

MAY 2020

Timeo hominem unius libri

WORLD BREEDING NEWS

for Sport Horses

“Stay safe and well...”

BN #281

Feature articles - Breeder interviews - Stallion profiles - Bloodline analysis



La Silla Stallion

Carusso LS La Silla



Lic.: STBLS, SF, WESTF

CARUSSO LS LA SILLA 2002
Montebello La Silla / Carrera La Silla - Joost

Semen Available

Offspring

Seven Year Old Champion - CSI* MTY 2017 Nicolás Pizarro / Cuautla LS



Lic.: SF

HONDURAS LS LA SILLA 2017
Mylord Carthago / Concordia La Silla - Corrado I



CUAUTLA LS 2010

Carusso LS / Córcega La Silla - Casall La Silla



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EDITORIAL

CHARACTER BUILDING



“This pandemic will certainly have an impact, and it already has, but our goal is to try to find all the solutions, and to fight so that we continue to operate under the best possible conditions. But we are used to it: when we sell horses, we can know periods of two, three, four years without having a good horse, and then we make

a discovery. One good horse and everything is square again.

“As breeders, we work on long cycles. Breeding sport horses is not a job you practice to become rich, but because you love what you do. It’s a passion, and the strength of horse people is that they are used to going through difficult times. That is not to say that we should not accompany them, or that we should not call on the public authorities to help in such critical times, doing everything that has to be done, but people are thick-skinned in this business, and they will keep working and surviving”.

Published in ‘Le Cheval’ under the signature of Etienne Robert, this interview somehow resonates with the WBFSH Tribune column on the following page penned by Pascal Cadiou. Always positive, this 60-year-old has been president of the Selle Français studbook since 2014.

He is himself a true horseman and breeder. Not one of the small farmers of past generations who defined the roots of the Selle Français, nor one of a wave of new investors that emerge each year.

No, a real ‘pro’, making a living with and by his farm. At the head of a grassy property of about 80 horses on 130 hectares between the rivers Loire and Charentes (the mid-west of France), a territory from which comes the original half-bred Vendéen, he knows what he is talking about. A man of the field, passionate, open, accessible, attentive to the men and women he gathers together through the studbook he has chaired for six years. He seems to us to be the archetype of ‘the man of the hour’ in such a moment of crisis.

His creed? The pandemic is serious, undecided, but no

panic. We are stronger than we think. We have the character, the character of our horses. The character of our territories, regions. We are naturally resistant!

His solution? The policy of small steps, of moving on, slowly but surely.

So pragmatic Mr Cadiou! No big deal: keep working, keep selecting, keep showing as much as you can. We have worked on a studbook program, try to stick with it as much as you can. The first breeding events, for foals mainly, were scheduled for early August, which is somewhat uncertain now. So! We’ll have to adapt....

The good news is that two-thirds of French production is located in the west of the country where the virus has been the least aggressive. In addition, the calendar of our regional and national events really starts in the fall and ends next February in St Lô. We will find solutions, to step out of quarantine in order to maintain the activity as alive as possible.

No speculation; just do the job! Enjoy the spring, the swallows returning to nest in the stables, the new grass that is shooting up, the foals that are born; in short, take full advantage of the specific pleasures of our profession, those for which we have embraced it; we love it.

Go back to true sensations, with apologies to those who were by the rules of opportunism or greed.

And let’s conclude with these words from Le Cheval: “In view of what is happening now, and the terrible situations that are familiar to so many, we do not have the right to languish. One only has to roll up one’s sleeves, in time-honoured way: we know what it’s like when foals die; when a good three-year-old is involved in a truck crash; an inguinal hernia....

There are fifty-thousand reasons to stop every day in this business. But if we continue to fight it is because we cannot live without it.”

Xavier Libbrecht

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THE ESSENTIALS FOR BALANCING OUR LIVES



The *Selle Français Studbook*, together with all of its regional components and its members can legitimately question the continuity of its actions.

This unprecedented pandemic for our generation obliges us to be cautious healthwise, to respect all the recommendations for the protection of mankind, but nevertheless to prepare for the resumption of our professional and social activities.

Breeding, training and selling a sport horse is an agricultural activity and these actions largely contribute to the economic income of all breeders, owners, riders, and traders. Our work for the past few weeks has been to put in place procedures for resuming breeding activities, training young horses, and performance testing for zero to six-year-olds.

Thanks to the active support of IFCE, our French technical Institute, of all the components within the Horse Sector, and in particular the SHF (*Societe Hippique Française*), the SFET (*Societe Française des Equides de Travail*), the various breeding societies and the veterinarian members of our associations, these procedures have already been put in place for some, and are in progress with our Ministry of Agriculture for others.

It is essential for the economy of our already beleaguered sector, especially for equestrian centers and the organizers of sporting events of all levels, to resume activity and prepare for the next steps.

The next phase for us as breeders is to prepare our foals and young horses for sale, even if the conditions for exiting the crisis are likely to be challenging. The complicated situations with horse trading are part of our daily lives. We often say 'horses look like the

ones (men and/or women) who breed them' and, indeed, the breeders of *Selle Français* are courageous, generous and not easy to harm. They will be able to react and take up the challenge looming before them.

The *Selle Français Studbook* will support the breeders who belong to this family, and make sure everything is done to start our tests for conformation, gaits, loose jumping, obviously in compliance with the rules recommended to fight against the spread of the virus.



We must continue to detect, select, evaluate, train, consider marketing and, thus, preserve our income. The regional breeders' associations and your breeding society will be there to organize the qualifiers and championships for the continuity of the breeding program and the promotion of our products, once again in compliance with all the sanitary rules.

The horse has always been part of the life of humanity and will continue, whatever happens, because our history is common and our destinies are linked.

The horse is obviously sport, but it is also culture, education, mediation, escape, it needs complicity, sharing, understanding, feeling.... Just like us!

We will always need horses in our environment, we will always need the ones who breed them because they are essential to the balance of our lives.

Pascal Cadiou
President of Selle Français Studbook

(This commentary is intended to provoke discussion on elements of the sport horse breeding industry. It does not reflect a position of World Breeding News or of the World Breeding Federation for Sport Horses.)

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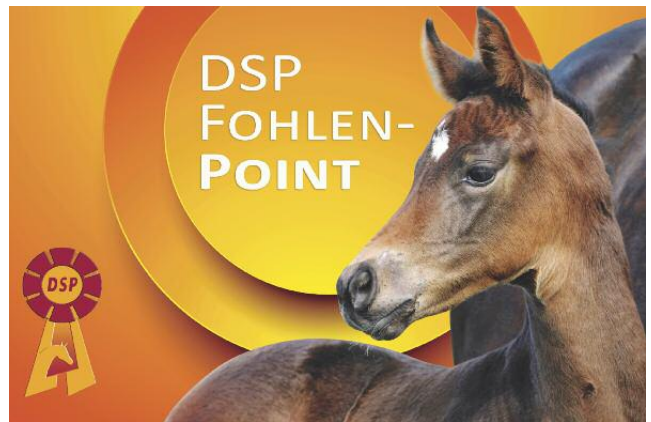
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 Stud-Book Selle Français



BRIEFS

Special times call for special measures: Breeders of the German Sport Horse (DSP) can now register their foals using the 'DSP foal point'. The new platform, which went online from April 10, 2020, provides a virtual meeting point for DSP foals in this coronavirus year. Breeders can present their foals at the foal point free of charge. The Süddeutsche Pferdezuchtverbände Vermarktungs GmbH (SPV) takes care of the online placement, and interested foal buyers have the opportunity to secure their first hopes for the future in advance of the DSP foal auctions. A registration form and further information about the foal point can be found at www.deutsches-sportpferd.de. This platform will operate until the scheduled auction season begins in July. According to previous plans, the 2nd DSP online foal auction will kick off on July 6, 2020. On July 25, 2020, the DSP Elite Foal Auction will follow, within the framework of the DSP championships for riding, dressage, and showjumping horses on the traditional Kaiserwiese in Nördlingen. At the same time, the Global Jumping foals auction takes place in Berlin during the Global Jumping Tour. The high-flyer auction at the Festival of the Horses on the Immenhöfe in Donaueschingen will take place on August 1. Due to the current situation, the riding and driving club Viernheim has already moved its jumping tournament from June to August: The Shooting Stars foal auction will take place on August 22, 2020. The Future Foals kick-off at the Chiemsee Horse Festival at Gut Ising on September 5. Exceptionally there is only one foal auction at Gut Ising this year, featuring both dressage and jumping foals. The DSP auction foals will be guests at Hofgut Liederbach near Frankfurt on September 19 during the Skyline Cup. And 'Your Majesties', a pure dressage foal auction at the CDI4 * Ludwigsburg dressage tournament, staged for the first time by Kassermann, will end the DSP auction foal tour in this memorable year on September 26, 2020. Depending on further developments of this current crisis, further online auctions or auction locations can be added at short notice, or tournament auctions can be postponed. Registrations for the foal point and the online auction should be sent directly to the Süddeutsche Pferdezuchtverbände Vermarktungs GmbH. For all other DSP foal auctions, the registration and selection tour takes place, as usual, directly through the Pfedezuchtverbandes. Further information and dates can be found on our homepage www.deutsches-sportpferd.de.



Manuel Springhetti (Ph: Feldhaus)

We are there for you: A new dressage horse instructor will be providing a unique service after the Oldenburger Online Elite Auction premiered, when internationally successful Grand Prix rider Manuel Springhetti joined the team. Born in Austria, he will enrich the Oldenburger Pferde-Vermarktungs GmbH as sales manager of the dressage horses. The 29-year-old is successful in advanced level dressage classes and has already worked for the renowned Helgstrand Dressage stables in Denmark and Van Olst Stables in the Netherlands. Manuel Springhetti is now available at the Oldenburg Horse Center Vechta on Mobile: 0170-7093018 or springhetti.manuel@oldenburger-pferde.com, and will provide support by answering questions about the entire auction process. He will also coordinate ongoing training for horses purchased who are unable to immediately join their new owners.

Oldenburg Mare Performance Test and Elite Broodmare Show in Vechta: Following the cancellation of all mare performance tests up to June 11, there will also be no Elite Broodmare Show at the Oldenburger Landesturnier Rastede this year. In order to offer our breeders the usual service, the mare performance test has been postponed to a later date: The mares of the Springpferdezuchtverband Oldenburg-International (OS) have the opportunity on Monday morning, August 3, to present themselves to the evaluation committee at the Oldenburg Horse Center Vechta. The mares of the Verband der Züchter des Oldenburger Pferdes (OL) compete on Monday afternoon, August 3, and on August 6/7 for a Verband Premium award or the Oldenburg Main Premium award. A novelty this year will be the staging of the Oldenburg Elite Broodmare Show on Sunday, August 16, in the Reiterwaldstadion of the Oldenburg Horse Center Vechta, combined between the Elite Foal Auction and the Foal Market. Mare Performance Tests outside the core breeding area: There will unfortunately be no dates for the canceled Mare Performance Tests outside the core breeding area. We ask for your understanding. Of course, you can present your mare to the Oldenburg Evaluation Commission nationwide from mid-June on the planned foal registration dates.

Horses for courses: “Money is driving change in our sport!”

BY JEAN LLEWELLYN

PHOTOGRAPHY: FITO TEJADA, PRIVATE COLLECTION, PETER LLEWELLYN

A highly respected voice in equestrian sport, who can forget Linda Allen's spectacular course designs at the Atlanta 1996 Olympic Games. Progressing through the ranks as a showjumping rider herself, Linda is now a popular coach, trainer and clinician, with a special affinity for young horses. For some time now, she has also been working as trainer and breeding consultant to some members of the Guatemalan national showjumping team who chose many years ago to breed and develop their own horses rather than buying 'ready made' jumpers.

Just recently, Leopoldo Palacios, also a well-known face of showjumping course design for five decades, was quoted as saying, “Course designing is changing a lot, like everything in life. There is development, but I'm not really sure that course designing is changing in a good way.” He continued by adding, “The fences today are not original. [...] I believe that today we are going a bit too far. The development is not good for the horses because of the increasing use of laboratories. I do not understand this – specialized technical training? At the end of the day our sport is a sport with animals that need to be near nature, not being developed in a laboratory. We need to come back to the roots and the nature of sport, because we have moved very far away from its nature.”

As the resident course designer at Spruce Meadows for over 25 years, Palacios speaks with passion about their adherence to grass competition rings, saying, “Natural fences and banks are so important for the sport. I like to make my fences ‘green’ with a lot of flowers,” a feature for which Spruce Meadows is famous.

◆ *Linda, how do your own thoughts compare with Leopoldo's statements?*

I very much agree with Leopoldo about the continuing evolution of the sport. At the top sport level I believe it starts with the courses and the venues, which then affects the training and development of horses, and finally affects the breeders as riders select horses that best suit today's sport. Like most everything in the world, time brings changes to sport. Most of the changes are good ones such as safety cups and lighter material. Today's public would never countenance horses falling as they did with regularity in the days of the Mexico City and Montreal Olympics. I feel, however, that many changes are not going in the right direction – or perhaps they have gone too far down the wrong path over the past two decades in particular.

I can't, however, characterize it as being due to the 'increasing use of laboratories' as Leopoldo says. Certainly since we've gone away from natural footing, that aspect has

moved from the days of virtual 'artists' with natural sand and wood products (such as Hermann Duckek whose talent gave us great footing for the 1996 Olympic Games in Atlanta, and the Agterberg brothers who accomplished the impossible for the WEG in The Hague), into today's world of artificial products and attempts to develop laboratory science to determine what is 'perfect' footing for our sport.

In days past the 'best' showjumper was the horse that could display every aspect of his character and training: boldness, carefulness, clever turns, and ground-covering gallop. While the biggest classes were most always with one or two rounds preceding a jump-off, through the week a selection of different competitions with different scoring formats lent variety to the whole event – for the spectators and to bolster the education of the less experienced horses. We have moved increasingly away from this over the years, with the result that every rider is searching for the same type of horse for the one-round-one-jump-off format. With few exceptions jumps all look the same and the questions posed by each course are relatively limited. We are rapidly losing what many of us traditionalists feel was an important element in the sport's appeal to the general public and horselover alike.

◆ *In terms of showjumping course designing over the past 30 years, what has driven its evolution?*

I think the root cause comes down to what drives change in much of our world today, money. The level of prize money available in our sport today has made it possible for professional riders to earn a living one couldn't even dream of 30 years ago. While this is great for those riders at the very top



Linda Allen

– and in a way it puts our sport in the same milieu as others such as tennis, golf, and motor sports – there have been many unintended consequences. That push toward sponsor-driven sport at the top is now affecting the sport at every level and in every aspect I believe.

In the past the flagship outdoor events all staged the competitions in venues that proudly displayed the sport in beautiful natural settings. Events such as Aachen, La Baule, Hickstead, Spruce Meadows, the Hampton Classic, etc., not only showed jumping horses in a natural way, each venue was unique and easily recognized by both competitors and fans by their jump material, natural obstacles, and decor. Many events had long histories, and with the passing of the years aspects were modified to meet the needs of modern sport but without losing the beauty of their unique nature. The appeal of the events wasn't lost on the average person and these tournaments tended to draw huge crowds, creating many fans of equestrian sport that attend every year. Even the World Cup Finals in Goteborg presented the sport in an extravaganza of flowers and drew huge and enthusiastic crowds. Crowds of avid spectators I believe are the hallmark of most every legitimate sporting event.

With the advent of the GCL (Global Champions League) and GCT (Global Champions Tour) with their fabulous prize money (for those that have either the record or the financial wherewithal to attend), came temporary arenas, rather boring jump material, and almost generic courses set in the middle of spectacular cities. They tend to be geared far more toward the rich and famous rather than the average family looking for a fun afternoon of sport. At these events, it seems the arenas have gotten smaller and the VIP areas larger. Certainly the target audience is a very affluent one.

With so much of the prize money now won over courses where virtually every fence is constructed with two to three rails and a plank, albeit of varying colors and different sponsors' names on the sides, riders need horses that do best over this type of course.

The variety in obstacles of years past – walls, ditches, planks, open water, and even banks and Grobs to differentiate certain speed classes – is seen more negatively by riders who are not very sure how their horses will react to the change from the generic fences they see at most events.

◆ Interestingly, looking back at the winners of, for instance, the Hickstead Derby over the past 10 years, they are all horses that you rarely see jumping the five-star Grand Prix and Nations' Cups classes, which is very different to 30 years ago when horses were multi-taskers and could jump a Derby one afternoon and a GP the same week. Today, Derby prize money, on average, is only one fifth that of a GP, so if we could remove 'money' from the equation, what do you think has contributed to this evolution?

Looking back in time, horses were much more

'generalists' and when you went to a competition you expected to do whatever the event and the designer asked you to do. Horses competed in more classes per show because there weren't so many tour choices. Today there are so many more events offered - the number of five-star events has increased exponentially just in the last few years. And the classes offering the most prize money and ranking points are mostly jump-off classes. Not only are the top horses less likely to do well in these other types of classes, they don't need to do them. Also, with the value of horses having risen exponentially, riders will not risk them in events such as Derbys, Puissance or a Match Race. Having a 'specialist horse' to do them is not cost effective given the expenses involved with shipping, etc., alongside regulated entries. With this being the case, very few events have continued to offer other class options.

My guess is that the majority of today's younger riders have never competed in anything other than jump-off, timed first round, two phase, and occasionally table 'C' classes. Furthermore, horses aren't prepared to do natural obstacles when they aren't likely to ever need to do them. Riders tend to go to more events and compete in fewer classes today. And, they select the classes for which they are best prepared.

◆ Given your comments about some show organizers catering to an 'elite' audience, where do you think the FEI should be focusing their attention for the future health of equestrian sport?

This is a very good question and speaks to the FEI's role, or what it should be. I fear that the many years of focusing solely on the very top of the pyramid by everyone has led to an ever-more closed off sport. The cost of everything involved in horse sport has grown out of reach for all but the extremely wealthy. Not just horses, breeding, feed, land, training, veterinary have increased at a rate far beyond inflation. The expense of organizing a competition and coming up with the necessary prize money to draw entries away from competing events has exploded as well. Even small 'un-rated', fun events



Alvaro Tejada riding Clark Palo Blanco (Kojak) during WEF 2020, out one of Palo Blanco's foundation mares, Pariciende (Corland)

cost a lot to put on. It is less the top of the pyramid in jumping sport that I worry about, it's the need for a strong foundation to ensure its future.

With the costs of participating at even a local level competition escalating so rapidly, I wonder not just where our future elite riders will come from, but how we will develop enough future young-horse trainers. Today's competition schedule – at least before this virus hit – meant top riders are seldom at home. Even European riders, who used to have the luxury of being home at least two to three days a week a good part of the year, travel farther afield and more often today.

Competing and bringing along young horses, particularly those from the ages of four to seven, are totally different occupations, since one keeps you on the road so much and the other requires daily attention at home. It is difficult for even the best young-horse trainer/rider to make a living, especially outside of Europe. Riders only get 'known' through competing a lot to become ranked. Those with a special gift for bringing on youngsters find it hard to become recognized and compensated for this very important facet of the sport. We need a much stronger and better organized approach to this aspect of our sport, in my opinion, otherwise any discussion of where the top is going is moot.

Is this the role of the FEI? I don't think so. I don't even think it's the role of National Federations, at least those of huge and geographically diverse countries such as the US and Canada. Promotion and access to horse sports in general needs to be at the local level. Growth is a result of competition whether it is between nations, riders, events, breeders, or organizers of small competitions in a local area.

In my experience improvement can seldom be legislated; it comes from competitive peer pressure. That's why I broke the ice in the US for the recognition of young horses through the Young Jumper Championships. It took years for the jumping establishment to acknowledge the existence of anything but the 'ready-made' horses purchased in Europe or elsewhere, with the important three to five years of training and experience already installed. I'm gratified to see that the USHJA plans to continue with a version of this program in essentially the format that I originally devised, with an emphasis on younger horses not competing week-in or week-out, or rewarded strictly on the basis of a top rider taking them at high speed every class.

Larger countries find it much harder to run national programs since the sport remains so different at the local levels. I believe the number of countries involved in breeding, developing, and selling jumping horses in Europe (all in close proximity to each other) has been an enormous help in growing and improving the program in each country. Competition helps, especially when the goal is similar for each country.

◆ For some years now you've been coaching a few talented showjumping riders in Guatemala. I believe that they are also breeding their own horses, so can you explain the program and your involvement?

I started traveling to work with the horses of Palo Blanco in Guatemala in March of 2016. The family that operates Palo Blanco has had three generations of riders that have competed to the Pan Am level. They began a breeding program over 20 years ago with a few well-bred mares from Europe and using frozen semen from top stallions. Today they produce between four and seven foals a year on a large farm outside of Guatemala City. The training operation is located very near the city and houses about 40 horses total.

