

Sports News

Shaikh Nasser rides to victory

By RAMI HULAYYEL , Posted on » Sunday, December 26, 2010



ROYAL Endurance Team captain Shaikh Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa steered Jamaal to victory in the 120-km National Day Endurance Horseride Championship at the Bahrain International Endurance Village in Sakhir yesterday.

Shaikh Nasser completed the five-stage event on top with a total time of five hours, 18 minutes and 31 seconds and an average speed of 22.605 kms per hour.

The Supreme Council for Youth and Sports president and chief of the Bahrain Olympic Committee edged out main challenger Gorden Sing who was just one second behind in the fifth and final stage.

Bahrain Royal Equestrian and Endurance Federation's (Breef) president Shaikh Khalid bin Hamad Al Khalifa rounded off the podium by finishing third overall in 5:23:55 and an average speed of 21.627 kms per hour.

An 80-km qualifying ride also took place yesterday on the sidelines of the main event and was divided into three stages.

The ride targeted new riders seeking experience and was won by Marion Wasilewski who steered Ranchera to victory in 4:21:00 and average speed of 19.540 kms per hour.

Finish

Behind him was Bag Bing (4:21:01), riding Nosy Be Du Pech, in second place with Nakhat Singh (4:21:01) finishing third.

The second event of the season, which was part of Bahrain's National Day celebrations and His Majesty King Hamad's accession to the throne, saw more than 60 riders taking part, including 47 in the 120-km event while 16 competed in the 85-km qualifying ride.

The challenging 120-km ride started with Salman Al Radhi taking the lead in the first stage, which was over 30 kms, in 1:10:58.

He was followed by Burjeer (1:13:52) in second place, Shaikh Nasser (1:14:09) in third while Shaikh Khalid (1:18:07) was seventh.

In the second stage, which was also over 30 kms, Shaikh Nasser put up a spirited show and climbed on top in 2:29:33. Shaikh Khalid (2:37:25) also improved to second place with Abdulrahman Al Saad (2:33:48) was third.

Shaikh Nasser maintained his sole lead in the 25-km third stage, crossing the finish line in 3:40:58. He was followed by Shaikh Khalid (3:43:35) and Abdulrahman Al Saad who also maintained their positions.

In the fourth and penultimate stage, which was over 20 kms, Ghazi Al Doseri clinched the lead in 4:37:52.

Not far behind was Gorden Sing (4:38:05) who moved up to second while Shaikh Nasser (4:38:24) and Shaikh Khalid (4:39:48) dropped to third and fourth, respectively.

But Shaikh Nasser soon regained his momentum in the fifth and final stage, which covered 15 kms, to move back on top and emerge champion.

The ride was flagged off by Shaikh Nasser's Media and Information Centre director Tawfeeq Salehi.

In the 80 kms, qualifying ride, Mohammed Al Hayki had a great start on El Baraq to complete the first stage first in 1:32:35. Marion was second in 1:33:32 and Nakhat Singh (1:34:09) third.

Bag Singh took the lead in the 30-km second stage in 3:06:11. Nakhat (3:06:17) moved up to second while Marion (3:06:27) went down to third.

However, Marion proved too strong in the third and last stage, which was over 20 kms, to clinch a deserving victory.

The ride was witnessed by his Majesty King Hamad who congratulated the winners at the awarding ceremony. His Majesty also met with the organisers and praised their efforts in developing endurance ride programmes.

Also attending the event were National Guard commander Shaikh Mohammed bin Isa Al Khalifa and Bahrain Olympic Committee's chief executive officer Shaikh Khalid bin Abdulla Al Khalifa who honoured the top three riders.