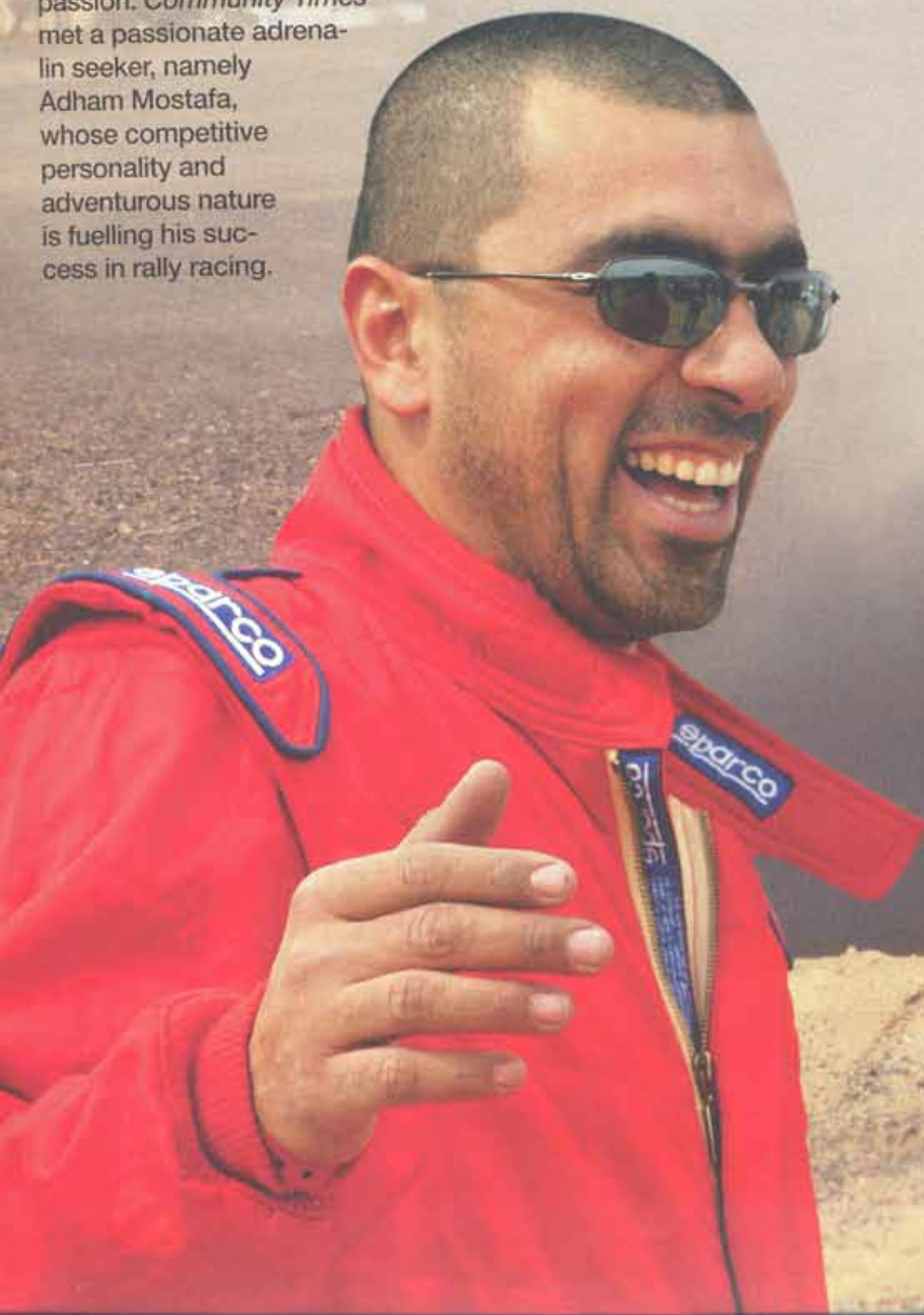


ADHAM MOSTAFA & RALLY RACING

By: Maha El Gazzar

Few people crave the feeling of adrenalin running through their body and the rush that escalates to their head. Society quickly dubs these people "adrenalin seekers" and the rest of us watch them, as they get involved in one adventure after the other. From skydiving to swimming with sharks and car racing, adrenalin seekers will do whatever it takes to get their 'fix' and satisfy their passion. *Community Times* met a passionate adrenalin seeker, namely Adham Mostafa, whose competitive personality and adventurous nature is fuelling his success in rally racing.



Rally Racing is an off-road, cross-country race that usually spans over more than two days. Each racer is required to drive a minimum number of kilometers daily.