They started the breeding program after finding it difficult and expensive to buy older competition-ready horses in Europe without 'connections'. On the other hand it was possible to purchase top quality mares, so they made the decision to invest in raising and developing their own horses. So far they have had one home-bred participate at the WEG, and others to Pan Am level, including wins at the Central American Games and at the WEF in Florida.

Years ago, Nelson Pessoa's brother Helio was employed as a coach and, later, Brazilian riders worked at Palo Blanco starting the younger horses and competing them up to the 1m40 level before the family took them on. In early 2016 their current trainer moved to Mexico to work, and Alvaro Tejada, one of the riders in the family, assumed the primary responsibility for the horse operation.

I had met Alvaro through Jose Alejos who is also from Guatemala. Jose is an exceptional horseman and the best starter of young horses that I have ever known. He and Julie Winkel and I started an annual, six-day Young Horse Trainers' School (YHTS) at Julie's great facility in Reno, NV. We've had attendees from all parts of the US, Canada, Mexico,



Voltaral PB (Voltaire - Opaal x Contender) – a Grand Prix winner at WEF with Alvaro Tejada (GUA)



l-r: Linda Allen, Alvaro Tejada, grandmother Isabel de Tejada, uncle Julio Tejada, Bernie Traurig

Guatemala, as well as guests from Columbia and Belgium.

When Alvaro found himself without a trainer, and with some very nice three-year-olds and more, younger horses coming up, he contacted me about finding someone to take the job. Both Alvaro and his grandmother are keen to compete at the top level in sport. He learned during a summer in Europe prior to the WEG in Normandy, along with yearly stints in Wellington, that today's top riders practice the sport at a very sophisticated level compared with the average riders from South and Central America. He was looking for someone that could bring that level to Palo Blanco as well as start youngsters from scratch.

While the shows are very high quality in Guatemala City – beautiful facilities, great variety of jump materials, and excellent courses – the number of riders who compete at 1m40 and above is quite small. I didn't know of anyone to recommend at the time so, as a 'stop-gap', I began going on a more or less regular basis to help them with the horses they had in work.

Alvaro and his cousin Eduardo have competed for a number of years at the international level and each have a number of older horses. Other family members also ride, plus they employ two other riders. Juan Diego Saenz has a lot of experience for his age since his father competed successfully through the Pan Am level. He does a fabulous job with the younger horses as well as taking his own horse to the Pan Am Games last year. I've worked with two other excellent riders that have progressed as assistants in this program.

My visits normally are four to six weeks apart and last from three days to a week depending on how many horses are in work. Normally we all prefer to concentrate on the at-home training as they are very capable of getting to the shows on their own. Along with putting in a couple of schooling sessions with the older horses – who don't have the jam-packed show

schedules that most have up north – we work with the four-, five-, six-, and seven-year-olds. With the number of available riders we are able to see up to 20 horses a day.

Over the past four years we have developed a training program that has worked well. Jose Alejos comes in the spring and gives the four-year-olds their first few days under saddle. He's extremely good with them so we've discovered that leaving them in the field until then is less stressful and they are right on schedule in terms of training by the end of the year.

The four- and five-year-olds alternate their time at the training facility with being out in the field. Those breaks actually help them progress faster while assuring that they're not worked too hard for their age. The four-year-olds usually go on a 'field trip' to another facility and/or to a show or two by the end of that year.

As five-year-olds they spend a bit more time being ridden and will do a few shows depending on their level of maturity. We don't worry about age-group competition for them as their readiness varies, plus we don't want to succumb to the pressure of showing them more than they actually need in any given year. Some get sold along the way, often to amateurs or junior riders, and our program has them easily able to transition to less experienced riders as we focus on giving them a big variety of different experiences and situations so they are confident and aren't easily rattled.

While I'm there we do two to three days of training over fences. We use new exercises each day so the horses get used to a lot of variety. The immature horses jump mostly out of the trot until their balance improves in the canter. It's almost all small jumps with the occasional larger fence in an easy approach. They've not really jumped a full course until they go to their first show. Between visits they continue with their flatwork with very little jumping unless they go to a show. We discuss a program for each horse for the work (or break) before I get back. It works very well and almost without exception the horses have progressed **a lot** each time I get to see them.

This year Alvaro took two seven-year-olds to WEF – actually not fully seven until early summer. They didn't go until week five of the circuit due to overbooked quarantine. Neither had had much showing experience, maybe 10 classes total in their fifth and sixth years as they were slow to mature, but they'd had the benefit of variety in their schooling at home. Alvaro took them without being sure they were ready to do the seven-year-old classes as they had only done one or two 1m20 courses in competition. Both proved they were ready and handled the 1m30 classes with confidence by their second week of showing. By alternating the bigger tracks with some 1m20 classes to keep them confident and happy they got great experience jumping clear rounds, despite the circuit finishing early. We were all gratified to see that our program – that didn't involve constant showing – had produced well-prepared horses. These were the first two horses who had started from the beginning in our program.

Alvaro tells me that our program develops horses that are

very uncomplicated and straight-forward, handling everything they are asked to do with ease and a great attitude. Issues or setbacks that they've had with horses in the past have never arisen with any of the horses in the new program.

The Palo Blanco breeding program has been refined to somewhat fewer mares, focusing on those that produce the best. The variety of stallions includes one that Alvaro's cousin Eduardo competed to quite high levels. Alvaro chooses to live in Guatemala rather than in the US or Europe, and with the excellent location for developing horses has an enviable record of bringing well-prepared horses to Florida.

◆ Can you tell us about the bloodlines of the mares that were used to launch the Palo Blanco breeding program, the stallions they've used, and their home-bred products that are now competing?

One of the original mares was Opaal (Contender x Ahorn Z x Calypso I), who was the dam of the KWPN Voltairal PB (Voltaire), who won a Grand Prix at WEF in 2018 and jumped at both the WEG 2014 in Caen, Normandy, and the Pan Ams in Toronto 2015. Opaal produced a daughter, Dominique PB (Clinton), who has a super five-year-old by Carland. Another daughter, Coffee (Ferro), has a quality six-year-old by Lord Z.

Another of the original mares was Pariciende (Corland x Ahorn x Lucky Boy). She produced a quality 1m45 mare, Waltaire by Voltaire. Pariciende also produced other daughters, the most notable of which is Balcamera PB (Alcamera La Silla), who is the dam of the seven-year-old KWPN mare, Italion PB that went to Wellington this year, as well as a 1m50 gelding, Clark PB (2007: Kojak) – a winner at WEF.

The mare Rabel (Ferro x Goodwill x Amor) produced Dolly PB, a 1m50 winner by Florencio; and Iberland PB, a seven-year-old gelding by Carland, who competed in Florida, as well as a very nice six-year-old by Wellington.

Rocturne Z (Rex Z x Darco x Wellington), was the dam of a quality seven-year-old by Neerlandic, and is the granddam of a three-year-old by Voltaire.

Edelevrouw (Nimmerdor x Erdball xx) had a daughter, Zocorra PB, by Concorde, that has produced six quality offspring by different stallions.

Finally, Pearly (by Iroko, a son of Pilot, out of a Nimmerdor x Paradox mare) produced a mare by Carland, who became Canadian five- and six-year-old champion, and a top quality five-year-old full sister.

Over the years, Palo Blanco has used semen from Voltaire, Burgraaf, Kojak, Canabis Z, Spartacus, Quote (Quidam x Cor de la Bryère), Emilion, Silvio II, Lord Z, Wellington, Corland,



Paddock freedom for Palo Blanco three-year-olds

Neerlandic, and Verdi. They also have offspring up to the age of seven by their own Holsteiner stallion, Carland (1997: Caretino 2 - Fontane x Landgraf I x Romino), whom Eduardo rode in the 2011 Pan Ams in Guadalajara, Mexico.

They have produced two successful eventers, one that competes in Europe and another that went to the Pan Ams from Guatemala, and have sold other young horses to the US, Canada, and other Central American countries. All from their breeding program.

◆ What motivated you to develop young-horse classes? Did you perceive a failure of owners/riders to 'correctly' prepare youngsters for the competition arena? A lack of understanding among course designers in terms of age-appropriate classes? Or a simple need to create a bridge for young horses into large tour events?

John Madden and I originally created a Futurity program in 1987 for the breeders of young horses in the US. It was a program where breeders could nominate both stallions and young horses and we put on three finals for the four-year-olds – in the East, the Midwest and the West. The horses were shown on the flat and over two very simple courses, and judged in different categories by well-known jumper riders. Such programs are offered by various US breed societies as well as for three-year-old Hunters. We wanted to provide some incentive for horse show people to become interested in horses bred in this country. It saw limited support, I believe because so many breeders were not in a position to ready their horses to participate in even a very simple way by that age. Finding people to train them in the US is difficult as all the well-known trainer/riders have businesses that keep them on the road for 45+ weeks a year, and keeping a four-year-old with them at shows week-in and week-out wasn't good for the horses or for

the wallets of the breeders.

By 2000, with the IJF still showing only modest support around the country, I believed the program should be expanded to include five- through eight-year-olds, with qualifying classes at shows throughout the year and three regional finals in September. This became the Young Jumper Championships and ran quite successfully with steady growth for 18 years.

The major problems occurred with the number of people wanting to participate who were unable to show valid identification and proof of age for their horses, and the frequent lack of suitable courses for each age group at the shows. The regional finals were very popular, however, and although the program was open to non-US-bred horses we always identified those that were in-country bred.

The program was funded by modest registration fees paid by owners to make their horses eligible. Since US professionals only gauge the importance of a competition by the prize money, and sponsorship was nearly impossible to raise since we did not control the events at which the regionals were held, the budget left to run the program was exceedingly tight. I was living in Mexico and unable to provide administrative oversight, so I resigned from the board in mid 2018.

I have to admit it was a constant struggle to try to keep the program format running in a way that would promote the good development of young horses rather than their exploitation. Our Federation was of the opinion that owners could simply have their veterinarian declare the age of their horses without documentation. Also, most professionals wanted a jump-off format every time a horse competed. They also forced us to drop eight-year-olds, with some in the NF declaring that a horse should be Grand Prix level by the age of eight or he wasn't going to make it. I felt strongly that there was no point in having a young horse competition if an owner could misrepresent a horse and show it in a younger class. I also disagreed on other issues and we resisted rolling the program under the umbrella of the NF. This did not make me popular with the powers-that-be!

A recurring issue throughout the years of the Young Jumper Championship was seeing appropriate courses for the

younger horses at the shows. There is actually limited mareducation for course designers in the US – five to six hours of classroom work, plus so many shows as an 'assistant', so people with no horse background (riding, training, teaching), except as staff at horse shows, often become licensed. They simply don't know what's easy or difficult for young horses. Also shows often toss the young horse classes into the middle of the day and frown on designers taking the time to do much course changing. I received very frequent messages over the years that the five-year-olds had to jump the 1m45 course, only set lower.

Today I see a few individuals who have specialized in developing young horses in a very good way and who have brought horses up to the international level. Most remarkable is Devin Ryan, who brought Eddie Blue up from a youngster through the YJC program. Obviously I would like to see more, as well as their successes more widely known.

One of the best things to come from the YJC years is that show managers in some parts of the country have acknowledged the extraordinary costs involved in the US for young horses to get essential arena experience. Some shows now offer breaks on entry fees, nomination fees, and/or stall fees for horses in these classes. Some areas of the country have also started offering both classes and other incentives for young horses. Everything helps.

I found it impossible to continue my involvement in the YJC since moving to Mexico, and resigned in mid 2018. I feel the YJC served its main objective of adding young horse competitions to the show scene in the US, and thus creating awareness of this formerly unacknowledged segment of the sport.

Beginning in 2021, the national discipline organization for hunters and jumpers (the USHJA) will initiate a new national program for jumpers from four through eight years of age. I understand that the format for the Finals will maintain what worked well for the YJC.

My hope is that the new program will keep their primary objective, the protection of potentially vulnerable young horses. The US already offers many 'championships' over jumps of every size, I believe this one should always emphasize proper development of young horses rather than rushing them to win big prize money. I also hope that all the efforts are made to ensure horses are properly identified with verifiable proof of age. Sadly, I have learned that there is never a shortage of people willing to 'fudge' on eligibility in order to win a class.

◆ Over the past couple of decades, the WBFHS has provided strong support to studbooks and developed the age-group championships in the three Olympic disciplines, but I was impressed by the very 'natural' training program that you follow with the horses created in Guatemala. How do you think the key stakeholders in both breeding and sport could better collaborate to create a better understanding of the needs of young horses in terms of training for their first entry into a competition arena?



The 12yo KWPN eventer Damaris Palo Blanco (Caretano Z - Travolta Palo Blanco), ridden by Elena Ceballos (VEN)

In addition to the WBFSH championships, a number of countries have national championships for four-year-olds and up. And most major events have offered classes for seven- and eight-year-olds for many years now. These were originally demanded by top riders as they prepared horses in this age-group to graduate to international competition at these venues. I've availed myself of every opportunity, both before starting the YJC, and ongoing ever since, to speak to top competitors about what they think of young horse programs in their own countries and how they themselves keep their 'pipeline' full for their future in the sport. There are huge differences between countries, but I believe the competition to produce top horses has driven the programs, while they have aided greatly in assisting breeders improve their product and get the recognition they deserve.

I found most interesting the explanation by the then head of the German FN, Hanfried Haring, of how Germany transformed its young horse classes from jump-off to style competitions. He said that years ago the FN's breeding experts felt that while they were breeding top quality, too low a percentage of successful young horses were making it to top sport. They decided it was the system rather than the bloodlines. Horses were asked to do the job of mature horses – run fast in jump-offs, for example. Instead of being correctly educated for a full sporting career, they were being burned out or lacked the necessary rideability for modern showjumping. Rather than carefulness, power, trainability, etc., – all critical elements for a top horse – success was measured by going crazy fast over small jumps, so 'the best' were being selected based on the wrong criteria for modern sport.

The FN decided to change the criteria to one of judges' opinion. Hanfried said the proposal was strongly resisted by virtually everyone when it first began: 'judges reward well-known riders', etc. So they required new, special training for both judges and designers – even the oldest! – and stuck with it. In my opinion it changed not only the horses coming out of the program but also the whole system of riding and training. Most young professionals get their start in the young horse classes and today you see some of the smoothest and most effective riding coming from preparing horses for those classes.



Palo Blanco paddocks

Speaking at length with riders such as Ludger Beerbaum and Jeroen Dubbeldam, it is clear that while most riders in a country see young horse national championships as important, the top riders tend to use the young horse classes early in the year as the place to shop for youngsters to put in to their own program with hopes of turning them into future Grand Prix horses. They also employ excellent up-and-coming riders to do the daily work with them and take them to some young horses classes, but use the classes primarily to further the horses' education.

Years ago I ran into Ludger at the Bundeschampionat in Warendorf, Germany, and had two questions for him: one, why was he not wearing riding clothes; and two, why did he have a couple of six- and seven-year-olds competing, but no five-year-olds. His replies were: One, he employed the best 'bereiters' (training riders) possible, and they had done all the work on the young horses, so it would be unfair for him to take the reins because it was the championship. And, two; he had five-year-olds that had been alternating between work and being put out in the field, because he felt there was no need for them to compete in a championship at this age, so they were all having a break by then to prepare for the following year's training. He commented that the majority of the five-year-olds there [in Warendorf] were ones that hadn't sold and that, likely, the best were enjoying a break the same as his horses.

Jeroen said that he does the same. Buying certain youngsters by their five-year-old year that he thought had potential and putting them into his own program. While they used the young horse classes in Holland to give them experience, they didn't go there to win, and seldom did the jump-off that their country includes for these classes. He said with the size of the industry in their small country there were many, most often amateurs, that also enjoyed those classes over smaller courses.

At any rate I have always believed that the sole purpose for training horses up to or through their seven-year-old year is to educate and prepare them to have hopefully long careers at or near their native capabilities. I see more horses ruined permanently when an owner, rider, or trainer prioritizes a short-term objective such as winning a young-horse competition. Too often, a horse must fit the timetable set by the competition schedule, even when it isn't the best for the horse. Using classes at shows when it fits the schedule of the horse, can be a real aid in training – as long as the test is age-appropriate to the horse and his training level. But competing to win usually leads to more classes than the horse needs at a certain level, when often they would benefit more from training at home, along with regular breaks in the field to 'just be a horse' during their younger years. If a championship or other special event happens to fall when the horse would benefit from it, great. If not, better to skip it and have a good horse when he is mature.

At the Young Horse Trainer School I caution young trainers never to recommend a young horse to an owner that wants to achieve 'his own' goals, as he will be unhappy in the end. However, for the owner that can take pleasure in the

process of seeing a young horse grow into his best self, the journey can be amazing. And, if they should be so lucky as to end up with a star, there is no way a 'ready-made' horse will provide the same joy as seeing your own horse, that you have seen grow and develop, win. Too often people buy a younger horse because he is less expensive than the fully 'made' one, but this is a very bad idea, and unless they ensure that the horse stays in a suitable program for his age level, it seldom works.

◆ Recently, a well-known and highly successful Canadian sport horse breeder, with a band of broodmares from exceptional bloodlines, said he was now focusing more on breeding for the US Hunter market, as it was an easier and financially appealing option? As this is a circuit with which many European breeders are not familiar, how would you explain this philosophy?

My guess is that it would be a far a far more appealing business model for breeders on this side of the Atlantic for a

number of reasons. Hunters in the US are a bigger market by the numbers than jumpers. It is popular with every category of rider, pro, amateur and junior, and is far easier for riders who rode as kids, but were then out of the sport for some years, to return to as older adults. It takes years of training and experience that's required for a jumper to successfully answer all the questions posed by different courses every time they enter an arena, including going against the clock. It takes less time to have a horse ready to compete successfully over the far simpler and more



Palo Blanco internal and external stables



straight-forward Hunter courses. The original Hunter Futurity was for three-year-old horses, and it is common for four-year-olds to be competing regularly and winning. And the classes and championships for horses starting their Hunter careers now offer substantial prize money. The US has recently initiated age-restricted classes for Hunters as well as jumpers so they don't have to compete against older horses or those with European experience. For a breeder to have such a market for younger horses can really help their bottom line.

A specific way of moving and style of jumping are the most critical qualities for a Hunter. Hunters can win a lot and be worth a great deal of money without ever tackling a fence over 0m95. Professional Hunter riders typically compete the younger horses until they are ready for amateur riders. Bloodlines for body type, a low way of moving, and impressive jumping style, and a calm temperaent, are not only relatively easy to find, those characteristics can be evaluated quite well even before a horse is backed.

In North America, professional jumping riders don't normally buy young horses. Professionals need to be at the shows, either travelling as they need to be at the shows, either internationally or with their many clients, and prefer 'ready to go' horses, either for the regional and national Grand Prix classes, or to enable their amateurs to win. It is simply too expensive to put the time into a jumper prospect for any but those with both the finances and a real love of young horses.

To be salable, a horse has to be ready to go or else the market is very limited. Breeders here find it nearly impossible to find rider/trainers that are willing to work at a farm and focus only on young horses. If they are good enough horseman, they want to be in the Grand Prix ring or else have their own client business.

Shopping for young horses in the Americas is tough, even if potential buyers spend a lot of time and money on travel they will likely see too many unstarted or poorly started horses. It's far safer for those wanting to buy a younger jumper to go to

Europe and see them doing roughly the same thing at the same age. Plus the qualities that in the end make a super jumper, be it Grand Prix or amateur horse, are not those that one can really see at a young age. They prove their worth only after a few years of work has been put into them.

◆ The sport horse industry in the US is still relatively young compared to some of the centuries-old European studbooks, so what does the American breeding industry need, now and in the future, in terms of education, infrastructure and support to create the goal-oriented and coordinated environment enjoyed by many European breeders?

I believe it's a steep hill to climb. Not only does Europe have 100+ years of culture behind it, the Continent is fortunate to have at least eight to 10 different nations that are all working toward essentially the same goal, year in, year out. Within some countries there are even regional studbooks. Every registry is grounded in pride for the product being produced and has the benefit of dedicated individuals putting energy and resources into the process. You cannot hire and pay staff and expect to achieve the same results as others with longer-term dedication and resources. Furthermore, successful breeders are long-term thinkers. You have to be in order to be involved in horse breeding. North Americans, for the most part, tend to be more focused on short-term goals. The vast majority of riders want to ride today, and win today! If we see a few more each year come forward with successful horses that they've taken the time to develop properly, I'll be satisfied. As we see more and more riders take horses all the way to the top, it all seems worth it. ■

Ten-day testing of Danish Warmblood stallions

BY BRITT CARLSEN / DWB

PHOTOGRAPHY: RIDENESTEN.COM

The Danish Warmblood licensing of three-year-old stallions in March was completed with an inspection of 20 in this age group under saddle. Stallions must now undergo ten days of observation before they can be granted final breeding approval.

