

# 2019 AN ATHLETICS MIDDLE EASTERN ODDYSSEY



When the IAAF World Championships was announced to be held in Doha the collective sigh of “what?” and “why?” resounded around the world of Athletics not least of which was concern about whether fans would want to go there. The reality is that many of the concerns had foundation and many international fans decided not to attend but with an imaginative and very comprehensive programme T&FT organised a party of 160+ fans that had a busy and rewarding schedule making the most of their time in Qatar with daily excursions, visits to out of the way places, art galleries, museums and places of local culture plus a variety of regional cuisine restaurants with our team of drivers and guides and daily fleet of 6 buses. With 28 x 4WD drive vehicles on the day of the Qatar Western Desert Safari it was akin to an army of Athletics fans on manoeuvres! Plus those at the event enjoyed the highest standard of athletic competition and performances ever at a World Championships in one of the most comfortable stadiums to have hosted a major competition.



The mix of the old and the new – and not just the fans! – was ever present in the Middle East. Good hospitality from the local suppliers abounded such as the Union Jack cake made to celebrate both the British fans and GB gold medal successes presented at one of our three hotels. A farewell party dinner banquet rounded off the social side of the championships with new friends and shared experiences enjoyed for our group of fans to reflect upon – whoever doubted Doha as a host venue?!

**For the 40 fans that went on to Jordan and Jerusalem** the Middle East odyssey continued with the thrill of seeing the Holy Land, of visiting the remains of the Roman and Petra civilizations, the desert landscapes, the Dead Sea salt (and mud!) and so much along the way. There were local issues here and there but the pluses far outweighed these - memories of a true adventure will linger long as we remove the sand from our shoes!



*First Class Athletics and Memorable Holidays.... the art of BEING THERE!*