Hailing from Business Administration studies, Mostafa was always interested in cars, from the time in the mid 80s when Europeans were first venturing into Africa to race through its rough terrains. It took a while for Egypt to catch up with the adventurous sports because, "There were a lot of reasons stopping the sport from growing," explains Mostafa, citing media awareness and sponsorships as examples.

Nonetheless, that did not stop Mostafa from learning more about the sport. In 1993, he attended a rally school in Kuwait where he was trained by renowned British instructor, Bill Gwynn, who trained many big names. The training comprised a few days of the basic theoretical learning, but it took Mostafa a while before he joined the practical experience.



The first official rally race appeared in the Egyptian scene in 2000, and Mostafa didn't hesitate to join. In fact, his team, who built their own car, were the only Egyptian team to finish the race.

In 2009, the Automotive Club formed the Egyptian Motor Sport Federation (EMSF), which organized two local rallies in Egypt every year—in addition to the Pharos Rally that takes place once a year.

Mostafa still remembers the feeling that came over him during his first race. "It was very intense and an overwhelming experience," he recalls. It was so overwhelming that when Mostafa rides a roller coaster these days, it doesn't shake him one bit. "Nothing meets my racing experience."

A rally racing car is always re-built from the inside out. A "Roll-Cage" is installed inside the car for safety. Most of the car features are upgraded, including the transmission, brakes, engine and suspension. A fire extinguishing system and an electric circuit breaker are always included in the car. Moreover, racers are not allowed to drive at night; the racing must take place during daylight and racers who miss the closing time receive penalty points.

When asked what makes a good racer, Mostafa answered "Dedication, dedication." This is evident in the way he is preparing for the next Pharos Rally taking place early this month. Mostafa is currently on a two-month hiatus to tune his car and exercise, as staying fit is a crucial part during the physically draining race. "I lose a kilogram of sweat every time," he says.

Mostafa also credits his success to his team "Desert Pharos Racing", without which "I would have not been able to race for more than one day. This is a team sport; we say the team has won and not Adham Mostafa," he says.

The Pharos Rally is taking place this month. The classification will take place on September 2nd, while the race will begin on September 4th. 26 countries and 12 Egyptians are participating in this year's six-day race, which will cover start in Cairo, passing through Bahareya, Dakhla, Sedra, Siwa and ends in El Alamein on the Mediterranean Sea. ■

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The Desert Pharos Racing

Adham Mostafa – Driver/Team Manager
1971, Cairo, Egypt

Achievements:

- 1993 Third overall, first Egyptian in Marlboro-Bill Gwynn Rally School
- 2000 First Egyptian, 3rd Marathon, 4th T1 in 2000 Rallye Des Pharaons
- 2009 First in T2 category in Egypt Rally Cup 2009
- 2010 Third T2 category in Egypt Rally Cup 2010

Ismail Sowailam – Driver/Navigator
1974, Cairo, Egypt

Ismail Sowailam is a recent addition to the Desert Pharaohs Rally Team. He's not so foreign to the sport as he's been following the various cross country rally races.

Hakam Rabei – Co-driver/Navigator
1989, Cairo, Egypt

Being the youngest member in the team can't be easy for Hakam Rabei. However, he has proven now and again that he has potential and is an added value to the Desert Pharaohs Rally Team in the future.

In 2009, Hakam Rabei decided it was time to give desert rally racing a shot, so he joined the Rally School of the Egyptian Federation for Motor Sports. Moving on from that, he became a co-driver/navigator in the Egyptian Rally Cup 2009, and from then on his love for desert rally races started.

Achievements:

- Egyptian Rally Cup 2009 – 3rd T2; 7th overall
- Egyptian Rally Cup 2010 – 2nd T2; 5th overall

Adham Mobarak – Support Team Leader
1978, Cairo, Egypt

Adham Mobarak got interested in cross-country rally racing some time along the nine years of camping. He finally gave it a shot in 2007, when he competed in Rallye des Pyramides.

Shaheera Mobarak – Assistant Team Manager
1975, California, USA

Shaheera Mobarak, a very dedicated, organized, and creative instructor and company manager, manages to get away from it all on desert camping trips. That's how it all started. She's joined the Raid of the Egypt Rally Cup 2009, where with a few other 'raiders' they followed the rally race track. She was given the award of "Least Stuck in the Sand" with her car. She's also joined the Raid in the Egypt Desert Challenge. Later to learn more, she assisted Adham Mostafa's team to learn more about the bigger rallies.

Achievements:

- Raid – Egypt Rally Cup 2009
- Raid – Egypt Desert Challenge 2009
- Assistance – Rally Des Pharaons 2009
- Assistant Team Manager – Egypt Rally Cup 2010