The three-year-old stallions showed exemplary behaviour under riders at the Danish Warmblood's stallion licensing in Herning. Following the licensing selection where 11 showjumping and 21 dressage stallions were approved for testing, 20 were shown under a rider before the judges. Prior to breeding approval being granted for this season, the young stallions must undergo a 10-day observation test. If successful, stallions are passed for servicing mares this season, then must submit to a further 35-day stallion test at the end of the year, in October or November.

The Danish Warmblood's 10-day observation test is conducted as an extension of the stallion licensing, where the stallions are lightly trained according to recognized principles for the training of young horses. It is a short test, so that the young stallions can quickly return to their regular environment. At the same time, the 10-day stay at the station within a uniform environment and training methods provides important information.

The Danish test model is also found in the German system, the difference being that the test in Germany is 14 days. Since some of the newly licensed young stallions in

Danish Warmblood are also approved in German studbooks and must be available to the German breeders, Danish Warmblood has offered to stallion keepers that the foreign-bred young stallions can be tested over 14 days.

No marks in the Danish system

The stallions tested within the framework of Danish Warmblood are not awarded marks, but a training description. However, the stallions that participate in the 14-day test must be given marks for their stable behavior, their loose jumping (technique and capacity), their gaits under a rider (walk, trot, canter, rideability), as well as with a test rider (rideability). The tallied marks are sent to Germany, and do not appear on the stallions' licensing description in Danish Warmblood.

According to Danish Warmblood's breeding advisor, Karina Christiansen, "The licensing takes its toll on the stallions, and we find it unfair to stamp stallions with an inferior mark due to fatigue. It will be something completely different when they return for the 35-day test in the autumn. We simply do not believe in the value of giving marks at this point in time."

This position is based on what has been assessed to provide the best welfare for the young stallions. At the same time, it ensures that the stallion is assessed under a rider prior to breeding approval, and thus no stallions with poor temperament, poor riding characteristics, or hereditary defects, such as their larynx, are effectively introduced into the reproduction programme.

Johnny Hansen also said, "We do not want the stallions to be over-trained so that a stallion owner tries to achieve higher marks. It is not a competition. The only thing we want to see is that the stallions can move around calmly with the rider, so that we can assess their temperament and rideability."

Whether the stallions have stable vices is also included in the observations during the tests and all 20 stallions passed the observation test. ■



Premium stallion, the Danish-bred Stenagers Ben Hur DWB (Borsalino x Florencio), bred by Bjarne and May-Britt Christensen, ridden by 15-year-old Anders Hoeck

An interim 'norm': Buying a horse with a mouse click!

BY JEAN LLEWELLYN / PRESS RELEASE

PHOTOGRAPHY: FELDHAUS

The Covid-19 pandemic has created a new norm for studbook auctions, as the 92nd Spring Elite Auction went online for Oldenburg. The digital option allowed customers to purchase conveniently and easily from the safety of their armchairs and, in fact, inspired bidding duels to the last second for a quality collection of young talents.

The four-year-old licensed Movie Star (Morricone I x Bentley x Rubinstein I), bred by Ines Lohmann from Extertal, and exhibited by Friedbert Schaul attracted the top price at €250,000. The black stallion is a son of champion stallion Morricone I and Toscana OLD – a successful Grand Prix mare under the saddle of Hubertus Schmidt. In the future, this movement artist will delight a new customer in Great Britain.

The second most expensive dressage horse at €112,000 was the five-year-old Flor Dressage Royal (Finest x Dressage Royal x Sandro Hit), bred by Paul Rode and exhibited by IVM Horse GmbH from Warendorf. The mare began her career as a champion of the German foal championships in Lienen and also paraded at the Elite Broodmare Show in Rastede. She descends from the same dam line as Anky van Grunsven's Olympic champion Bonfire.

For €111,500, the six-year-old Selle Français champion Danseuse Royale (Don Juan de Hus x Rubin-Royal x In Extenso), bred by Xavier Marie, France, and exhibited by Star Horses, France, sold to a young dressage rider from Hessen, Germany.



Flor Dressage Royal (Finest x Dressage Royal x Sandro Hit), bred by Paul Rode



Top priced showjumper: 5yo Zarzuela (Diarado x Conchetto x Castro), bred and exhibited by Gestüt Woldsee

The top price for the showjumpers was five-year-old Zarzuela (Diarado x Conchetto x Castro), bred and exhibited by Gestüt Woldsee, Bad Zwischenahn. Her dam, Zorcetta, also produced Zoey (Quality), who was successful in 1m45 classes ridden by Faye Sutton. This charming mare moved to a renowned jumping stable in Austria for €111,000.

Oldenburg's breeders, friends and customers celebrated this online auction premiere on their screens all around the world, and the event exceeded all expectations. Elite quality of the Oldenburg riding horses and great trust from the customers demonstrated that excellent advice and service prevailed even under adverse conditions.

Out of 42 auction candidates, 16 were sold to foreign customers from Austria (three), Switzerland (two), and one apiece for Belgium, Denmark, Finland, Ireland, Great Britain, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal, Sweden, Spain, and the United States.

The total sales of the Online Elite Auction reached €1,740,500, with an average price just over €41,000. ■

The Oldenburg Elite Foal Auction will also take place online, running from May 20-23. The 3rd Oldenburg Special Edition with foals and riding horses scheduled for June 13 may also take place online.

Ludwig Christmann and the NEW German breeding values

BY CHRISTOPHER HECTOR

PHOTOGRAPHY: PETER LLEWELLYN, BLUE HORS APS

GRAPHICS: GEMMA ALEXANDER

Every year about this time I look forward to receiving the translation of Dr Ludwig Christmann's annual survey of the German breeding values, this year particularly so, since it seems that the breeding values are multiplying rapidly. Once upon a time there was a single German FN value, based on the BLUP model, which has been used to calculate everything from milk production in dairy cows (which I think was its first use) to the likelihood of a volcano explosion!

It is just not such a useful tool when it comes to evaluating horse breeding and identifying the best stallions.

The BLUP system gained most power in France where it dominated the selection of licensed stallions, and provoked stern criticism from the famed breeder, and journalist, Bernard le Courtois. Writing in 1994, six years after the introduction of BLUP to French breeding, he was of the opinion: "In the beginning I was optimistic concerning the BLUP; even though I have always been convinced that nothing can replace experience and observation and the know-how of a horseman. Today, with hindsight, I am aware of the system's aberrations as well as the way in which it has been abused."

Le Courtois asserts that his judgment "is drawn from professional experience: as a stud farmer, owner, judge, dealer and most of all as a breeder passionately involved in sport horse selection."

He is also well aware that the pressure for some sort of 'objective' guide comes in part from the phasing out of the traditional breeders to a new generation of 'town' breeders. This was compounded by a National Stud staffed by "executives who do not have the practical training their predecessors received, thanks to present modes of recruitment and training.

"Many newcomers in the horse world grabbed onto BLUP like a childish simple life-buoy. Suddenly they felt on an equal par with the professionals, imagining that this index would make up for their lack of knowledge, without realising that they were fooling themselves. They hid behind the BLUP, believing it would protect them."

Le Courtois turned to the evidence of the scientist, Professor Signoret: "The principal PRINCIPLE of the BLUP method is excessively simple, even simplistic. It affirms a priority that a foal that is born will, providing all else is equal, represent an average between his father and mother. Breeders, genetic specialists, and those involved in improving domestic breeds know that, generally speaking, this is not the case. Only milk production is the happy

exception confirmed by experience."

"It turns out that the equine BLUP index is nothing more than an adaptation of the American milk BLUP index!"

I have written a series of articles over the years, pointing out anomalies in the 'numbers' – young stallions would appear from nowhere, high on the rankings, then disappear just as rapidly, while established sires with excellent progeny on the ground would languish at the bottom of the tables, if they made them at all.

Seemingly those in charge realised the rankings were not perfect because the German FN changed the system. There were now two tables, one based on progeny performance in young horse classes, one on senior competition results. It was an improvement, though there were still some bizarre results. This year, there are three sets of tables, but I'll let Ludwig Christmann explain the changes of this year's charts: The new breeding value works

With great anticipation, we waited for the results of the breeding value estimation of the German Equestrian Federation. After all quite a few changes had been implemented. The biggest difference is the insertion of a new breeding value called 'Highest Achieved Level'.

By Dr. Ludwig Christmann

This article first appeared in Der Hannoveraner January 2020

A few changes were implemented for jumping horses in the breeding value estimation of young horse classes. The scores, which were obtained in mare and stallion performance tests as well as in jumping and dressage horse classes for young horses, are now the basis for the breeding value. In the past, stallion performance tests and mare tests were valued separately. This has now been simplified; they are calculated together. Furthermore, for the first time, the results from the three-day sport test for stallions were integrated.

Top Dressage Sires		
1	Escolar	167
2	Don Juan de Hus	165
3	Damon Hill	159
3	Follow Me	159
5	Fursten-Look	158
6	Benicio	157
6	Furstenball	150
8	Stanford	156
9	Lissaro	155
9	Don Frederic	155

Top Dressage Sires		
1	Escolar	167
2	Don Juan de Hus	165
3	Damon Hill	159
3	Follow Me	159
5	Fursten-Look	158
6	Benicio	157
6	Furstenball	150
8	Stanford	156
9	Lissaro	155
9	Don Frederic	155

The list of the top ten jumping stallions, which were rated the highest nationwide, shows a strong dominance of Hannoveraner stallions. Just like last year, Celle's state stud sire Diacontinus by Diarado x Contendro (breeder: Klaus Jurgens, Sehnde-Bolzum) is leading the way. Breeders of Hannoveraner horses used him a lot last year. Even though his oldest descendants are now only five years of age, 61 stallions and mares, which were evaluated in performance tests, and 148 horses, which participated in young horse classes, offer a broad basis for a reliable breeding value estimation. Numerous descendants of Diacontinus already successfully compete in jumping horse classes at the M-level.

The genetics of Stakkato especially imprint the list of top jumpers though. Stakkato himself continues to be in the top group. His sons Stanley, Stakkato Gold, Sampras and Sandokan LGST join him. Regarding Perigueux, we find Stakkato as the dam's sire.

In the young horse jumping classes, Stakkato and his descendants benefit from very good technique. Bascule, technique, carefulness, and absolute performance willingness are the attributes which Stakkato reliably passes on.

Celle's state stud sire Stanley (Stakkato x Loreda, bred by Wilfried Berg, Burgdorf; line of Adda) often stood in the shadow of other sons of Stakkato during past years. His performance predisposition is very well secured on the dam side of his pedigree via Loreda, Graphit and Gotthard. His dam line is one of the best, which the region of jumping horses Burgdorf-Hänigsen has to offer. Eighty-nine descendants of the 2006-born stallion successfully competed in jumping classes for young horses, twelve were evaluated in breed classes. His oldest descendants are now eight years of age; several of them already have successes at the S-level. Premium aspirant Sally probably is one of the most successful. She is out of a dam by For Edition. Bonja Bormann already won numerous classes at the S level with her including international two-star jumping classes in Neumunster (GER) and Uggerhalne (DEN).

The 2008-born Sampras (Stakkato) is one of the newcomers into the top ten. Dr. Jacobs GbR bred him in Bierbergen. On the dam side, Sampras has a very interesting

pedigree with Achill-Libero H (that's the official name for Libero H), Calypso II, and Furioso II. The stallion Wallenberg, who stands at the breeding farm VDL in the Netherlands, is his full brother.

The Callaho breeding farm in South Africa bought Sampras at Verden's foal auction. He completed a good 70-day test and stood at stud on the breeding farm Famos for two years before he moved to South Africa. He only produced a few descendants, which are very successful.

Sandokan LGST (Stakkato x Landor S, bred by Hans-Werner Schubert, Kötze) is out of the superior dam line of Norm. In 2013, Sandokan LGST was the national champion of five-year-old jumpers with rider Eva Bitter. His oldest sons in competition are five years of age and have successes in jumping horse classes up to the L-level.

Producers of international calibre

It becomes increasingly more apparent that Hannover has a stallion of international calibre in Stakkato Gold (breeder: Arend Kamphorst, Prieros). The stallion, who is stationed at Stud Sprehe, is among the highest graded producers in every type of breeding value estimation. He is among the top ten in the breeding value estimation of young horse classes and, with his breeding value Highest Achieved Class (be patient, Ludwig will unravel the mysteries of this new class later in this article) of 167, he ranks among the top one percent in this particular breeding value estimation method. Last year, he was the best German stallion in the FN-breeding value estimation for competition.

His heredity is no coincidence, if you look at the pedigree of his dam. There you not only find performance producers like the Hannoveraner Stallion Of The Year Werther, but also Achill-Libero H and Calypso II. The dam Wertheroeschen successfully competed at the international level up to 1m60. Already numerous internationally successful horses descend out of the dam line of Algabe. Stakkato Gold offers a good transition to competitions.

The German Riding Federation publishes three breeding values: young horse classes, competitions, and the new breeding value called highest achieved level (HEK). To

maintain clarity, we omit the competition breeding value in the extensive chart. Instead we list the new breeding value 'highest achieved level' (HEK).

The Holstein stallion Cumano, who became world champion in Aachen (GER) with rider Jos Lansink in 2006, holds the lead of the top ten in the breeding value HEK. Although he does not have the largest number of descendants, a large percentage of his offspring are successful in international competition. Nine out of 30 descendants have successes at the three star S-level, three at the four-star S-level.

The top ten list otherwise is a mirror image of the competition situation, with which not only the Hannoveraner horses but also the entire breeding program of German jumping horses are faced. Only two stallions on this list were stationed in Germany: Cornet Obolensky and Chacco-Blue. The others were used or originated in Belgium, France, and the Netherlands. They are stallions who are well known as producers of horses of international calibre.

Chacco-Blue is a great example that the new HEK breeding value has the desired result. With a breeding value of 173, Chacco-Blue is identified as a top producer for international competition. It confirms his leading position in the list of producers of the WBFSH. His competition breeding value is 138. Even though this is also clearly positive, it does not certify exceptional heredity.

The situation with For Pleasure is similar. The HEK breeding value of 161 reflects much more how his offspring perform in horse shows all over the world than the breeding value for competition does, which is estimated at 139.

Baloubet de Rouet is an example that the results in jumping horse classes do not always make a statement about the successes in international competition. His breeding value in young horse classes is estimated at 126. As a producer of international sport horses, the Olympic champion from Athens (GRE) has an HEK breeding value of 183, and with that belongs to the top group. The results of 266 descendants were entered into his breeding value estimation for young horse classes. In spite of this, both breeding values are important and meaningful. In addition to jumping ability, the style at the fences and rideability are

crucial in the young horse classes. In upper level competitions, ability, fighting spirit, and smartness are of utmost importance.

Dressage rankings

Just like last year, the Westfalian stallion Escolar (Estobar NRW x Furst Piccolo, owned by Gut Neuenhof, Nideggen) is the highest-graded dressage sire with a young horse classes breeding value of 167. With rider Hubertus Schmidt, the expressive bay stallion is one of Germany's greatest hopefuls in the large dressage arena. The same counts for his heredity.

We can now already observe that Escolar gave the Hannoveraner line of the Thoroughbred stallion Adeptus xx – who got to Westfalia via the 1969-born Ehrensold (Ehrenschild) – a lift.

Four Hannoveraner stallions are among the highest valued: Fürsten-Look, Benicio, Lissaro, and Don Frederic. The presence of Fürstenball in this top group is striking. He is listed as well as his two sons Fürsten-Look (breeder: Johannes Sabel, Gersten) from the Schockemöhle stallion station, the national champion of four-year-old stallions in 2015, as well as Follow Me from the Dressage Horse Performance Center in Löningen.

Christopher Hector comments: Once again Lissaro features in the top line-up of dressage sires, despite that fact that breeders were so unimpressed with his progeny that he was withdrawn from stud to make an honest living as a young rider mount. I've seen a few of his progeny, sweet creatures, but without that spark that makes a dressage horse. I would have thought, given that Lissaro was bred to jump and indeed jumped successfully at a young horse level, foals out of jumping mares with lots of blood, might be great eventers....

Stanford, bred in the Rhineland by Anton and Uwe Mengelaers, Geilenkirchen, reached the publishing threshold for the first time, which required a security of 70% for the FN-breeding value estimation. As a three-year-old, this son of Sir Donnerhall x Diamond Hit finished the National Championships for German riding horses in third place with rider Stefanie Wolf. The following year, he again

FN Highest Level Achieved		
1	Cumano	205
2	Kashmir van Schuttershof	185
3	Baloubet du Rouet	183
4	Heartbreaker	181
5	Cornet Obolensky	179
5	Quasimodo Z	179
7	Diamant de Semilly	174
7	Kannan	174
9	Chacco-Blue	173
10	Toulon	171

FN Highest Level Achieved		
1	Jazz	228
2	Don Schufro	199
3	Breitling W	198
4	Painted Black	195
5	Donnerbube I	192
6	Welt Hit I O	188
7	Damon Hill	187
8	Welt Hit II	186
9	Gribaldi	185
10	Johnson	150

Name	Hannoveraner BVs MPT/auction			Hannoveraner BVs mare inspection			FN Breeding Values	
	Jumping	Dressage	Accuracy (%)	Riding horse points	Conformation	Accuracy (%)	By young horse / certainty (%)	By highest achieved level / certainty (%)
Balou du Rouet	147	73	91	92	105	95	134/96	147/99
Calido	152	98	97	112	86	97	135/98	132/99
Canoso							133/82	124/89
Capistrano							141/85	139/88
Cash and Carry							112/89	152/94
Casivo							137/91	124/96
Castino							133/83	103/85
Celestial							146/94	146/98
Chacco-Blue	158	80	90	87	98	95	141/96	173/99
Colestus							139/91	134/96
Colman							135/96	138/99
Comme il faut							145/92	157/96
Comte	142	98	90	116	112	90	142/90	101/92
Cornado							145/90	163/95
Cornet Obolensky	147	72	86	73	133	87	147/97	179/99
Cornet's Prinz							125/87	149/90
Coupe de Coeur							134/88	150/94
Diarado	135	72	85	97	108	90	141/96	135/99
Douglas							143/84	153/89
Edward	130	114	86	90	97	89	136/87	114/85
Eldorado vd Zeshoek							136/79	158/92
Fly High	147	65	80	53	77	80	123/86	135/91
Forsyth	147	79	76	66	109	78	125/86	144/94
Graf Top	145	74	98	96	110	97	133/96	118/98
Grey Top	134	92	89	110	134	92	151/92	125/95
Lex Lugar							134/79	137/81
Light On							135/71	131/92
Now or Never M	128	91	87	100	96	85	142/91	122/94
Numero Uno	131	92	72	95	102	83	135/92	139/98
Ogano Sitte							143/70	170/88
Perigueux	147	58	94	119	106	93	151/93	139/97
Perpignon	144	52	88	79	102	86	126/90	119/92
Quaid	143	72	90	100	107	91	132/92	127/95
Stakkato	151	70	97	60	116	98	155/98	147/99
Stakkato Gold	145	64	80	77	121	83	154/91	167/95
Stanley	138	92	74	76	93	80	156/87	125/90
Stolzenberg	150	72	96	79	109	96	145/95	133/98
Tangelo vd Zuuthoeve							133/77	156/92
Valentino	136	99	95	117	110	94	145/94	126/97
Ziocco Blue							132/85	149/94

was a finalist. He also became a finalist as a five- and as a six-year-old at the dressage World Breeding Championships for Young Horses (WBCYH) in Verden, where Dorothee Schneider presented him. He obtained his best result in 2015, when he finished in fourth place.

Later on, Matthias Bouten rode Stanford to victory in dressage classes at the S-level. He stood at stud at 'Krusterhof', the farm of Johann Hinnemann in Voerde. Stanford's high rating does not surprise the former breed manager in the Rhineland, Martin Spoo: "The line of Fanfare is one of the best in the Rhineland region. The foundation dam Fanfare by Cyrus was originally imported from Hannover. Stanford has been a fantastic horse from the start and sired many striking foals in the Rhineland." His most successful son so far is Sole Mio, who was licensed in Verden then sold to the USA, where he won the US championships for young dressage horses in two consecutive years. Stanford is no longer serving as a breeding stallion.

Don Frederic (Don Frederico x Wolkentanz, bred by Beate Wedermann, Wangerland) often passes on great moving potential to his descendants. He also impresses with his heredity of a good type and good exterior.

