



World's best

■ Shaikh Mohammad Bin Rashid Al Maktoum and Shaikh Hamdan Bin Mohammad Bin Rashid Al Maktoum (above), Crown Prince of Dubai, during the 160km World Endurance Championships at Euston Park in Suffolk, UK, on Saturday.

Khalifa leads praise for Mohammad

VICE-PRESIDENT WINS INDIVIDUAL GOLD AND ALSO GUIDES UAE TO SUCCESS IN WORLD ENDURANCE

ABU DHABI

President His Highness Shaikh Khalifa Bin Zayed Al Nahyan has congratulated His Highness Shaikh Mohammad Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice-President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, on winning the individual gold medal at the Longines FEI World Endurance Championship staged at Euston Park in Suffolk, UK.

A total of 152 riders from 38 countries competed for the title with Shaikh Mohammad winning the individual race and the UAE the team prize.

In a statement, Shaikh Khalifa said: "The victory represents an honourable, qualitative addition to the UAE's proven record of sports achievements at the international level."

The President praised the achievement as a "proof" of the merit of UAE riders, led by Shaikh Mohammad, in claiming prestigious honours in the world's biggest championships.

For his part, Shaikh Mohammad expressed profound thanks and gratitude to Shaikh Khalifa, saying: "The title is an achievement to the UAE under the leadership of Shaikh Khalifa."

Shaikh Mohammad was also congratulated by His Highness Dr Shaikh Sultan Bin Mohammad Al Qasimi, Supreme Council Member and Ruler of Sharjah; His Highness Shaikh Hamad Bin Mohammad Al Sharqi, Supreme Council Member and Ruler of Fujairah; His Highness Shaikh Humaid Bin Rashid Al Nuaimi, Supreme Council Member and Ruler of Ajman; His Highness Shaikh Saud Bin Saqr Al Qasimi, Supreme Council Member and

His Highness Shaikh Saud Bin Rashid Al Mualla, Supreme Council Member and Ruler of Umm Al Quwain.

They also greeted him for leading the UAE team to taking first position in the team classification. The Crown Princes and Deputy Rulers of Sharjah, Fujairah, Ajman, Ras Al Khaimah and Umm Al Quwain also greeted the Vice-President on the achievement.

Convincing victory

Riding Madji Du Pont, Shaikh Mohammad completed the 160km championship with a strong finish at an average speed of 22.82 km/h.

He rode the final 20km loop at 27.6 km/h to finish ahead of the UAE's Shaikh Rashid Dalmoock Al Maktoum (Yamamah) and Ali Ahalfan Al Jahouri (Vendaval).

A former World Champion, Spain's Maria Alvarez Ponton, came fourth with Nobby after a fine performance from the evergreen 17-year-old victor in Kentucky in 2010 and Malaysia in 2012.

It was a convincing win by the UAE riders, who are viewed as the strongest in the sport.

The team of Shaikh Mohammad Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Shaikh Rashid Dalmoock Al Maktoum and Shaikh Majid Bin Mohammad Al Maktoum also won the World Championship team competition in style, finishing a full two hours ahead of France, with Oman in third, the USA in fourth and Belgium in fifth.

A world-class field lined up for the championships over what was widely viewed as a deceptively tough course, which took in a variety of terrain from forest tracks to grassland and sand.

■ The victorious UAE team along with Shaikh Nahyan Bin Mubarak Al Nahyan, Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research, and other Shaikhs and supporters.
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■ Above: His Highness Shaikh Mohammad Bin Rashid Al Maktoum with his wife Princess Haya Bint Al Hussain and daughter Shaikha Al Jalila Bint Mohammad Bin Rashid Al Maktoum after the endurance ride.
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■ The UAE team overcame a strong challenge from the French, Bahrain and Spanish riders, with the Americans fielding a team featuring two experienced riders in the shape of Becky Hart and Valerie Kanavy.
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■ The UAE riders with the UAE national flag during the 160km ride, which attracted a huge international field of 152 riders from 38 countries.
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■ The 14th World Endurance Championships have been a true reflection of the UAE team's superiority as they replicated the success they achieved in the World Equestrian Games in Kentucky in 2010.
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