Al Thani who represented Qatar and was placed sixth in show-jumping at the 2016 Summer Olympics in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. He also carried Qatar's flag in the Parade of Nations at the opening ceremony.

Other top-ranked riders who will be competing in the show-jumping events include world number one Daniel Deusser (Germany), who finished second in last year's Grand Prix at CHI AL SHAQAB; second-ranked Christian Ahlmann (Germany), who finished third in the 2016 Grand Prix; and Simon Delestre (France), currently ranked fifth in the world.

Patrik Kittel (Sweden) won both the Grand Prix and the Freestyle test at AL SHAQAB last year, and he'll look to repeat the feat in 2017. Other dressage riders to watch include Carl Hester (United Kingdom), the world's number five, and Inessa Merkulova (Russia), ranked sixth. Several riders will be defending their 2016 crowns in para-dressage, including 1b winner Nicole Den Dulk (Netherlands), II winner Rixt van der



Horst (Netherlands), and Philippa Johnson-Dwyer (South Africa), who won the III.

Visitors to the CHI AL SHAQAB 2017 can look forward to number of exciting activities and an assortment of food and beverages in the Spectator Plaza. The dedicated entertainment zone will feature something for the entire family including interactive video games, virtual reality sets, F1 and horse simulators, face painters, illusionists, pony rides and a daycare centre for toddlers. A range of cultural activities will also be on offer, including henna painters, falcon handlers and traditional food to enable visitors to experience true Qatari hospitality.

Speaking about the value of the event to the community, Sheikha Asmaa Al Thani, CHI Al Shaqab Marketing Director, said: "In addition to being a notable sporting event, CHI AL SHAQAB is an invaluable event for the wider community in Qatar. It is an opportunity to discover a sport to those who are not familiar with it, become enthused about horses capabilities, and enjoy an array of additional activities which will be available during these remarkable three days."

Machaille Al Naimi, Qatar Foundation President for Community Development, said: "Al Shaqab offers a platform for the community to enhance their knowledge and creativity by providing information about Qatari traditions and cultural heritage. CHI AL SHAQAB, one of Qatar's flagship events, provides opportunities for the Qatari community to participate in a variety of cultural and equestrian activities."

This year's event holds special significance since for AL SHAQAB, as it marks our 25th anniversary. By hosting events such as CHI AL SHAQAB 2017, AL SHAQAB supports the Qatar Foundation Vision 2030, which aims to promote Qatar as a premier international sports destination.

There are several ticketing options for interested spectators. Adult general admission is QAR35, and QAR15 for children. VIP tickets include VIP seating on the second floor of the arena, complimentary all-day 5-star catering, exclusive entrance, and VIP valet parking; single-day VIP tickets start from QAR1,000 for adults and QAR500 for children. Three-day VIP packages are also available, at QAR2,500 for adults and QAR1,250 for children. For tickets, please visit [www.q-tickets.com](http://www.q-tickets.com).

### **Schedule of Events**

#### **Thursday, 2<sup>nd</sup> March**

**9:30 am: Jumping CSI 3\*, outdoor arena**

**10:30 am: Para-Dressage CPEDI 3\*, indoor arena**

**12:30 pm: Jumping CSI 3\*, outdoor arena**

**3 pm: Jumping CSI 5\*, outdoor arena**

**5:45 pm: Jumping CSI 5\*, outdoor arena**

#### **Friday, 3<sup>rd</sup> March**

**8:45 am: Para-Dressage CPEDI 3\*, indoor arena**

**9:30 am: Jumping CSI 3\*, outdoor arena**

**2:45 pm: Jumping CSI 3\*, outdoor arena**

**3 pm: Dressage CDI 5\* Grand Prix, indoor arena**

**4:45 pm: Jumping CSI 5\*, outdoor arena**

**7:30 pm: Jumping CSI 5\*, outdoor arena**

#### **Saturday, 4<sup>th</sup> March**

**8:30 am: Dressage CDI 5\* Grand Prix Special, indoor arena**

**9:00 am: Jumping CSI 3\*, outdoor arena**

**10:30 am: Para-Dressage CPEDI 3\*, indoor arena**

**11:30 am: Jumping CSI 5\*, outdoor arena**

**2:15 pm: Jumping CSI 3\*, outdoor arena**

**2:45 pm: Dressage CDI 5\*, indoor arena**

**4:30 pm: Jumping CSI 5\*, outdoor arena**

To learn more and participate in social media competitions, follow Al Shaqab's channels:

**INSTAGRAM: @al\_shaqab**



TWITTER: @AlShaqab  
FACEBOOK: alshaqabofficial

-ENDS-

#### AL SHAQAB – A World Class Facility

Since its establishment in 1992, AL SHAQAB's vision was to build on Qatar's Arabian horse heritage and be a leading global centre for equine professionals while providing an engaging experience for the community. Global leadership has not only meant preserving, improving and promoting the Arabian horse breed, but also encouraging the community in this unique, traditional cultural sport.

World Champion stallions Gazal Al Shaqab, Al Adeed Al Shaqab and Marwan Al Shaqab, alongside their offsprings have enhanced the pedigree of Arabian horses not only Qatar, but around the world. In 2004, AL SHAQAB became a member of Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development to continue its mission to promote the breeding and showing of Arabian horses, and to provide educational and competitive opportunities in the equestrian arts.

Today, AL SHAQAB's impressive facilities, which are distinctively designed in the shape of a horseshoe, cover 980, 000 square metres. With a state-of-the-art Main Arena comprising both an indoor and outdoor venue capable of holding over 5000 spectators, AL SHAQAB is part of Qatar's growing reputation on the world stage that showcases its ability to host major international sports event at the highest level.

#### Qatar Foundation – Unlocking Human Potential

Qatar Foundation for Education, Science, and Community Development (QF) is a private, non-profit organisation that is supporting Qatar on its journey from carbon economy to knowledge economy by unlocking human potential, for the benefit of not only Qatar, but the world. Qatar Foundation was co-founded in 1995 by His Highness Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, the Father Amir, and Chairperson Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser.

QF's work encompasses education, research and community development. World-class universities are brought to Qatar to help create an education sector in which young people can develop the attitudes and skills required for a knowledge economy. At the same time, QF builds Qatar's innovation and technology capacity by developing and commercialising solutions through key sciences. The Foundation also works to foster a progressive society while enhancing cultural life, protecting Qatar's heritage and addressing immediate social needs in the community.

For a complete list of QF's initiatives and projects, visit <http://www.qf.org.qa>