His stable mate on the Schafhof is the stallion Foundation (Fidertanz x De Vito, bred by Gerd Pigge, Lastrup). Foundation follows Don Frederic with 153 points. He also established himself at the Grand Prix level with his rider Matthias Alexander Rath. Don Frederic, as well as Foundation, confirm their good evaluation from the previous year.

Two newcomers lie between the two stallions with 154 points. They are First Ampère, and the seven-year-old, black Bon Coeur (Benetton Dream x Sandro Hit, bred by Birgit Tietjen, Taaken).

As a producer, Bon Coeur is one of the biggest positive surprises of the last two years. Already in 2018, his first sons generated a lot of enthusiasm at the licensings. As three-year-olds, they fulfilled all expectations under saddle. From this first vintage, his son Bon Courage became the vice national champion of three-year-old stallions with rider Jessica Lynn Thomas. Many of his daughters received high grades in mare tests, which led to the high breeding value of the black stallion. We now only hope that the logistics will work and that he will be able to be used in Lower Saxony, even though he now lives at Lövsta Stud in Sweden.

First Ampère (Ampère x Weltruhm, bred by Jan Siemsgluss, Bomlitz) obtained the equal high breeding value of 154, just as Bon Coeur. In recent years, the bay stallion (owned by Breeding Farm Nymphenburg, Bad Zwischenahn) has been an excellent advertisement for the Hannoveraner Verband. At the Bundeschampionat in Warendorf in 2014, Eike Beyerungen rode him into third place. As a five-year-old, he finished the Bundeschampionat for dressage horses also winning bronze.

He represented German and Hannoveraner colors three times at the dressage WBCYH in Ermelo (NED) from 2016 until 2018 with rider Tessa Frank. He became a finalist each

time and placed well. Now Cosima von Fircks competes First Ampère, seamlessly linking up with her preceding successes. She has already won several dressage classes at the S-level with the now just eight-year old stallion, for instance at the Nations' Cup show for young riders in Mariakolnok (HUN).

"During the past years, the emphasis was on First Ampère's development and training. Many breeders inquired about him, but we had to turn them down. In the future, he will not only compete, but also be used for breeding," says his owner, Freiherr von Fircks.

In addition to his own successes, the results of seven four-year-olds in young horse-classes and two in breed classes (mares/stallions) contributed to his breeding value.

Highest Achieved Level (HEK)

Many important horses from international dressage breedings meet in the group of the top ten of the highest achieved level breeding value estimation.

Leading the way is the Dutch star producer Jazz followed by Don Schufro and the Hannoveraner Breitling W.

In the several decades since I've been looking closely at the breeding values, Breitling W is perhaps the only instance when the numbers drew attention to a relatively obscure stallion who was achieving great results. **CH**

The youngest stallion in this top group is the Dutch stallion Johnson, a son of Jazz. Johnson was born in 2002. With Hans Peter Minderhoud, he was on the Dutch team that won the gold medal at the European Championships in Aachen in 2015. By now, Johnson is also causing a great stir as a producer of international dressage horses. The list of WFBSH producers has him in second place. Seven of his descendants are among the top 100 in the world rankings.

The Hannoveraner stallions Wie Weltmeyer, born 1990, and Dimaggio, born 1995, are among those stallions, who are valued in the best one percent.

Wie Weltmeyer (Weltmeyer x Dynamo, bred by Volker Bachmann, Fassberg) was a successful Grand Prix horse. With rider Emma Hindle, he represented Great Britain and won the bronze medal with the British team at the European Championships at Hickstead (GBR) in 2003. He sired only a few descendants, relatively speaking. In the Hannoveraner yearbook for stallions in 2018, he was listed lastly with 116 descendants who were registered in Hannover. A total of 66 offspring participated in competitions, 52 of them as dressage horses. Twelve of those obtained successes at the S-level. Wie-Atlantico de Ymas was probably the most successful with numerous international Grand Prix successes with rider Anders Dahl from Denmark.

Dimaggio (Don Primero, bred by Ralf Hollwedel, Syke) was the world champion of young dressage horses in 2000 with rider Suzanne Lavandera. His last breeding station was the Böckmann Hengststation. He was in high demand until his death in 2015 and produced numerous horses with successes at the Grand Prix level.

The Rhinelander Lord Loxley (Lord Sinclair) follows



Cumano, 2006 world champion in Aachen, jumping here with Jos Lansink during the Beijing 2008 Olympic Games in Hong Kong

closely with 167 points. He too was rated very highly. This stallion – out of a dam by Weltmeyer – became the vice world champion of young dressage horses in 2004 with rider Jana Freund, and only a few weeks later he was the Bundeschampion of five-year-old dressage horses. This popular, powerfully moving stallion was out of the breeding program of Sonnenhof Studfarm in St. Vith, Belgium, where he also stood at stud at the end. He produced numerous horses for top-level dressage.

How does the new HEK breeding value classify De Niro (Donnerhall x Akzent II, bred by Brigitte Pahl, Fockbek)? His breeding value in this new breeding value estimation lies at 162, which places him very close to the top one percent of the best stallions (169 and better). The show results of more than 1,100 descendants were examined: 29 of them successfully competed in dressage at the four-star S-level and three at five-star S-level.

The result of the first round with this new breeding value, called highest achieved level is as follows: The experiences are positive; the classification is comprehensible. It especially applies to stallions who produced horses for international competitions. The above-mentioned examples show that stallions with a relatively small number of descendants have a chance in the breeding value estimation, and not only in the breeding value highest achieved level. After all, the breeding value estimation considers the performance of every participating or successful horse. If a stallion has a lot of descendants it raises the probability that many of them only successfully compete in the lower levels. This can conceivably have a negative

effect on a breeding value.

This is different to the stallion rankings of the WBFSH, which only take into account the top descendants of a stallion. There, stallions who are used heavily for breeding have an advantage.

The new breeding value

The reason for the development of the breeding value “highest achieved level” (HEK) was the impression that the international successes of descendants were not sufficiently considered. From the Hannoveraner perspective, it affected the

top producers De Niro and For Pleasure. Therefore, the committee of the German Equestrian Federation, which deals with the breeding value estimation, worked out a model in which the evaluation criteria for the breeding value is the highest level that a horse achieves in his horse show career.

A chart was developed that reflects the performance level of jumpers as well as dressage horses. The points in the chart can be obtained if a horse confirms the performance ability three times. The point chart starts with successes at the A-level. Once a horse has participated in classes at the A-level three times, it receives a point.

If the horse places between second and fourth position at the A-level a total of three times, a bonus of 0.3 is added. There is an additional bonus for victories at the respective level, but again only if there are three victories. The chart differentiates especially at the upper levels between one-star S-level and five-star S-level. The highest points that a horse can obtain are 8.6, and that is when it has a minimum of three victories at five-star S-level classes. Only one value for each horse is entered into the breeding value estimation while this value can improve throughout the horse’s career.

For the first time, and only in this particular new breeding value, international show results, which the International Equestrian Federation (FEI) provided, are considered for the breeding value estimation. The breeding value is estimated in accordance with the proven rules of the BLUP breeding value estimation. This means that all available information about relatives is included, that there is basis for comparison, and that fixed effects are integrated,

Name	Hannoveraner BVs MPT/auction			Hannoveraner BVs mare inspection			FN Breeding Values	
	Dressage	Jumping	Accuracy (%)	Riding horse points	Conformation	Accuracy (%)	By young horse / certainty (%)	By highest achieved level / certainty (%)
Ballettmeister	113	97	81	107	107	72	135/84	128/73
Belantis							142/93	
Belissimo M	130	95	96	121	156	96	140/99	143/98
Beneton Dream	123	80	92	111	110	92	132/96	150/90
Benicio	141	94	78	130	156	85	157/94	
Best of Gold							150/77	
Bon Coeur	120	86	75	116	113	83	154/82	
Bordeaux							143/96	166/88
Borsalino							147/76	
Buckingham	92	91	66	89	97	81	135/73	
Damsey	110	90	82	109	109	86	130/93	129/87
Dancier	120	77	98	129	122	98	137/99	133/82
Danone	125	74	90	104	115	91	135/97	160/93
Dantano							151/72	
Dante Weltino	119	85	75	116	93	82	137/96	133/82
De Niro	110	74	99	103	120	99	123/99	162/99
Decurio							139/92	124/76
Delatio							135/75	
Desperado							145/80	
Desperados	120	82	94	128	123	94	130/98	152/95
Diamond Hit	132	78	95	100	135	95	136/99	169/98
Don Frederic	139	85	75	132	135	83	155/93	
Don Frederico	132	81	99	113	88	99	131/99	139/99
Don Nobless	117	73	76	124	109	82	147/91	
Dressage Royal	122	82	85	107	108	85	128/94	139/90
Escolar							167/95	
Estobar NRW	99	99	68	81	93	70	135/93	152/88
Fahrenheit							138/90	
Farrell							144/70	
Fidertanz	124	86	97	99	117	96	129/99	149/98
Finest	121	90	77	130	108	89	140/93	
First Selection							137/90	133/79
Florenz							138/81	
Floriscount	143	79	94	130	133	96	141/98	138/93
Follow Me							159/88	
For Romance	122	90	74	159	141	83	140/96	

Name	Hannoveraner BVs MPT/auction			Hannoveraner BVs mare inspection			FN Breeding Values	
	Dressage	Jumping	Accuracy (%)	Riding horse points	Conformation	Accuracy (%)	By young horse / certainty (%)	By highest achieved level / certainty (%)
Foundation	145	79	82	116	120	88	153/96	131/88
Fürst Belissaro	128	92	75	132	135	84	137/84	
Fürst Romancier	135	84	93	143	111	95	140/99	123/95
Fürst Wilhelm							137/93	126/76
Fürstbischof							145/80	
Fürstenball	145	91	94	163	129	96	157/99	147/96
Fürsten-Look							158/88	
Goldberg							142/86	
Hotline	121	78	93	123	71	93	125/97	158/95
Instertanz V							135/84	
Johnson							128/95	181/90
Like a Diamond NRW							136/75	
Lissaro	122	113	83	90	117	83	155/95	132/90
Livaldon	126	81	81	117	121	88	151/92	
Londontime	139	75	96	114	119	96	144/98	147/93
Millenium	104	80	71	131	101	80	137/97	121/82
Morricone							150/75	
Quantensprung	122	86	75	119	121	79	144/89	
Quaterback	119	88	94	123	142	95	131/99	152/97
Rock Forever	121	107	68	103	91	75	151/98	144/95
Rocky Lee							140/86	
Rubin-Royal	113	99	95	123	124	95	116/98	151/97
San Amour	118	90	93	135	127	94	133/99	155/96
Sandro Hit	129	85	98	132	126	98	129/99	152/99
Scolari	125	82	95	128	116	95	141/98	138/94
Sezuan							149/93	
Silberschmied	117	76	85	148	112	85	130/90	119/79
Sir Donnerhall	140	89	97	142	129	97	145/99	169/98
Sir Gregory							142/80	
Sir Heinrich							153/95	129/78
Spörken	125	84	92	117	92	93	135/96	111/87
Stanford (Rhld)							156/79	
Sunday							134/89	131/80
Van Vivaldi							146/87	
Vitalis	114	90	71	120	132	75	151/96	154/99
Weltmeyer	135	73	99	120	136	99	135/99	154/99
Zack	115	78	72	136	138	81	134/96	154/87

which may influence the performance. The gender of the horses, the age at the time of the last competition, and the age at which the first HEK-breeding value estimation was done define such effects.

The new model of the breeding value estimation was carefully tested before the first results were published. Viktoria Welker from Dresden wrote her doctoral thesis about this subject at the University Halle-Wittenberg. The title is 'Estimation of the parameters regarding the population genetics in the breeding of riding horses with special consideration to the innovative attribute definitions for horse show-performances'. She confirmed that the new attribute 'highest achieved level' is well suited for the breeding value estimation and as a selection tool. The estimated heritability is remarkable, at 0.22 for dressage and 0.37 for jumping.

With respect to the new attribute, she concluded, "Compared to the transformed rank (note: previous estimation criterion), specific statements about the performance ability and about the genetic predisposition of the horse for his use as a sport horse at a high level can be made."

Dr. Ludwig Christmann said, "I must confess that I was somewhat amazed when the new HEK dressage values were revealed."

Overall, it is a goodly line-up of stallions with proven progeny, but there in the middle, ranked fifth, is Donnerbube I, a stallion I remember well from his time in Martina Hannover's training stables. The bay stallion was a sweet horse, but perhaps not the ideal model for a breeding stallion. Since then Donnerbube has gone on to have a distinguished career with the glamorous Italian, Sylvia Rizzo, with whom his final competition results were in Doha in 2013, where he placed 11th and 12th in the GP and the Kür, respectively. Before that his best result was a third in a three-star Freestyle at West Palm Beach. Donnerbube was obviously a great traveler; in 2011 alone he fronted the judge at C in Mechelen, Stockholm, Lyon, Milan, Wroclaw, Hickstead, Vierzon, Pompadour, Compiègne, Hagen, Saumur, Vindauben, and Vejer de la Frontera. Whew! But as a sire? I cannot recall one of his progeny at any level.

I asked Ludwig if he could explain this apparent anomaly. This was his response: "Donnerbube certainly is a surprise in this list. He also was presented for licensing as a nine-year-old for Hannover, but did not pass. The new breeding value, however, gives an indication for the genetic potential to pass on the talent for the higher classes. Looking closer at the facts, Donnerbube is not so impossible: He did a very good performance test in Warendorf with an index of 131 in dressage, which made him second out of 23. He started his career with a very good pedigree value. His dam Pik Dame produced seven dressage horses, three of these competing at S-level and up.

He did not produce many horses, just around 60 were born in Germany, but more than half of his offspring were successful in dressage competitions, three were successful in

three-star S-level competitions. One of his S-successful offspring was out of a Thoroughbred mare, so the mare did not contribute so much."

I beg to differ! Arguably the most successful dressage dam in Germany is Wolfram Wittig's Devisa, by the Thoroughbred Diego xx and with 63.28% 'blood'. She is the dam of five Grand Prix competitors, two at St George. According to Horsetelex, Donnerbube is the sire of two GP horses: Sophie Wells' Diomedes (Flamenco); and Daiquiri (Justinian xx) ridden by the Italians, Anna Paprocka-Campanella and Leonardo Tiozzo.

"Based on the low number of offspring the reliability of Donnerbube's breeding value is pretty low with 74% and his own performance still has an influence. This low reliability indicates, that the breeding value might change with more offspring information.

"Of course, he would never make it into the international WBFSH rankings with this small number of offspring. When you look at these rankings it is dominated by stallions who produced masses of horses. Donnerbube certainly has not been a super stallion, but he is an example, that the breeding value system may point to stallions, who bred less mares – an example in the rankings of the jumping stallions is Cumano."

Again I beg to differ! Cumano is a really different proposition to Donnerbube, in that he produced



Don Schufro / aka Blue Hors Don Schufro

international superstars and basically from one crop since fertility problems dogged him later in his career. Cumano spent one season in France in 2000 when he was seven years old and this was perhaps the most productive season of any stallion, anywhere, any time, in the world.

He produced 61 foals that year out of fairly 'normal' mares, 11 of whom gained jumping indices of 150 or more, and SIX of whom have won CSI classes. They include Steve Guerdat's Nasa (out of a mare by Prince d'Elle), second at Spruce Meadows, Calgary in 2013; Nectar des Roches (Count Ivor xx), fourth at three-star Vichy with Edouard Couperie; Nenuphar'Jac (Pidayack), a consistent GP performer with Michel Robert, and with his retirement, with Penelope Provost; Neptune Breccourt (Kayack), 10th at the 2013 European Championships with Lucia Maria Moneta; Newton du Haut Bois (Quat'Sous), second in a 1m45 at Spruce Meadows with Cameron Handley. Then we have Noblesse des Tess (Irake) who was fourth at the London 2012 Olympic Games with Kamal Bahamdan, and Notre Moinerie (Qredo de Paulstra) double clear in the second-placed Swiss team at Lummen Nations' Cup with Carlo Pfyffer.

The search for the Holy Grail

Commentary by Chris Hector: All over the breeding world it seems the search for the perfect mathematical model goes on. For many the Holy Grail seems to be calculating successful competitors as a proportion of foals born. Thus the KWPN has recently calculated their stallion standings on the basis of S-level competitors to total progeny and as with the new German HEK standings, it produces some bizarre results.

On these figures the number one dressage stallion is former young horse champion, Rubels (Rafustinsels x Amethyst) who has 11 out of 107 offspring at S-level, 10.3%, the most successful of which is Hans Peter Minderhoud's Grand Prix horse,

Zanardi (Avignon). Zanardi was recently placed fifth in the Freestyle and eighth in the Grand Prix at Doha. He best result in 2019 was a win at Geesteren three-star with a score of 78.725.

Second on this ranking is Jazz, with 9.5% of his foals going on to S-level, but while I had to search the database to find Rubels' top representative, we can all easily name super competitors by Jazz.

Third spot to Paganini, and now the worth of this new ranking is starting to look very shaky indeed. Paganini (Havidoff x Statuar) was a moderately successful Grand Prix horse with Bert Rutten before he was sold as a competition horse to Canadian Cheryl Meisner. The KWPN assessment of his progeny in Holland was not enthusiastic: "Paganini showed a uniform group of ample developed foals who are sufficient to more than sufficient riding type. In trot, the hind leg should be brought under more. In movement the foals should have more length of stride and more suppleness."

And of those S-level competitors that rocketed the stallion into third place, only one appears to have gone Grand Prix, the mare Aida H (Pericles xx) who competed with Enrico di Vico in a GP at Omago (ITA) back in March 2019, for a score of 62.391%. Enough said.

Really I think we are back where we started with Le Courtois: "Nothing can replace experience and observation and the know-how of a horseman."

Still I guess calculating the numbers provides gainful employment to numerous breed society functionaries, and endless fun for bored equestrian journalists deprived of our usual fodder of equestrian competition, locked down because of the virus... Stay safe, stay home, stay kind my friends, see you on the other side of this terrible time.

Thanks again as always Ludwig, your knowledge enriches us.... ■



Horse Sport Ireland breeding initiatives 2020

BY ALISON CORBALLY / HSI DIRECTOR OF BREEDING AND PROGRAMMES
PHOTOGRAPHY: SUSAN FINNERTY

While the competition sector of our Sport Horse Industry is currently experiencing government-enforced restrictions due to Covid-19, the breeding sector can continue, albeit adhering to all Irish Government guidelines to prevent the spread of this virus.

As highlighted in recent Horse Sport Ireland (HSI) advertisements, we have made arrangements to continue to provide registration services and processing for our breeders while adhering to the current restrictions and guidelines. While we are not facilitating in-person visits to our offices during the restrictions, the Horse Sport Ireland team will continue to assist you with any queries you may have. Many of the 2020 HSI national breeding initiatives are already published online and online forms are available for breeders to participate and apply.

Thoroughbred Percentage foal Scheme.

The aim of this scheme is to increase the level of Thoroughbred percentage in foals bred in Ireland, registered in DAFM studbooks and destined for eventing. From an analysis of the foal registration records over the past four years it was clear that only (5%) of foals being bred in Ireland have more than 75% Thoroughbred blood. At the HSI eventing breeding conference in 2018, the top-level event riders and trainers emphasised the need for more Thoroughbred blood. Padraig McCarthy and Chris Bartle emphasised the need for greater than 80% Thoroughbred blood for the top four-star event horse. When Michael Jung was in Ireland last autumn, he too was looking for horses with 80% blood, and he claimed that they are very difficult to source in Europe.

One of the breeders who utilised the scheme last year was Mary Rothwell, from Tinahely, Co. Wicklow. Mary told us that, "This was my first year doing this scheme and we had three mares for it. I think it's an excellent incentive for the breeders and breeding in Ireland. Over the years Ireland's bloodlines have become diluted with the increased use of popular foreign stallions while we have lost some of our own Irish horse traits and characteristics. The Irish Sport Horse has always been known and associated with having a great brain or a fifth leg, introducing warmblood lines has in my

opinion somewhat diluted this trait over the years. This scheme also helps the traditional breeder aiming for the event market, which is a longer road when going to the sales versus the produce from warmblood stallions which can usually command good prices as foals."

She continued, "It is a really worthwhile scheme introduced by Horse Sport Ireland because it encourages breeders to inject Thoroughbred blood back into our lines and also the progeny from this scheme are predominantly aimed at the eventing discipline where we have been so well recognised in the world rankings for years. I definitely intend to use this scheme in the future and look forward to it being reintroduced in 2020."

The Thoroughbred incentive scheme, will assist the first 200 breeders, (subject to meeting mare and stallion classification and performance criteria) that register a foal with more than 70% Thoroughbred blood in 2021. This scheme was oversubscribed last year, which only allowed the best proven mares to participate, which augers well from the production of more elite Irish event horses in the future.



Lissadell – Dr. Noel Cawley's Plot Blue reserve loose jumping champion at Warrington Equestrian Centre 2019

New equine research initiatives.

HSI is undertaking significant research projects in 2020, one of these is to test a specified number of foals for breeders registered in any DAFM approved studbook for Warmblood Fragile Foal Syndrome (WFFS). WFFS is an hereditary syndrome with symptoms of hyperextensible and abnormally fragile skin. It is a syndrome that can affect many different breeds of horses. In affected foals, the skin of newborn foals lacks tensile strength and lesions can therefore occur across the body. Limb joints are also extremely lax and hyperextensible. These abnormalities require euthanasia just after delivery. The defect is caused by a point mutation on the PLOD1 gene, which results in an incomplete protein folding. Where both the mare and the stallion carry the recessive gene responsible, the resulting foal will be affected.

Other European studbooks have carried out similar population screening research from a particular foal crop to establish the incidence within the population. By establishing the incidence within the Irish population appropriate measures can then be included within studbooks breeding programme.

GENJUMP research project

Horse Sport Ireland partnered with University College Dublin (UCD) – as the research-performing organisation – in 2019 and were successful in being awarded significant equine research funding under the Research Stimulus Fund (RSF). The RSF provides funding to Irish research institutes for 'public good' agricultural-production-related research. This funding is separate from normal HSI funding for the sector and is applied for in an open tender process.

The overall aim of the GENJUMP project is to further develop the showjumping selection index using phenotype and pedigree information that are currently available in the Horse Sport Ireland database. "This is the first time that UCD/HSI have been successful in securing Stimulus Funding for equine research. It is a truly exciting development because, for many years like other studbooks, we have limited funding to pursue progressive developmental research in equine genetics. Through this Stimulus Funding, over the next two years we will have a dedicated team in UCD working to provide a suitable multi-trait selection index for our Irish breeders. This work will



*The champion showjumping foal Boleybawn Alaska (ISH: Malito de Reve(SF) - Arina (KWP/N) x Crown Z) bred and owned by Ronan Rothwell
l-r: Ger O'Neill, Barry O'Connor, Alison Corbally and Ronan Rothwell*

provide many spin-off benefits for breeders and will also support the roadmap for future scientific research developments. It is a truly ground-breaking opportunity, which will make such a difference, in terms of solid information for all our breeders – it is very exciting," said Alison Corbally, Director of Breeding HSI.

Professor Alan Fahey will lead this two-year project entitled 'Genetic improvement of the sport horse population for showjumping in Ireland' in conjunction with Horse Sport Ireland (HSI) and using the HSI database.

"I am delighted. I'm not sure that the sport horse industry has ever received this much money for sport horse research before, we couldn't do this without HSI, they are the industry partners, and Alison Corbally has been instrumental in this development and is the HSI lead for the research project. HSI already have a genetic evaluation that they run annually and is published in their stallion book. We would like to form research and development building on that work. We want to start looking at what other countries are doing and where we should be benchmarking ourselves and maybe find new traits that we could start including in that evaluation that can help us, and the breeders," Professor Fahey said.

Irish Draught Genomic Genetic Diversity Project

Last year, Horse Sport Ireland, updated its Genetic Diversity list of Irish Draught stallions of concern, i.e. the Irish Draught stallions which have bloodlines that are under-represented within the breed and, therefore, may be under threat.

However, just one week ago, HSI were notified that they were successful in obtaining funding from DAFM's



Plot Gold (Plot Blue [KWP] - Cimenta C [SPH] x Orlando van de Heffinck [BWP]). HSI 2016 showjumping champion sold subsequently to Freestyling Farms in the United States, and already performing for them in four-year-old classes under the saddle of Jill Morrison Gaffney – riding here in Ocala

'Genomic Genetic Resources Grant Aid Scheme 2020'. This will enable technology to be leveraged to better understand the current genetic diversity and inbreeding status along with generation of genomic co-ancestry data that will aid breed management conservation strategies.

The proposed project aims to: Compare the current pedigree-based genetic diversity measures for Irish Draught stallions of concern to genomic measures; To perform comparative population genetics analysis to establish relative genomic diversity and inbreeding metrics for Irish Draught breed and genomic co-ancestry relationships amongst stallions. This project will also ensure that a scientifically sound blueprint for conservation of genetic resources is in place for the Irish Draught breed.

Other breeding initiatives.

Other Breeding Initiatives that HSI had planned to extend in 2020 were the three- and four-year-old mare classes and the Foal Championship. These will very much, like all competitions, depend on the status of Covid-19 later in the year.

The Horse Sport Ireland autumn loose jumping competitions for three- and four-year-old fillies have also

been very well received and supported by Irish breeders with over 130 fillies competing last year. These championships aim to identify and show case young fillies that would be suitable for use as top class broodmares of the future.

The reserve champion in four-year-old loose jumping in Warrington with Lissadell (ISH), by Plot Blue (KWP) out of Winter Cruise (ISH) by Cruising (ISH) (TIH). Lissadell was bred by Lisa Cawley, owned by Dr. Noel Cawley and he recently reflected on the initiative, saying; "This is a very good initiative and I would strongly recommend these classes to all breeders and producers. The support of these classes will improve Irelands broodmare herd and with the implementation of pedigree bonus points this year it encourages breeders to use the best available mares and stallions. However, I do think that even more emphasis should be based on pedigree and performance, at least 30% of the overall score. The rest on functional confirmation and athleticism. Choice of stallion plays a significant role in the progeny and their ability to perform, so I think this needs to be recognised in overall scores. I would like to see more spectators at these championships. Breeders and producers need to come to these events to educate themselves and see what fellow breeders are trying to achieve and work towards. I like to see these classes being dominated by Irish-bred

horses and not imported three-year-olds. It is so important that Irish breeders get the recognition they deserve.

“My plan with my three- and four-year-old mares that have competed through this loose jumping championship is to continue to produce them through the Irish Sport Horse Studbook series and allow them to perform to the highest level and then retire them for breeding.”

Following a review of 2019, the three-year-old loose jumping will continue in a similar format. However, the four-year-old class will change to become a four-year-old ridden autumn league. The emphasis will be on clear round jumping over encouraging, flowing tracks. All who participate in at least one qualifier will be eligible to take part in the final, which will be a judged class.

Horse Sport Ireland Foal Championship.

The HSI Foal Championship aims to identify, evaluate and reward breeders who have bred a foal that has the potential to be competitive at the highest level in showjumping or eventing.

Olive Clarke was the reserve champion (2015) and champion (2016) of the HSI Foal Championship with her lovely foal out of her own jumping mare Paradise G. She said, “We’ve had excellent success with the foal championship since our first year in 2015. Our now five-year-old filly by Cornet Obolensky (BWP) out of Paradise G (KWPN) by Indoctro (Holst) came second in the showjumping filly foal section. However, we decided not to sell this filly at the time. We are very excited to see where she takes us given her dam’s success winning multiple national Grand Prix classes and coming fourth in the Hickstead Speed Derby in 2009.

“The following year we had the winner of the showjumping colt section. This colt, called Plot Gold, was by Plot Blue (KWPN) out of Cimenta C (SPH) by Orlando van de Heffeinck (BWP). Due to this win the foal sold to Freestyling Farms in the United States. They then came back and bought the half-sister because they were so happy with this horse, and he is already performing for them in four-year-old classes being ridden by Jill Gaffney in Ocala recently.

“Last year we had a late foal, so we didn’t enter but we definitely intend to enter our future foals in this. This initiative by Horse Sport Ireland offers an opportunity for foals to gain experience and get out to different venues while giving breeders the ideal opportunity to showcase their homebred stock. We also really like the format of the competition.

The showjumping and eventing sections encourage all breeders to see and gauge the future potential in their foals. This year Cimenta C (SPH) is due to foal in June. This foal is by Tyson (KWPN) and we intend to bring that foal out to the HSI Foal Championship too.”

This championship provides breeders with the opportunity to showcase their young stock against some of the top foals in the country. Videos of the winners from the championship were uploaded onto the Horse Sport Ireland Facebook platforms, and over the past three years we have been informed that a significant number of foals have been sold directly through these championship videos. It is a useful way for Horse Sport Ireland to provide breeders with a direct route to market.

Horse Sport Ireland has other exciting new breeding initiatives approved for 2020, some of which depend on the length of time the Covid-19 virus remains in the country, and associated restrictions. Through increased targeted breeding initiatives and greater research and development undertaken, the future opportunities look bright for progressive breeders in Ireland to produce quality, market driven equine athletes for the future. HSI will continue to support breeders in making informed breeding decisions in this challenging year. Above all, stay safe and I looking forward to meeting you all again as soon as possible. ■



Mary Rothwell with Millennium Cruise (ISH) by Cruising (ISH) out of Greenhall Cailin Deas (ISH) by Mister Lord (USA) at RDS, Dublin Horse Show

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EVA, EIA and CEM: “But my horse has no symptoms!”

BY SONJA EGAN

PHOTOGRAPHY: MIRKO SAJKOV

GRAPHICSA: SONJA EGAN

The efficient movement of horses and biological products has undoubtedly revolutionised equine sport and veterinary medicine. Equally, these ever-progressing advances have highlighted the importance of enforcing strict biosecurity and hygiene practices.

The efficient movement of horses and biological products has undoubtedly revolutionised equine sport and veterinary medicine. Equally, these ever-progressing advances have highlighted the importance of enforcing strict biosecurity and hygiene practices. The February 2019 equine influenza outbreak (figure 1) reminded us of the impact of contagious disease on equine sport and movement. British racing authorities acted swiftly to minimise disease spread, temporarily suspending several race meets. Further precautionary measures were taken to lockdown stables who had confirmed cases and potential recent contacts. The six-day suspension was lifted following successful disease containment, resulting from the collective effort of all stakeholders in adhering to biosecurity and vaccination rules as laid out by racing authorities.

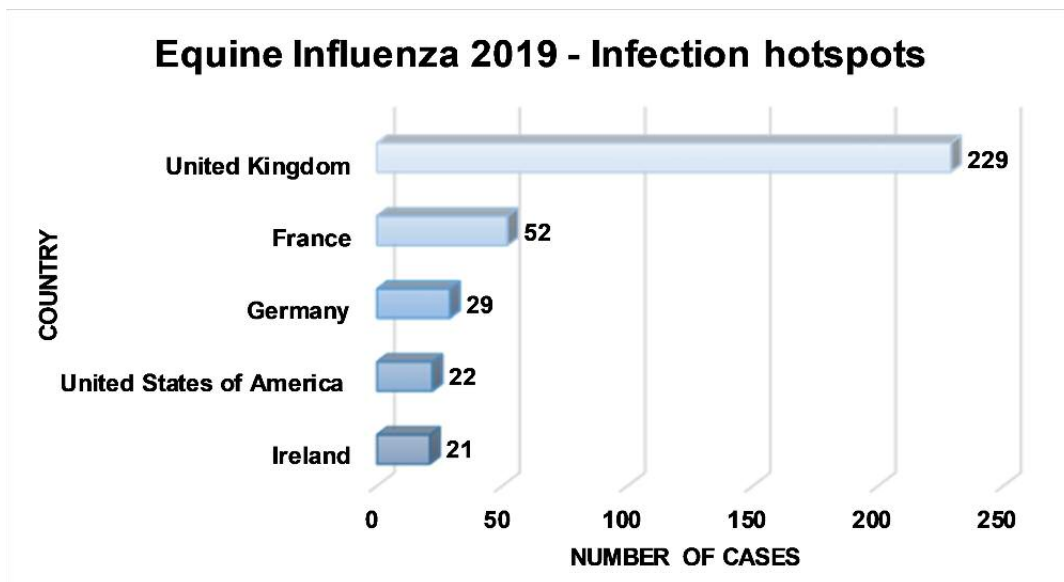
Research from Dominguez et al (2016) identified that several infectious diseases relating to ‘disease events’ were a result of international horse movements²; these included equine infectious anaemia (EIA), contagious equine metritis

organism (CEM), and equine viral arteritis (EVA).

Equine venereal disease has been associated with significant economic losses due to widespread abortion in mares, neonatal death and identification of the carrier horse^{3,4}. Timoney et al. 2011 stated that the estimated cost of the 1978 Kentucky CEM outbreak was \$1,000,000 for each day equine movement restrictions were in place, preventing all breeding⁴. The impact of these outbreaks clearly demonstrates the value of implementing testing and prevention protocols which act as a type of biosecurity ‘insurance’ for equine populations.

The Horseracing Betting Levy Board (HBLB) published the 42nd edition of the *International Codes of Practice 2020* in January this year⁵. This code provides voluntary recommendations to breeders regarding the prevention and control of specific equine diseases, including but not limited to CEM, EVA, and EIA. These recommendations are common to Ireland, Germany, France, Italy, and the UK, but have been adapted and implemented by numerous countries worldwide, particularly following the development of the EquiBioSafe

FIGURE 1: EQUINE INFLUENZA OUTBREAK 2019



application for iOS and android smartphones⁵.

CEM, EVA, and EIA are listed as notifiable diseases by the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE). This means that by law, a positive test confirming infection must be reported to the relevant country's governing department by the horse's owner, manager, veterinary surgeon, or diagnostic laboratory concerned. The department will then make a ruling with regards to the appropriate control measures which may include movement and/or breeding restrictions, and notifying the OIE.

Equine Arteritis Virus

Equine Arteritis Virus (EAV) is the causative agent of the disease Equine Viral Arteritis (EVA). The disease was first detected on a Standardbred stud in the United States in 1953, where many subsequent outbreaks have caused substantial economic losses³. EVA now circulates widely on continental Europe due to the unrestricted movement of stallions within the European Union. The virus is transmitted via respiratory secretions, natural, and artificial venereal contact. Thus, the disease is easily spread in non-breeding animals once present on equine premises. In 2019, the UK reported an outbreak caused by suspected respiratory transmission linked to attendance at a competitive equine event⁶. Disease presentation is variable, ranging from asymptomatic to abortion in pregnant mares and death in young foals. Clinical signs may include fever, depression, reduced appetite, and inflammation of conjunctiva ('pink eye'), among others.

EAV establishes persistent infection in the reproductive tract of 10-70% of all infected carrier stallions⁷, rendering many breeding stallions' permanent carriers or 'shedders' of the virus through their semen. This occurs without a reduction in fertility or other clinical signs⁷. For these reasons, vaccination of breeding stallions and teasers is highly recommended. The *HBLB Code of Practice 2020* states that the best method of prevention is ensuring the stallion is disease-free prior to the commencement of any breeding activities⁸. This is completed through a blood test, checking for the presence of specific antibodies – serological testing. A seropositive result indicates an active infection OR previous infection OR vaccinated horse. Thus, a 'shedder' will have the same testing result as a stallion who has been vaccinated against the disease⁸. In order to prove that the stallion is not a shedder, the owner must complete a blood test prior to the vaccination and retain the previous seronegative result, usually



marked in the passport by a veterinarian. The existing European recommendations suggest that stallions should receive a vaccination on a six-monthly basis. Otherwise all unvaccinated stallions should be tested after January 1 of the new year and only commence breeding activity on receipt of a seronegative result⁸.

There are comparatively fewer guidelines in relation to mares; generally guided by the mare's history, contact with other animals, and the overseeing veterinary surgeon. However, the *Code of Practice 2020* suggests that the mare should be tested, at minimum, after January 1 that year, and 28 days prior to any breeding activity, regardless of the method (artificial/natural insemination)⁸. The mare should not be included in any breeding programme until the results are confirmed as seronegative. If the mare is found to be seropositive for EVA she must be isolated immediately, this also requires the isolation and testing of any equines she has been in contact with. Re-testing should occur at minimum 14-day intervals; a return to breeding is guided by a veterinarian following stabilisation or a decline in blood circulating antibodies.

Contagious equine metritis organism

Contagious equine metritis organism (CEM/CEMO) is a venereal disease caused by the bacterium *Taylorella equigenitalis*. CEM is highly contagious and can be difficult to detect and control as equines may be asymptomatic. The disease was first identified in Newmarket in 1977 but has since been eradicated from the UK.⁹ However, the disease circulates widely in mainland Europe where currently there is no vaccination to prevent CEM⁹. Due to seasonal equine breeding practice, CEM can have a devastating effect on equine reproductive efficiency. Infection causes vaginal discharge and infertility in mares, however, there are no outward clinical signs of disease in infected stallions or carrier mares. The disease is spread through natural and artificial breeding practice, or indirectly via staff hands or infected semen collection equipment.

As with EVA, the best method of prevention is ensuring the equine herd is free from disease prior to any breeding activity. Testing for CEM occurs through swabbing the genitalia of mares and stallions for culturing and analysis in a specialist laboratory. If a positive result is returned, the horse must be treated and re-tested prior to being cleared for breeding⁹. Equines should be tested after January 1 and before breeding activity to rule-out any infection. The *HBLB Code of Practice 2020* provides a detailed list of recommendations with regards to mare/stallion at-risk status and testing protocols. Further to this they recommend appropriate training in hygiene and biosecurity for breeding and stable staff to prevent indirect transmission⁹.

Equine Infectious Anaemia

Equine Infectious Anaemia (EIA) is often called 'swamp fever' due to its prevalence in warm, wet areas and is caused by



the equine infectious anaemia virus (EIAV). Disease transmission occurs through the transfer of blood or secretions containing infected cells, biting flies, contaminated needles, teeth rasps, stomach tubes, twitches, or any other instruments which may cause abrasion. The virus occurs worldwide across all equine population groups. Clinical signs, as in EVA and CEM, are extremely variable; ranging from asymptomatic to fever, ataxia, haemorrhaging, and increased respiratory and heart rate, among others¹⁰.

In 2006 there was a cluster of positive cases detected in Ireland originating from the use of infected plasma¹¹. It is estimated that the Irish Equine Centre completed 57,000 tests in the process of returning Ireland to disease-free status^{11,12}.

A similar but much larger outbreak occurred in Germany in 2012, where contaminated donor blood was linked to over 900 horses¹². There are currently no vaccinations to prevent EIA, where infected horses remain carriers for life. Thus, the only form of prevention is through serological testing (blood testing) and ensuring a negative result on an annual basis. The Coggins test is deemed the clinical gold standard and used to confirm infection/infection absence¹². The ELISA for EIA test is used to screen the population where EIA is not suspected¹².

The *HBLB code of Practice 2020* advises that if a horse displays severe unexplained anaemia; they should be isolated and tested for the disease as soon as possible¹⁰. Stallions should be tested following January 1 each year; mares should also be tested after January 1, but within 28 days of breeding. Disease eradication involves identifying infected horses and compulsory removal (slaughter) from the population.

Screening and prevention recommendations

- Horses must be tested annually - after the 1st of January and before any breeding activities are completed
- Equines should be vaccinated where possible/available
- Stallion owners should implement an annual screening programme and insist on dated EVA, EIA and CEM certificates from each mare owner
- Equally, mare owners should request proof regarding the stallion's screening record
- If a mare does not fall pregnant following covering by a selected stallion, and the owner wishes to change stallion, the

owner must provide a new set of EIA, EVA and CEM clearance certificates

- All tests must be completed and documented by a veterinary surgeon
- Tests must be analysed at a specialist laboratory
- All imported blood/breeding products should be tested
- Breeding/Stable staff should be trained in biosecurity and appropriate hygiene practice to prevent disease spread.

For more information regarding prevention, screening, diagnosis and treatment of notifiable diseases please see the *HBLB Code of practice 2020* and the OIE website.

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Andrea Etter's life-changing visit to Ireland

BY SONJA GROB

PHOTOGRAPHY: CORALINE VALLINI

Since 1992, Andrea Etter has managed and operated Belmont House Stud, situated in the centre of Ireland. Her parents Gerhard and Hedi Etter bought the farm in 1987 and since then it has been a guarantee for quality horses and ponies for professionals as well as for amateurs, according to their slogan 'Breeding and producing future champions'.

Belmont – *An Lios Dearg* in the Irish language, meaning 'the red ring fort' – is a village of just 200 residents in County Offaly, close to the absolute centre of Ireland. Belmont House Stud farm includes an 18th-century manor house, with 30 stables and all the modern facilities typically associated with a thriving modern-day breeding enterprise.

◆ Andrea, you had a promising career as a showjumper in Switzerland, including European championship appearances as a junior and young rider. After apprenticing as a saddler, you left Switzerland for further education with horses in the Netherlands and the United States. What was the reason that you went to Belmont – and the decision to stay?

Basically, the plan was to learn English in Ireland. I came over at the beginning of October, that's 28 years ago. During the winter there were not many indoor shows in Switzerland at the time, so I had the time without competitions and wanted to stay for half a year. At home in our dealing stable it wasn't always easy for me since the horses came in and left again soon when they found a new owner. And here I realised that I could keep the horses for a longer time and in the way I wanted to, with a lot of space and the big fields. And I could still work together with the family, but independently from each other. That was perfect for me.

◆ Besides 30 stables, large loose sheds, the sand and indoor arena, the horse walker and many other facilities you have 80 hectares of land, some your own, some rented. How many mares and stallions are in Belmont?

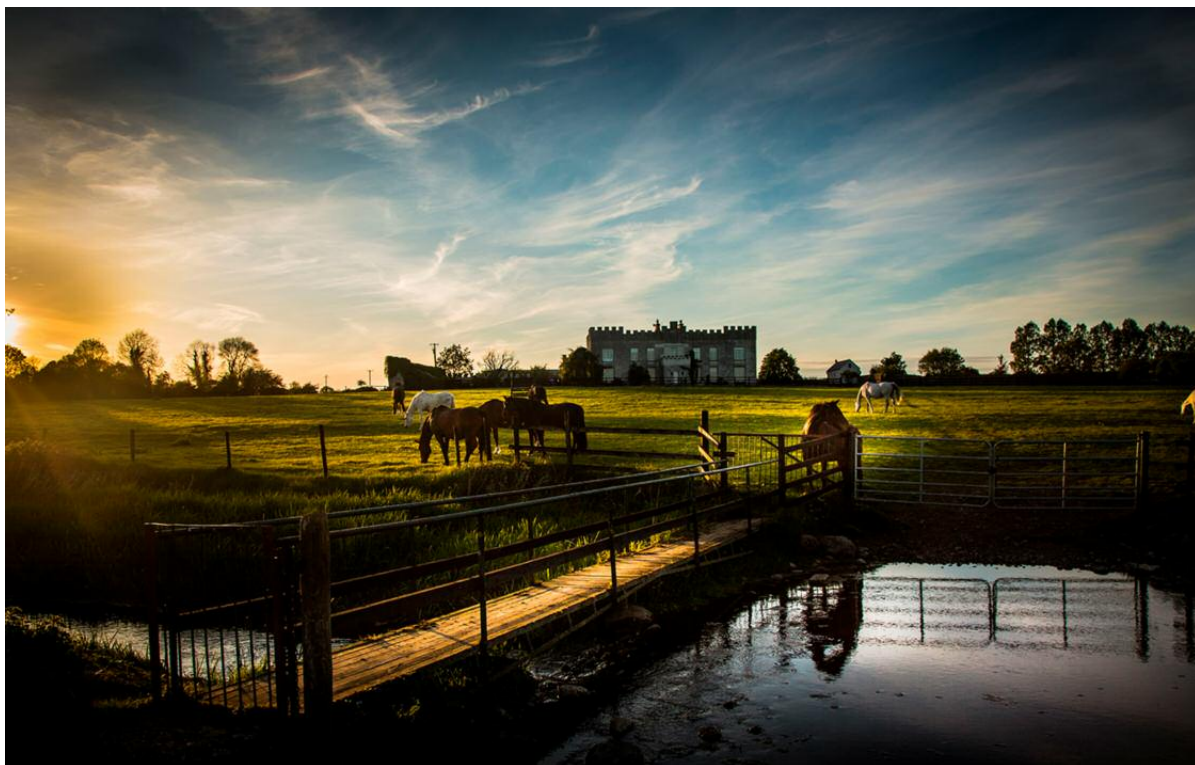
There are around 30 broodmares, young horses, sport horses, and our four resident stallions. All in all, about 150 horses are at Belmont House Stud, including liveries for clients that keep them here at our farm.

◆ Among all your horses, there are many that are outstanding. One of them is your home-bred stallion Celtic Hero B Z (Calikot Hero - Cricket Z x Caretano Z). Can you tell us something about him?

He is my heart horse, my darling! He is so special for me since I bred him myself, and from the beginning he gave his best and just wanted to please you. He is such an uncomplicated and special horse. I bought his mother as a three-year-old from my friend Aukelien in the Netherlands and she was in foal to Chellano Z. This resulted in the mare Carolina B Z, who is now back here again as a broodmare. I still have Celtic Hero B Z's mother Cricket Z and another



Andrea Etter with Celtic Hero B Z (Calikot Hero)



Belmont House Stud

sister (Cera Cara B by O-Piloth) in our breeding program.

Calikot Hero, Celtic Hero B Z's sire, whom we leased for one breeding season was bred by Luc Henry (Belgium). When Luc saw Celtic as a foal, he really liked him and we did a deal for a half share. Celtic was sold to the United States as a six-year-old and is being ridden successfully by Heather Caristo Williams up to 1m40. Frozen semen is available from us and his offspring are showing his exact same characteristics. They are very careful, easy to work with, nice types, horses that always want to perform at their best. I visited Celtic this spring and was very pleased to see him, he has a special place in my heart!

◆ You are also more than proud of Mr Lincoln B (Aganix du Seigneur - Lucy in the Sky B x O-Piloth), another a homebred stallion. What's the reason for this?

Mr Lincoln B's great-grandfather Wandango was my father's favourite horse. Wandango's first product was a mare called Wandonga, successful to 1m60 level with my brother Daniel, and Cameron Hanley. After her competition career Wandonga came to Belmont House Stud for breeding and is the grandmother of Mr Lincoln B. As a yearling I sold Mr Lincoln B to Tanja, a German friend of mine. Tanja left Mr Lincoln B with us and entrusted us with his education and his stud duties. I always believed in him, he won some major competitions as a three-year-old, including 'The Young Irelander' at CSI Millstreet.

Recently he was bought by Studfarm Zangersheide and

will be ridden by Christian Ahlmann. I am really looking forward to see this combination in the ring together. To have bred such a stallion subsequently sold to the famous Zangersheide Stud and getting the opportunity to compete with such a top rider is a great pleasure for me. I am very pleased to have Mr Lincoln B's full brother, the five-year-old Mr Quincy B standing here at Belmont House Stud. Mr Quincy B is already a winner at three and four years of age, including the four-year-old finals at CSI Mullingar and the preliminary final at CSI Cavan.

◆ And not to forget, Stetter (Manhattan - Nicole x Goodtimes). He is also well known in your home country as Swiss rider Claudia Gisler competed him to 1m55. She competed him from the age of five to 14. How is he doing?

He had an injury at the age of 14 and then came to Belmont House Stud to stand at stud. Stetter had sired the successful 1m60 jumper Wetter before his competition career. The oldest of his Irish offspring are now six years old, and show his attributes, they are very careful and competitive, they are all very motivated, they want to win. Stetter is doing very well at the age of 21.

◆ We could fill pages about all your horses, but there is a newcomer that lately joined your stud. Can you tell us something about Stockholm van't Roosakker Z (Stakkato - Quasibelle du Seigneur x Rubens du Ri d'Asse)?



Stockholm was bred by the Belgians Marc Kluskens and Luc Henry, from the damline of Glocks London, Golden Hawk and many more 1m60 performers, probably one of the strongest mother lines in the world. Stockholm was approved as a three-year-old in Zangersheide and we have leased him for this season, I'm looking forward to see his foals born next year.

For three seasons we had Ganesh Hero Z here at stud, bred by Gerry Marron and Luc Henry, from the famous Belgian mother line of Usha van't Roosakker, by Gemini xx, the clone of Gem Twist xx. After two successful jumping seasons here in Ireland, Ganesh Hero Z is now competing in Belgium. We have frozen semen in stock and are expecting a good few foals from him again this year.

◆ Since we made this interview in April, the first few foals have been born. How many are to follow?

Five have been born, so far, all by Ganesh Hero Z, in total we are expecting 25 foals this season. The 2020 foals we are expecting are from Mr Quincy B, Ganesh Hero Z, Quartz Rouge and Kassander van't Roosakker.

◆ All this, of course, means a lot of work, yet you manage everything by yourself with regarding to breeding and reproduction. But also administration, sales, marketing, and coaching your riding students. How many employees help you with all the work?

Yes, there is a lot of work, I definitely won't get bored. I have a great team of people helping me, including my partner Seamus who helps wherever he can.

During some of the breeding seasons we have a repro-vet here at the farm, other than that we have about four employees working with the horses.

◆ For generations your family in Switzerland has been well-known in the

international horse world. The main quarters are located in the Berne canton, and your brothers are also successful. Daniel is an international showjumper, trades horses, is a showjumping commentator on Swiss television, and Marc has his company 'Etter Events'. Besides horse trading he offers timing equipment and fence material for hire and for sale. I assume you work closely together, sending promising horses to Switzerland?

Exactly. We work very closely as a family, along with my parents Gerhard and Hedi and my brothers. Some of the home-bred 'B' horses (all Belmont-bred horses carry the 'B' suffix) go to Müntschemier to be sold from there. For amateur clients from abroad especially, we offer guest rooms here at our farm so they can come and see which horse suits them best. They can get to know a horse over a period of time, ride it out on the cross-country course, jump a course of fences. Some of the other horses and ponies are sold here in Ireland.

◆ Together with your two sport horses Utopia and Candyman, you brought your Minishetty with you to Ireland. It was a very sad day for you in January this year, when Marylou died at the age of 35. You still have her best friend Allagh B, the 25-year-old donkey, that was born on your farm. How is she doing without her best friend?

Like Marylou did, Allagh walks everywhere freely around the stables. But she is not alone, we have Cheeky B and Princess B, two small Shetties (Shetland ponies) bred here at the farm, they are her little friends. And since Allagh walks around she is very connected to all the people here. So when she wants attention she will let you know, and believe me, her voice is not to be overheard! ■

For any further information about Belmont House visit the homepage: www.belmonthousestud.com

Record-breaking NZWA tour pushing the boundaries

BY SALLY REID

PHOTOGRAPHY: JODY HARTSTONE, CHELEKEN PHOTOGRAPHY

'Why get your horse classified?' is a question that probably sounds absurd to European and other Northern Hemisphere readers of WBN, but it's one that the New Zealand Warmblood Association has posted on its website in an effort to educate the sometimes casual NZ sport horse breeding industry. It seems to have had the desired effect, as this year's tour was the biggest on record, with 180 horses presented to tour assessor, Matthias Werner from Germany.

However, bringing New Zealand's sport horse industry together in a well-organised, cohesive body has been (and continues to be) an uphill battle for NZWA president Jody Hartstone. She has been working tirelessly to increase breeders' involvement and understanding since taking over the role in 2016, and this year's NZWA classification tour was a tribute to her perseverance. "It was our biggest and most successful yet," Hartstone says. "And it was very encouraging to have another big showjumping breeder – Vicki Wilson – on board this year. Unfortunately, it is a long, slow road to get New Zealand interested in the pedigree recording and birth registrations of their horses, as for many years now this has not been the culture of breeding and buying sport horses in this country. "But to have the support of high-profile studs and riders, like Takapoto, Cheleken Stud and Vicki Wilson, really helps show the professionalism of these set-ups and, hopefully, other breeders will follow their lead.

"The only way New Zealand horses will have a true impact internationally is if we ensure that all horses born here who are eligible for passports do actually get registered, so New Zealand and NZ breeders get the recognition they deserve on the international stage.

"There were some top quality horses put forward this year and the standard of foals was outstanding with so many reaching merit and excellence. It was also encouraging to have four more stallions put forward for licencing and all will have something to offer breeders in New Zealand. The tour was logistically a nightmare to organise with massive distances covered and so many horses seen but all who put horses forward found it a welcoming and educational experience with the added bonus of seeing if their breeding really does measure up to European standards."

Super little Seraphim

In total, 88 foals – the highest number ever – were presented for judging this year: 29 scored 'excellence' and a further 30 scored 'merit'. It's a very encouraging result for breeders.

The Overall Champion Foal, and also Champion Colt Foal

and Champion Dressage-bred Foal, was the gorgeous Southern Star Seraphim (Rosari Fabio - Cheeky Bubba xx x The Commander xx) whose score was 84.75. He scored nines for all three gaits, as well as for appearance and for his head.

Seraphim was bred by Ulrich and Nannette Doering of Southern Star Sporthorses who own both his sire and his dam: they are still new to the scene, but have set some high goals for their stud and are obviously achieving these. Their main aim is to breed Warmbloods of modern international quality, and, as his name suggests, Ulrich Doering is German; he grew up in Stuttgart, so is well aware of European standards. The couple's son and daughter are also involved in the running of Southern Star Sporthorses, which is in the Waikato region of the North Island. The foals presented this year were from their second crop.

"Last year's Assessor, Frank Weisskirchen, was impressed with the foals the Doerings put forward, but this year's crop did even better," says Jody Hartstone. "There were two stand-outs for Matthias – Southern Star Seraphim and Southern Star Beauty," (see fillies below).

Southern Star's sole stallion, Rosari Fabio (Fürst Romancier - Rosari Gracia x Gymnastik Star) is a very handsome dark bay, who is consistently throwing leggy foals with good shoulders. He was bred by Fiona McCrostie.



Southern Star Seraphim (Rosari Fabio - Cheeky Bubba xx x The Commander xx) dressage-bred champion and overall champion



Timolina (Timolin) with her dam, Luxor (Landioso)

According to Nannette Doering, “We fell in love with Fabio because of his free, elastic movement and this is what Matthias picked up in all his offspring. Every single one of his foals received at least an eight for their shoulders, which gives them that ground-covering, elastic movement with real freedom through the back. They are all modern, leggy types as opposed to the more old-fashioned, heavier type of warmblood. Fabio also has a kind, loving temperament, which for a stallion is quite unusual. When people are buying a sport horse they want both an athlete and a companion, so it is very important to us that he is passing his temperament on to his offspring.”

Rosari Fabio also passes on some super bloodlines, including his fourth-generation cross of Donnerhall. He carries the elite ‘Edoste’ Oldenburg mare-line (Stamm 46) through his own sire, the Hauptprämie Oldenburg, Fürst Romancier (Fürst Heinrich - Ronja x Romancier), who was the main premium winner and most successful stallion of his age group at the 2009 World Championships.

On his dam’s side, Fabio has the mighty De Niro, and Gymnastik Star (Glueckspilz x Calypso II), a German-bred ‘premium’ Hanoverian who stood in Australia and has champion progeny on both sides of the Tasman. He is not yet licensed as an NZWA breeding stallion, but Fabio’s foals can be entered into the Warmblood register by way of the ‘amnesty clause’ in the NZWA breeding regulations.

The Doerings bought Seraphim’s Thoroughbred dam, Cheeky Bubba xx, after receiving a tip from a friend. “She is a big mare who we liked straight away for her sharp hock action and floating trot, which is quite unusual in a full Thoroughbred,” says Nannette Doering. “She’s the sort of mare who really blows you away when she moves, because it’s much more than you expect.”

Reserve Champion Colt

Like the Doerings of Southern Star, Paul and Gloriann Mullen, breeders of the Reserve Champion Colt, own both the sire and the dam, and operate their stud as a family business. The colt is the eye-catching tobiano, Traummacher WHS

(Traumprinz GF - Precious WSH x Prestige VDL), who was also Reserve Champion Dressage-Bred Foal. The Mullens’ stud is Wembleybrook Sport Horses in Canterbury, once better known for breeding Connemaras, but concentrating more on Warmbloods these days.

Traummacher WHS received the highest movement score (87%) of the tour. His sire, Traumprinz GF (Talisman GF - Sempatica GF x Sempatico M) is a German import, bred by Gestüt Falkenhorst. He is believed to be the only Warmblood stallion of his colour (buckskin tobiano) in Australasia, and received his NZWA licence from Gerd Kust in 2018. Several other of his foals gained 2020 ‘merit’ awards, including Wembleybrook Sport Horses grey tobiano colt, Traumwolke WHS (Traumprinz GF - Gurteens Vienna x Griffyndor), who was awarded ‘excellence’. This foal’s dam is a Hanoverian and, coincidentally, has the blood of Gymnastik Star, who also features in Southern Star Seraphim’s pedigree.

Traummacher’s dam, Precious VDL (Prestige VDL - Rosewood xx x Kings Gambit xx) was classified in 2017 under Matthais Werner, receiving a ‘merit’ score. This year, she was the winner of the special studbook mare prize, for the dam with a single progeny scoring the highest over all categories.

Two top fillies

A pair of fillies – both in the North Island – scored identical totals of 83%. They are Timolina (Timolin - Luxor x Landioso) bred by Jody Hartstone, and Southern Star Beauty (Rosari Fabio - Rosari Glory Girl x Gymnastik Star), bred by Ulrich and Nannette Doering.

Timolina, a granddaughter of Totilas through her sire, Timolin (Totilas x Sion), was selected by Matthias Werner to take the overall prize. She is a real scene-stealer with not just a legendary grandsire, but a maternal family of which to be hugely proud.

Her dam, Luxor, was the highest ranked mare in New Zealand during the 2010 NZ Warmblood Association classification tour, under Gerd Kust. Luxor has some super progeny, including two brothers by Whisper (Weltmeyer x Feiner Stern): Wyoming, who was the Champion Foal of the 2018 classifications; and Wiseman, who was 2016’s tour Champion. A Luxor daughter, Winslet, is winning consistently at Level 5 dressage. It’s hardly surprising that Timolina is a stunner and has already been sold.

“I am always super-excited to see what my mare Luxor produces each year,” says Jody Hartstone. “We chose Timolin as the sire for her this year as I admired his abilities in eventing as well as dressage and showjumping. He has a healthy dose of Holsteiner on the dam side too, which is always attractive to me, along with Totilas as a grand-sire. Timolina is an exceptional mover, with a delightful nature and the beauty to match.”

Southern Star Beauty, who was bred by the Doerings, scored a wonderful 9.50 for her canter and an overall total of 83%. She has a slightly older half-sister, Southern Star Fleur, who was the Reserve Champion Youngstock of the tour.

“Beauty got a 9.50 for what Matthias Werner described as an ‘outstanding canter’, 8.50 for walk and 8.50 for her trot,” says Nannette Doering. “For us as new breeders it’s satisfying that their conformation marks were just as impressive as their movement marks. She received an 8.50 for her head, 8.50 for her neck, 8.00 for her forehead and also for her hind quarters.”

After her classification, Southern Beauty travelled across the North Island to compete in the HOY Warmblood showing classes, where she excelled: she was Reserve Champion Warmblood of the Year, beating all but one* of the adult horses!

* This was the Hanoverian mare Hi D’Zine MH (His Highness – D’Zine MH x Dancier) bred by Judith Matthews of Matthews Hanoverians.

Bred for a purpose Champion Jumper-bred Foal

This title went to Takapoto Hendricks (Hector VD Abdijhoeve - Claire x Chasseur I), a colt who scored an ‘excellence’ mark of 82.5. He was bred by Takapoto Equestrian, and certainly has the genes for his future job. His sire, Hector van d’Abdijhoeve, is from BWP Prestatiestam 71, Schridde 550, and was bred by Hugo Boelens in Belgium. He had wins and placings at five-star level with Ireland’s Bertram Allen, including the CSIO5* at St Gallen in 2017, and was

bought by Denis Lynch in 2019.

Takapoto Hendricks’ dam, the Hanoverian mare Claire (Chasseur I - Mondolina x Goldstern), competed internationally at 1m60. She was bred in Germany by Fenna Schulte-Landwehr, who, incidentally, bred the unforgettable Weihaiwej. Claire is from Stamm Marjanka, O 181 B 1 (E. Voigt) and has the super jumping blood of Cor de la Bryère, Gotthard and Grannus.

Reserve Champion Jumper-bred Foal

The reserve jumping championship went to Rangatira Furore (Timbermill Fifth Avenue - Kiteroa Gwynnave x Anamour), who scored 82%. He was bred by Sarah Sutherland and Dougal Watt of Rangatira Stud near Auckland, where his sire stands. Rangatira aims to produce eventers, and the Hanoverian Timbermill Fifth Avenue (Fürst Nymphenburg - Devon x Dynamit) has eventing connections through his dam, Devon. She is out of Paratata xx who is also the dam of the four-star eventer, GV Braveheart (Distelfink), who competed for Australia, finishing eighth at WEG 1998 in Rome.

Furore’s damsire, the superb German-bred Anamour (Aalborg - Lucille x Lombard), while more commonly associated with dressage, sired a large number of very good eventers here, including 2013’s Boekelo four-star winner, Henton Attorney General.

Champion Dressage-Bred Foal

The overall top foal of the tour, Southern Star Seraphim (Rosari Fabio - Cheeky Bubba xx x The Commander xx), was also winner of this title, with reserve going to Traummacher WSH (Traumprinz GF – Precious WSH x Prestige VDL) – who was the tour’s overall reserve champion. See full details of these two outstanding colts above.

Youngstock honours to Fugato progeny

Both top scorers in the Youngstock category were sired by the German-bred Oldenburg, Fugato SW (Foundation x Fürst Heinrich x Rohdiamont), who was the Champion Studbook Stallion of the tour (see below).

The 2020 Champion Youngstock title went to his daughter Fantasia SSH (Fugato - Sangria RE x Sandro), bred and owned by Rafaella Fonseca of Sunnymede Sport Horses. This is a boutique North Island stud which has just a few foals each year: Fantasia SSH is from the 2018 crop, and was the clear champion of the Youngstock group with 82%, the only ‘excellence’ mark.

Her dam, Sangria RE, is a beautiful jet black mare by Sandro (Sandro Hit x Flemmingh x Ahorn) out of an Anamour daughter. She was bred by Royston Equine.

Reserve Champion Youngstock was Southern Star Fleur (Fugato - Rosari Glory Girl x Gymnastik Star) bred by Nannette and Ulrich Doering. SS Fleur received a ‘merit’ score of 79, and is a half-sister to Southern Star Beauty, who was the top-



Matthias Werner with Vicki Wilson and Captivate



Captivate VWNZ (Cachassini II - Showtym Celebration x Prestige VDL)

equal scorer among this year's fillies (see above).

A young Rheinlander mare sired by Team Nijhof's Zambesi (Heartbreaker x Calvaro Z), finished just behind SS Fleur with a 'merit' award and a score of 78.25. Zsa Zsa (Zambesi TN - Jane Champion, PL x Corlando) was bred by veterinarian Hayley Shaw of Petticoat Lane Stud. Interestingly, her full-sister, PL Jessica Rabbit, also received a 'merit' award in the very large field of fillies. Another foal bred by Shaw using a Team Nijhof stallion scored 'excellence', with an amazingly consistent eight in all 13 of his categories. He is PL Rupert Bear (Zacharov TN - PL Lola x Littorio), who has the super showjumping blood of Clinton and Lord through his sire.

High marks for mares

Five Warmblood mares were awarded 'excellence' this year, with the highest marks going to the beautiful bay NZ Warmblood, Sayonara FE (Salutation - Aloha x Aljano), who was bred by Kallista and Sharon Field at Field Equestrian, and is currently competing in dressage.

Sayonara FE is owned by Craig and Andra Mobberley of Elmwood Stud, which is in its first year of operation – in fact, she is the first horse they have ever presented for inspection. It seems they are blessed with a very good eye for potential dams, as their Thoroughbred, Vivace ES (Van Nistelrooy xx x Flourescent Light xx), was the tour's Champion Foundation Mare.

Sayonara FE's overall mark of 82% included 84% for conformation. "Her quality is what we should all aspire to be breeding from," says Jody Hartstone. The mare's dam, Aloha (Aljano - Macarena BF x Contender) was bred by Reinhold Bauerfeld in Germany and imported to New Zealand by Jan Oram.

A mere quarter of a percentage point behind Sayonara, and 2020's Reserve Champion Mare, is the gorgeous black La Peregrino (Vollrath Lessing - Ariana x Anamour). She is owned by Sandra Fryatt and Ross Beaven. "Simply stunning," says Jody Hartstone of this mare who was bred by Adele Chester.

Studbook Mare of the Tour

This award went to the NZWB studbook mare with the highest-scoring progeny, won by Precious WSH (Prestige VDL - Rosewood xx x Kings Gambit xx), dam of the reserve champion colt, Traummacher WSH. She is a beautiful, elegant bay who joined Paul and Gloriann Mullen's Wembleybrook broodmare band in 2017, and scored 78.5 (merit) at her own classification in 2018. Precious was born in 2009, so has plenty of years ahead of her at the stud. Her first foal, Paradigm WSH (Sorcery), was classified last year under Frank Weißkirchen, scoring a wonderful 85% for movement, and an 'excellence' award of 81.5%.

Champion Foundation Mare

Foundation mares are Thoroughbred, Arab or Anglo-Arabs who have been inspected and approved for the NZWA's Foundation Studbook. This year's winner was Elmwood Stud's Vivace ES xx (Van Nistelrooy xx), who scored 'excellence' with 80.25%, including 85.5% for conformation, and is now the highest-scoring mare in the NZ Warmblood Foundation Studbook. Her sire, Van Nistelrooy is an extremely handsome American stallion, whose first season at stud was spent in New Zealand. He is a son of the US superstar Storm Cat.

Stand-out stallions

Champion stallion of the tour was the handsome bay Captivate VWNZ (Cachassini II - Showtym Celebration x Prestige VDL) – a three-year-old bred by Vicki Wilson of VWNZ in Hawke's Bay, and scored 82.85%, receiving an 'excellence' award.

Captivate's dam, Showtym Celebration, had a good start to her jumping career with Wilson, but injury caused early retirement to the broodmare paddock. The mare was inspected on this tour, receiving 'merit' status with a score of 78.5. Her beautiful 2019 daughter, Champagne VWNZ, by Wilson's imported stallion Carpaccio (2020's seven-year-old Horse of the Year), was also inspected, scoring 81.25% and an 'excellence' award. Showtym Celebration's dam is Showtym Applause, who was by Jody Hartstone's wonderful German-bred Holsteiner Landioso (Landgraf x Calvados II), out of a Thoroughbred mare.

Captivate VWNZ's sire, Cachassini II (Cachas - Varese Bezirksprämie x Cassini I) was inspected and licensed by Matthias Werner several years ago. He is an approved German-born Holsteiner from Stamm 4245, imported to New Zealand by Highfield Stud but later sold to Australia, where he now stands. He has an older full brother, the 11-year-old Prämienhengst Cachassini, who won both his inspections with scores of 10 for jumping. "Captivate simply oozes quality," says Hartstone. "He is very impressive in his conformation and movement – and his jump, as you'd expect from his pedigree – is even more of a highlight."

The reserve champion, Mira Crown Royal (Mirabeau -

White Beauty xx x RFF King's Ransom xx), is a cremello bred by Blazing Colours Farm in Ontario, Canada. He was imported by Janelle van Roon of Fanfaire Equestrian, and, says Hartstone, has 'near faultless' conformation as well as good movement and a good jump. His sire, Mirabeau (Marscapone GF) is a German Warmblood, also cremello. Mira Crown Royal's dam, the rare cremello Thoroughbred White Beauty, is approved for RPSI with 'premium' status, and Oldenburg (GOV), where eight eights in her inspection gave her entry to the main mare book.

Studbook Stallion of the Tour:

This award is given to the NZWA Licensed Stallion who has the three highest-scoring progeny. For the second year running, it went to Fugato (Foundation - Wildrose x Fürst Heinrich), a German-bred Oldenburg who was imported by Sheena Ross of Sterling Warmbloods. He is now seven and has been gelded to further his competition career, but is still available via frozen semen.

Fugato's sire, Foundation (the recent recipient of the Hanoverian Verband's Grande Prize), is from the 'F' dressage line, and his dam, Wildrose, is a state premium Oldenburg from the Donnerhall-De Niro 'D' line. It's not too surprising that Fugato's progeny – the first of which were born in 2017 – are showing more than the average amount of promise.

"Very impressive..."

Matthias Werner sums up his thoughts on the tour: "I am absolutely impressed by the modern and sportive type of foals and also young horses being bred in New Zealand now. They are absolutely of the same type and quality as the rest of the world. It is really amazing how quickly the breed is developing in New Zealand – even since 2017 where there were already some nice horses, there have been impressive improvements in the quality and quantity of foals produced, especially

with such a small population compared to the European stud books.

"New Zealand is absolutely on the right track, and a lot of foals I saw I wished we had back in Germany. It is important to take care that you now keep the quality, take care that these horses now go under saddle and show their potential in the sport.

To improve... "The training of breeders and handlers needs to be improved so people understand how to show the horses off to the Assessment team at their best. This involves prior training and turnout and knowing how to stand a horse up properly to be judged.

"Europeans could take a leaf out of the New Zealand breeders' books by keeping a mind on how the young horses are kept – outside, in groups, with a stress-free environment instead of being stabled so much; horses are allowed to be horses. Also, to be a bit more open in the mind for bringing in different pedigrees, especially the use of Thoroughbred blood.

"For myself it was a very impressive tour – you never get bored. It is a beautiful country to see, and every day the people were absolutely nice – and the horses too. It was not only a big honour for me to be there, but also a big pleasure. It was great to be able to go to Takapoto and meet some of the people that are making the sport happen. It is important to connect breeders with the riders.

"It is amazing how the hard-working NZWA committee have developed the NZWB Stud Book into a world-recognised breed association – it is an honour to be a small part of this development. I really appreciate being invited to help New Zealand in this way. Thank you to all the breeders who showed their horses, and thank you to the sponsors and committee, and those who invited us into their homes. It is nice to have breeders with their heart in the right place, with passion and enthusiasm to breed such high quality Sport Horses." ■



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Top-level breeding: Grand Prix produces Grand Prix

BY JUDITH MARTENS / KWPN

PHOTOGRAPHY: DIRK CAREMANS

The highest level, that's what breeding is all about. Of all the foals born in a single year, only a small percentage reach the top of the sport. Character, willingness, good health, functional conformation, environmental factors, and the right package of jumping genes determine whether or not a horse will become a Grand Prix showjumper.

Breeders who thoughtfully choose a stallion each year can only hope that their choice will bring them what they want. A jumper comes from a jumper is a frequently heard expression. But is it true? In this article, we answer that question.

The KWPN has always been known as the studbook with the strictest stallion selection policy. Before a stallion can be approved by the KWPN, he must pass the performance test. But once approved, do these stallions actually produce the better showjumpers? To answer this question, we analyzed all KWPN-registered offspring classified at the 1m50 level or higher and sired by a KWPN-approved stallion – a group of 2,151 KWPN horses. These horses have all completed a course at their respective level, acquiring no more than four faults. This analysis includes KWPN-approved stallions aged 30 years or younger, in other words, born in 1990 or later. Among these 417 stallions, 194 have at least one offspring which has competed at the 1m50 level or higher.

Indoctro on Top

The 30-year-old preferent stallion Indoctro proudly

leads the ranking with 207 KWPN offspring which jump or have jumped at the 1m50 level or higher. He is followed by the preferent stallion Numero Uno with 117, Andiamo with 65, the preferent stallion Tangelo van de Zuuthoeve with 60 and the keur stallion Indorado with 58 offspring at the 1m50 level or higher. The majority of these stallions, however, have also bred a great deal and therefore have the most KWPN-registered offspring, which is represented in Table 1. The youngest stallion in this ranking is Verdi.

Leading sires relative to number of foals

If we compare the number of offspring which jump 1m50 or higher against the total number of registered offspring, a completely different top five emerges. And if we look at the stallions with at least 10 offspring which have competed at 1m50 or higher, Hors La Loi II is the leader (see Table 2). Of his 386 offspring, 41 show at the 1m50 level or higher. Among these is his KWPN-approved son Untouchable, who was a Grand Prix showjumper under Daniel Deusser (GER). In the same ranking, the stallion is in eighth place.

Andiamo again

Andiamo is the only stallion who appears in the top five in the ranking based on absolute numbers as well as the ranking based on the number of registered foals. Like Hors La Loi II, 10.6% of Andiamo offspring jump 1m50 or higher. Of Oklund's offspring, 7.1% compete at the 1m50 level or higher, followed by 6.7% of Kenwood's offspring. The Olympic stallion Berlin ranks fourth. Of his offspring, 51 jump 1m50 or higher, which is 6.2% of his progeny. Following closely

TABLE 1: SIRE RANKING OF OFFSPRING THAT JUMPS 1M50 OR HIGHER

Rank	Name	Amount	Foals	Percentage
1	Indoctro	207	4.313	4,8%
2	Numero Uno	117	2.573	4,5%
3	Andiamo*	65	615	10,6%
4	Tangelo van de Zuuthoeve*	60	1.634	3,7%
5	Indorado*	58	1.615	3,6%
6	Lupicor*	56	1170	4,8%
7	Verdi*	53	1574	3,4%
7	Oklund*	53	747	7,1%
8	Berlin*	51	821	6,2%
9	Cantos*	47	830	5,7%
10	Namelus R	44	1011	4,4%

*Jumped at Grand Prix level



The Berlin son H&M Extra is one of six 1m60-level offspring with Berlin and Heartbreaker in his bloodlines His Belgian rider Olivier Philippaerts has his sights on the Tokyo Olympics with the talented jumper

on his heels is Gran Corrado with 6.2% of his offspring jumping at the 1m50 level or higher, a total of 14 offspring. In fifth place is the prematurely deceased Padinus with 30 of 493 offspring classified at the 1m50 level or higher. All these stallions have proven themselves at the highest level, except for Kenwood, who was shown through the 1m40 level; and Padinus, who died at age eight. A remarkable fact about Gran Corrado is that four of his fourteen offspring have Hamlet as the dam's sire.

Separate ranking for young stallions

The youngest horses classified at the 1m50 level or higher are eight years old. If they were sired by a young stallion, one no older than age eight at the time of breeding, then that stallion would have been born in 2003 or later. Because the majority of these stallions' offspring are too young to compete at the 1m50 level, they don't appear in the aforementioned ranking. For this group of relatively young stallions, we've constructed a separate ranking (see Table 3). In first place is Bacardi VDL, who competes at the highest level. He was previously ridden by Jannika Sprunger (SUI) and is currently under Edwina Alexander-Tops (AUS). Of only 36 offspring, three jump 1m50 or higher. The 14-year-old stallion's offspring include the 1m50 horses Gigi-Carmen

(damsire Oklund), Goldenstar (ds Ipsylon B) and Fremont VDL (ds Silverstone).

Comeback Carambole

Carambole follows with 14 of 520 total offspring. Recently, the stallion made a comeback at the highest level.

TABLE 2: LEADING SIRES WITH 1M50 OFFSPRING RELATIVE TO NUMBER OF FOALS

Rank	Name	Amount	Foals	Percentage
1	Hors La Loi II*	41	386	10,6%
1	Andiamo*	65	615	10,6%
2	Oklund*	53	747	7,1%
3	Kenwood	11	163	6,7%
4	Berlin*	51	821	6,2%
4	Gran Corrado*	14	226	6,2%
5	Padinus	30	493	6,1%
6	Cantos*	47	830	5,7%
7	Manhattan	36	644	5,6%
8	Untouchable*	10	183	5,5%
9	Phin Phin*	27	546	4,9%
9	Kojak	33	668	4,9%
10	Indoctro	207	4.313	4,8%
10	Larino*	27	564	4,8%
10	Lupicor*	56	1.170	4,8%

*Jumped at Grand Prix level



Influences on the dam's side

What do the 1m60 horses Ecclatant, Excellent B and Extra have in common, besides being 11 years old? All three are by Berlin out of a Heartbreaker dam. The 1m55 Grand Prix horse Hinde de la Vie and the 1m60 horses Aken Utopia and Antigone de la Vie also share the same bloodlines. Dirksen: "The sharpness and 'blood' of Heartbreaker combined with the scope of Berlin make this a good combination, and that's also true in practice." In total, Heartbreaker sired 28 of the mares with offspring classified at 1m50 or higher, remarkably six times in combination with Berlin. In addition, a Heartbreaker mare was paired

Numero Uno combined with Voltaire has often produced a better showjumper. A good example is the Dutch reserve champion, Cristello, who has also excelled internationally with Kevin Jochems

Four of his offspring are classified at the Grand Prix level: Elien (ds Mermus R), Hello Senator (ds Indoctro), Fecybelle (ds Sjapoo) and Formidable (ds Calvados). "As young horses, both Bacardi VDL and Carambole convinced in the performance test with their scope, among other things. It's good to see that they pass it on," says Henk Dirksen.

Both Amadeus and Zirocco Blue VDL have 2.3% of their offspring classified at the 1m50 level or higher. The only difference between them are the numbers. To illustrate, Amadeus has sired four jumpers classified at 1m50 or higher and Zirocco Blue VDL 39. For Amadeus, these are the three 1m60 horses Enjoy (ds Namelus R), Estoril (ds Wolfgang) and Evert (ds Indoctro); and the 1m50 stallion ERP van www.olland.biz (ds Namelus R). Zirocco Blue VDL has produced several renowned Grand Prix offspring: Eddie Blue (ds Marlon), ridden by American Devin Ryan; Jet Blue (ds Indoctro), ridden by American McLain Ward; Flair (ds Indoctro), ridden by Steve Guerdat (SUI); and the KWPN stallion Florian (ds Cardento), ridden by Albert Zoer (NED). Following in fourth place is Bustique with seven of 316 total offspring. His son Feeling Lucky (ds Krunch de Breve) competes at the 1m60 level and Gaga E (ds Elmshorn) at the 1m55 Grand Prix level.

twice with Karandasj and Numero Uno.

Proven combinations

Indoctro x Nimmerdor is also a proven combination, as evidenced by jumpers including the Grand Prix horses Royal Dream, ridden by Dennis van den Brink (NED); and Victor E. The KWPN stallion Wittinger VDL, who competed at the Grand Prix level under Jur Vrieling (NED), also possesses these bloodlines. In total, Indoctro combined with a Nimmerdor mare produced 22 showjumpers classified at 1m50 or higher. Nimmerdor's son Ahorn is also a good match with Indoctro, as evidenced by 17 showjumper offspring at the 1m50 level or higher. "It's nice to see that Ahorn does well in the damline. It seems to be a good fit,

TABLE 3: SIRES AT A MAXIMUM AGE OF 8 YEARS OLD AT MOMENT OF COVERING

Rank	Name	Amount	Foals	Percentage
1	Bacardi VDL*	3	36	8,3%
2	Carambole*	14	520	2,7%
3	Amadeus	4	174	2,3%
3	Zirocco Blue VDL*	39	1.712	2,3%
4	Bustique	7	316	2,2%
5	Warrant*	14	727	1,9%
5	Applaus	2	104	1,9%
5	Wallenberg	2	105	1,9%
5	Wittinger VDL*	7	377	1,9%

*Jumped at Grand Prix level

especially in combination with Indoctro,” explains Dirksen. Almost 5% of Ahorn offspring are mares which have produced a showjumper classified at 1m50 or higher (see Table 4).

On the dam’s side, G.Ramiro Z produced a better showjumper 12 times combined with Indoctro and 13 times combined with a Voltaire mare. Conversely, the blood of Indoctro mares is a

good fit with Zirocco Blue VDL. This combination has produced six showjumpers classified at 1m50 or higher. Among them are the previously mentioned Flair and Jet Blue as well as the 1m50 horses Dancing Blue; Daylinde; the Blom Cup winner Gogo Karla V, ridden by Willem Greve (NED); and Gold Diamands WG. Dirksen: “This successful combination is also easy to explain: Zirocco Blue VDL passes on size, substance and scope; and that fits well with the sharpness, 'blood' and suppleness of Indoctro mares. This has resulted in a better horse multiple times. At Zirocco Blue VDL's offspring inspection, the foals out of Indoctro mares received favorable attention.”

The Numero Uno x Indoctro combination produced five showjumpers classified at 1m50 or higher. Among them are the silver medal winner at the WBFSH Jumping World Breeding Championship for Young Horses: Flash, ridden by Pieter Devos (BEL). In total, Indoctro is the damsire of 70 showjumpers classified at 1m50 or higher.

Voltaire 83 times

Voltaire appears most often as the sire of a mare who produced a showjumper classified at the 1m50 level or higher: 83 times. The Karandasj x Voltaire combination has resulted in seven showjumpers at the 1m50 level or higher, including the Grand Prix horse Audine B. Combined with Numero Uno, Voltaire as the damsire delivered 10 superior jumpers. These include Tyson, ridden by Leon Thijssen (NED); and Cristello, formerly under Leon Thijssen and later under Kevin Jochems (NED) at the highest level. Furthermore, the KWPN-approved stallion and Grand Prix showjumper Unaniem also boasts these bloodlines. “This successful combination is also easy to explain: the sharpness of Numero Uno combined with the willingness and rideability of Voltaire fit well together,” Dirksen adds. The Andiamo x Voltaire combination produced five showjumpers at the 1m50 level or higher.

Concorde on the dam's side

The Voltaire son Concorde also appears frequently on the dam’s side. His blood flows through 50 mares on the

STALLIONS APPROVED AT A LATER AGE

We also focused on the group of stallions that were born before 1990 but presented their first crop of foals after 1994. Among them are Heartbreaker and Celano, who were approved later in life. The group includes 10 stallions with offspring who have jumped at least 1m50. In the table opposite, we can see that Heartbreaker has been very influential. More than 11% of his offspring compete at 1m50 or higher. In addition, Heartbreaker is a good match with Burggraaf, G.Ramiro Z, and Voltaire mares. With these combinations alone, he produced a better showjumper 34 times.

dam's side of showjumpers classified at the 1m50 level or higher. Concorde was combined with the stallion Hors La Loi II five times, producing horses including the Grand Prix jumper Theres La Loi. And a Concorde mare was paired four times with Manhattan and Verdi. Combined with Verdi, the result was three Grand Prix horses: Baronescha, Cerberus W and Davinci. When

Numero Uno was paired with a Burggraaf mare, the result was eight showjumpers at the 1m50 level or higher. In total, Burggraaf was the damsire 66 times. Combined with Tangelo van de Zuuthoeve, Burggraaf delivered a proven result five times, as evidenced by horses including the Grand Prix showjumper Valesca.

A jumper produces a jumper

The guiding principle in the above analysis is that stallions that have competed at the Grand Prix level pass on their talent, which results in Grand Prix offspring. In other words, a jumper produces a jumper. ■

TABLE 4: DAM'SIRES WITH OFFSPRING WHO JUMPED 1M50 OR HIGHER

Rank	Name	Amount
1	Voltaire	83
2	Indoctro	70
3	Burggraaf	66
5	Nimmerdor	66
6	Ahorn	63
7	Concorde	50
8	G.Ramiro Z	48
9	Calvados	39
10	Corland	36
11	Lux	33
12	Cavalier	32
13	Emilion	29
14	Heartbreaker	28
14	Indorado	28
15	Animo	27

The changing scene in Polish stallion performance testing

BY ANNA CUBER / POLISH HORSE BREEDERS ASSOCIATION (PZHK)

PHOTOGRAPHY: KATARZYNA WISZOWATY

In Poland Performance Tests for saddle type stallions have been held for several dozen years. Initially, they were 12-month stationary tests conducted in a few stallion training centres, mainly for horses originating from the national horse studs and fully financed by the State.

With the passing years, these tests have undergone necessary changes. The testing time has been reduced on several occasions (the most recent version involves a 100-day training period preceding the actual performance test), as well as the financing and organisation.

Our studbook has also taken into consideration the frequent criticisms of sport riders who trained the young stallions at the stationary training centre, and has looked into the solutions that create the best effects for the present time using, for example, breeding in Belgium (BWP, sBs or Zangersheide). Therefore, the Polish studbooks of Warmblood horses – such as the Polish half-bred horse studbook (SP), Wielkopolska studbook (WLKP) and the Malopolska studbook (M), in which also Anglo-Arabian horses are recorded – have taken the decision to abandon the saddle-stallion stationary performance tests in favour of the Field Test (preceded by a 100-day training period) modelled on the BWP performance test. Stallions are divided into three basic groups: jumping, dressage, and horses with a high infusion of Thoroughbred blood who have been explicitly bred for eventing.

However, the superiority of Belgian stallions these days does not result from the formula of stallion evaluation that is the Field Test, but with the multi-stage selection and early presentation of stallions under saddle, with the most important element being the young stallions competing in competitions designed for them exclusively.

In Poland, unlike in Belgium, there are no competitions dedicated to temporarily approved stallions, although the Polish Championships for Young Horses (MPMK) performs that function. Just like the Bundeschampionate, those competitions where the best age-grouped horses from both domestic and foreign breeding compete in three disciplines are organised annually at the end of September at the same time and place. The top jumping, dressage, and eventing horses all meet there.

MPMK also plays a significant selection role because the Polish Horse Breeders Association invites the best professionals in Europe to act as judges and evaluate breeding material alongside the Polish judges in an impartial and professional manner. In these competitions, supervised by the Polish Horse Breeders Association, a stallion holding a time-limited licence approved in the Field

Test has to take part and complete the MPMK in order to obtain a licence for life. If he does not meet this requirement in time as a four-, five-, or six-year-old, he may still receive a breeding licence based on sporting achievements – a, so called, sport path designed for seven-year-olds and older stallions in both the Olympic and non-Olympic disciplines. Stallions that have not taken the Field Test may still be granted a licence for life upon meeting certain criteria based on a required score in Polish Championships for Young Horses or other equestrian competitions.

The Polish Horse Breeders Association is also a co-organiser of the young horse championships in jumping, dressage, and eventing as well as in the discipline of singles driving and long-distance endurance. For many years, PZHK had co-financed the Performance Tests, but the management board took the decision to abandon subsidizing this selection from year 2020.

In Poland, Field Tests also include saddle horses from the Wielkopolska and Malopolska studbooks, as long as they comply with the criteria in, so called, genetic resource conservation programmes, which includes broodmares meeting the pedigree requirements of a given studbook. Male offspring of these dams are entitled to enter the Field Test with a reduced usage criteria applied. In order to support the maintenance of those horses in a separate group, the State contributes a small sum to the real cost of keeping those horses, and requires the use of only a designated male or female specimen in breeding.

Stallions of such coat colours as dappled and piebald, in high demand by breeders, are in a similar situation. They also enter Field Tests and can be used in breeding upon achieving a determined lower result. *Nota bene.* For a number of years, many multi-coloured horses from Poland were offered in the Western European markets, mainly in Great Britain. One of the best-known breeders of high performance and 'multi-colour' horses was Kazimierz Mazurek, father of the current president of Polish Horse Breeders Association and, himself, a breeder of dressage horses.

For years, Poland has been famous for its achievements in the discipline of driving: first with four-in-hand, and presently singles. The names of brother and sister Weronika and Bartosz Kwiatek are well-known to driving fans. And

because there are breeders who want their stallions to undergo the driving Performance Tests, the Polish Horse Breeders Association organises such tests of stationary (60 days) and field types.

Not only horses with Polish passports but also those belonging to WBFSH and holding foreign passports may enter the selection both in Field Tests and the championships for young horses.

In horse breeding, one has to wait many years for the results of introduced changes to take effect. But, maybe, in the near future, not only the stallion Nevados S – registered in Polish half-bred horses (SP) studbook, which has for several years competed with Belgium's Gregory Wathélet – but also other horses with Polish passports will become known to world audiences?

It should be mentioned that at the present time, when the globalisation of sport horse breeding has become a standard and a horse of an e.g. pure Holstein pedigree can obtain KWPN or BWP passport, it is not the colour of the cover that matters but whether a given horse will endure challenging workouts and meet the demands of the modern-day dressage or showjumping arenas.

An outstanding sport horse will always find buyers regardless of whether the market situation is difficult or favourable. Therefore, it's hoped that, thanks to the changes in breeding, the good times for horses representing the lesser-known studbooks like those of the Polish Horse Breeders Association (SP, WLKP, M) are approaching slowly but surely. ■



During the Field Test, stallion Fabergas S PZHK (SP) (2015: MJT Nevados S [SP] – Fabreggia S [SP] x Regiel [m]) bred by Stanislaw Szurik, owned by MJT Stajnia Marcelwo Sp. z o.o.



Profiling Canadian Warmblood breeding regions: Alberta

BY CHRIS GOULD / CWHBA

PHOTOGRAPHY: VANESSA LATFORD, PETER LLEWELLYN

This article is the first in a series profiling the Canadian Warmblood breeding regions by province. Canada is a very large country. In fact, the second largest by area (including lakes) in the world. It's climate is so diverse it includes 12 climate zones, ranging from mild coastal areas, to the continental middle with severe winters, snow-covered for up to six months of the year. Winter temperatures can reach -40°C, with summer highs in the 30s.

Forty-two percent of the land mass is covered in forest with several mountain ranges, so the portion of farmland for pasture and crops is much smaller than one would expect. Concentrated in the southernmost region of the country it makes up only 4.8% of the total area. Nevertheless, this is still a lot of land out of a total area of about 10 million square kilometres stretching 7,000 kilometres from east to west and encompassing five and a half time zones.

So in this vast land, where are the horses, and more specifically the Warmblood horses? And under what conditions are they raised? If we take the regions alphabetically, we begin with Alberta, one of only two landlocked provinces, where the aforementioned continental climate dictates much of everyday life.

Alberta is the westernmost province of the prairie heartland, bordered by the Rocky Mountains to the west. It's also the largest horse producer regardless of breed, but in the case of Warmbloods, around 40% of annual registrations originate with Alberta breeders. Known as 'cowboy country', the region boasts the 'greatest show on earth' – the Calgary Stampede. However, even more famous in the world of equestrian sport is Spruce Meadows, whose Masters' tournament is a horse sport mecca that draws the world's top showjumpers, providing a template for local breeders and a familiarity with bloodlines to produce the highest quality sport horses.



Access to open water

Some of the very first Warmblood stallions imported into Canada in the late 1960s found their way to Alberta. The first wave to arrive was predominantly Hanoverian. Stallions such as Abrupt (Abglanz x Adlerfarn) imported by Joe Selinger in 1967, laid the foundation for what was to follow. A steady stream of quality stallions representative of many of the top bloodlines in Europe ensured that Warmblood breeding in Alberta was on a firm footing, and with the advent of frozen semen that practice has continued.

Alberta breeders have been early adopters of advances in breeding technology and that has allowed them to remain competitive. They have also been innovative: the CWHBA Fall Classic Breeders Sale is the longest running Warmblood sale in North America. Warmblood horses are becoming so ubiquitous that they now dominate horse shows at all levels.

In spite of the harsh winters, Alberta, in many ways provides an ideal environment to produce healthy, sound horses. The drier climate means that horses can stay out year-round even in the coldest winters, which is the case for most breeders. This means strong bones developed through steady exercise. Feeding forage for six or seven months a year is a challenge, but the quality is good, predominately timothy, brome, and alfalfa. During pasture season the grass is abundant; fescue in the center and north of the province and wheat grass and rye grass in the dry south as well as native grasses.



Mares in the snow



Mares and foals enjoying a river stroll



Space to run with the wind

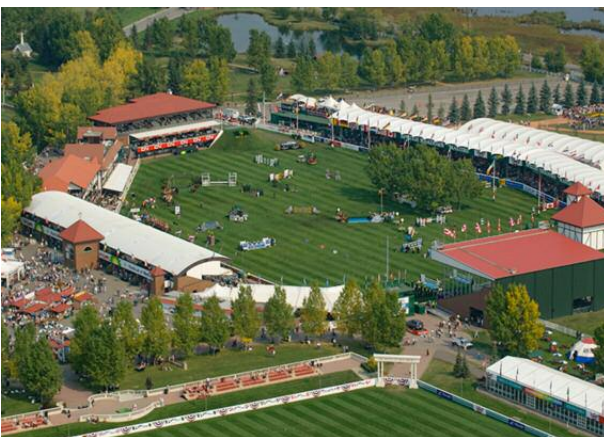
Alberta has always had several large-scale breeders with 10 or more mares, but the backbone of the industry is the small breeder with two or three mares. The worldwide trend toward frozen semen is well established and the development of stallion stations is also taking hold in the province, with a few stud farms offering more than one stallion. Several owners are very active in competition with their stallions, thus demonstrating the high quality of genetics available locally. The pedigrees of Alberta stallions reads like the who's who of Warmblood breeding with sons of Calido, Hickstead, Numero Uno, I'm Special de Muze and Quidam's Rubin to name just a few. Although jumping lines do predominate, top dressage sire lines are also available containing the bloodlines of Rock Forever, Florestan, Lauries Crusader xx and Donnerhall.

If Alberta is a good place to breed Warmbloods, it is probably an even better place to buy them, since production outstrips demand from the relatively low population. Alberta-bred horses can be found throughout North America and have even been exported to Europe. Alberta constitutes the core of Warmblood breeding in Canada, but it is not the sum.

Next month we will look at another region that contrasts with the prairie dry land. ■



Following the herd



Aerial view of Spruce Meadows international arena



The pleasure of napping in the sun

Swiecicki: Willingness, phenotype and good health

BY AGATA GROSICKA

PHOTOGRAPHY: DAVA PALEJ, AND PERSONAL COLLECTION

A four-year-old mare Gothika WLKP (Comilfo Plus Z - Greace x Larron) bred by Kruszki Stud was the winner of the third national Warmblood horses championship in free jumping at the last indoor Cavaliada Show, and also became champion mare of National Wielkopolska (Greater Poland) Horse Championship in Baborowko 2019. This is great evidence that Wielkopolska (WLKP) – one of the oldest Poland's national horse breeds is regaining its recognition.

More significantly, however, is the vast improvement in the quality of its horses. With many bigger and smaller studs operating in the region that produced two current European team showjumping champions, I would like to introduce you to this unique region, as well as Mr. Henryk Swiecicki Snr, president of the WLKP Association, who was happy to provide some historical context and further information about the present-day situation.

◆ On the history of the Association of the Breeders of the Greater Poland Horses

“Greater Poland is a huge lowland province in the western part of Poland with the area of the size of the Netherlands. In the 19th century it was a very well-developed region that generated interest in horse breeding and horse racing. That led in 1838 to the creation of the Association aiming to improve the quality of the breeding of farm animals (horses, cattle, sheep). And in 1895 the Association of Horse Breeders was established. It began registering horses in the studbooks and thus we consider this date as the origin of our Association of the Breeders of the Greater Poland (Wielkopolska) Horses.

“After the First World War, Poland regained its independence. This new situation enlivened horse breeding in the country and the Ministry of Agriculture entrusted the Association of the Breeders in Greater Poland region to keep and register breed books. Despite the world crisis, the period between the First and the Second World Wars was very beneficial for horse breeding in our region. Horses were bred mainly for field work and transportation, yet a lot of attention was put into breeding army mounts. In Poland at that time there were around 40 cavalry regiments where there was a lot of focus on equestrian sport. Our military horsemen won medals at the Olympic Games in Paris 1924, Amsterdam 1928, and Berlin 1936. In our region, a number of State farms were operating: stallion studs in Sierakowo, Gniezno, and the Racot Horse Stud as well as private breeding farms, including the biggest horse stud in Europe, Posadowo Stud, which belonged to the Lacki family.

“During the Second World War, despite repressions

imposed on horse owners, the Association continued working, and it's worth mentioning that it also continued using its own original horse brand, which till now is still highly appreciated by our breeders and used as the emblem of our Association.”

◆ On the influence of the post-war political situation on the regress in the breeding of Polish sport horses.

“The post-war period was a very difficult time for horse breeding because the Communist authorities nationalized, or simply plundered without any amends all agricultural farms, including private horse studs.

“The State policy favoured breeding of a farm horse. Newly founded horse studs and National Agricultural Farms



Henryk Swiecicki Snr

were separated from private breeding through administrative decrees. The whole country was divided into regions which bred either warm-blooded horses or cold-blooded types.

“Luckily for the breeding, people who were in charge of those state farms happened to be the people of great knowledge. Yet the overall political management influenced the development of breeding in a very negative way and stopped the progress and pursuit of modernity. State funding did not bring expected results, it caused the outgrowth of administration and eventually the breeding was only the background for getting more state financial support.”

◆ On the current structure of the Association of the Breeders of Greater Poland Horses

“Our Association is the oldest breeding association in Poland; a voluntary and independent organization with a social and professional profile that includes the breeders of the Greater Poland horses as well as the breeders of other horses. The members of our Association are the breeders from our region and also from other regions in Poland. We have our own organizations within all the 31 counties, which choose their own authorities organizing breeding events in the country including local championships, shows, training, and various meetings. The Association and all our county organizations have their own banners, which makes us unique in Poland.

“Our main office is located in Gniezno Stallion Stud. The members of our Association organize many breeding, leisure, and professional showjumping and eventing tournaments, including international competitions such as CSI4* 4Foulee Poznan or the Baborówko CCI4* and Horse Sale. One of the biggest sporting events organized in this part of Europe is the CSI4*-W Cavaliada Poznan which takes place in our region, thanks to a cooperation with the members of the Association. We are also happy to have great sportsmen among our members, including Pawel Warszawski, a member of our national eventing Olympic team, and Krzysztof Ludwiczak, a member and the coach of the Polish national showjumping team.”

◆ On the current situation for breeders in Greater Poland

“Currently our Association includes circa 1,100 members. In the recent years our employees have described and registered about 2,000 horses annually. They also carry out breeding, notification, and accounting works and are involved in organizing many events. For four years we have cooperated with the Ludger Beerbaum Stallion Stud and this cooperation has been very fruitful.

“Our breeders collectively breed around 50 selected mares and then present them with their foals at the annual foal shows. Since 2018 the show has taken place in Baborowko and the foals are judged and divided into groups

according to their sires. They are also selected into categories: dressage, showjumping, and those over 50% Thoroughbred. It is worth mentioning here that we invite well-known international experts to be the judges, including Almuth Blaschke, Ludger Beerbaum’s breeder, Dr. Jan Greve, a well-known Dutch breeder, and Dr. Jerzy Fedorski from Hamburg.”



Gothika WLKP (Comilfo Plus Z)

◆ On a modern sport horse

In my opinion a modern sport horse should possess following features:

- Willingness to work and endurance – work in modern times meaning sport
- Phenotype: For a long time some associations focused on breeding a preferred feature and it turned out that if such a feature was not the most important one, it did not influence the quality improvement in the next generations. What really matters is to have the best possible knowledge about sport horse potential and its capability of transferring the best features.
- Good health, which provides longevity in sport and facilitates the acquisition of all the required skills, slowly but surely in accordance with a rider’s expectations. This can be achieved with horses advanced in Thoroughbred blood.

And these are the features which can be found among horses bred now in our region by our breeders.”

◆ On the influence on COVID19 crisis on breeding

Riding schools and sport in general are the first to suffer. Our clients, the owners of the horses, have no income and are left with costs, and we are not sure if the timing is right for new horse riding enthusiasts to take the stage. We, the breeders, should remain reasonable and optimistic – these are the virtues engraved in breeding for many generations, yet we should also stay humble yet persistent in reaching our goals.

“Organizational activities, centralization, and funding are only short-term administrative activities which will mostly preserve the infrastructure. During such a recession we should work out simple solutions that will support breeding and breeders. They breed horses with their own money, the horses which in fair-play competition will represent their brand. Meanwhile the breeders should unite in their own associations to reach their common goal.”

“Last but not the least, we kindly invite all breeders and horse fans to come and visit our studs.” ■

Online sales keeping heads above the waterline!

BY AURÉLIE COVINI

In the complex context of the Covid-19 virus, which is impacting events in all countries, auctions, unlike major competitions, are able to survive due to online sales with photos and videos on websites. This report and tables covers the period January 1 - April 25, 2020, including 248 dressage horses and 522 jumpers, totalling 770 sold.

Indoor sales have been canceled and replaced by online auctions by studbooks such as in Holstein, Westfalia, and Oldenburg. The same decision was taken for the Asian Horse Week sale (canceled in February), and for various auctions in the Netherlands.

The number of horses sold at the start of this year is thus increasing: 570 horses sold in the first quarter of 2020 against 418 last year over the same period and, therefore, a close return to the volume of transactions of 2017.

On the breeding side, the market remains well supported financially, with many foals and embryos passing

the €20,000 mark. Specifically, of 80 embryo foals out of 161 sold, half have passed the €15,000 mark, while 44 sold for more than €20,000. The genetic level of embryos and foals offered at the start of the year is very high and the market is not weakening. However, we have noticed a stabilization in average prices, perhaps a sign that the market is being structured. The multiplication of sales makes it possible to find scales of value, even if sometimes two identical embryos can be sold, one for €19,000 in one sale and the other €14,000 elsewhere. This also indicates that the client portfolio of sales organizers remains important. At the end of last year, we had to record the sale of three times more foals to see this level of sales overall.

DRESSAGE STALLIONS RANKED ACCORDING TO TOTAL € SALES

Stallion	Total Sales	Volume	Average
Morricone I	386,000	4	96,500
Painted Black	370,000	1	370,000
Benicio	337,000	9	37,444
Finest	288,500	9	32,056
Glock's Toto Jr	221,000	2	110,500
Sir Heinrich	213,500	7	30,500
For Romance I	210,500	6	35,083
Sezuan	180,000	1	180,000
Fuerstenball	175,000	4	43,750
Ampere	169,500	2	84,750
Ebony	160,000	1	160,000
Gribaldi	150,000	1	150,000
Don Juan de Hus	144,000	2	72,000
Negro	141,000	4	35,250
Franklin	137,000	6	22,833
Spörcken	126,000	3	42,000
Zonik	116,000	2	58,000
Vitalis	110,000	3	36,667
Desperado NOP	109,500	2	54,750
Fidertanz	107,500	2	53,750
Dream Boy	101,000	5	20,200
Bon Bravour	100,000	1	100,000
Estobar NRW	100,000	2	50,000
Fürst Jazz	95,500	3	31,833
De Kooning	95,000	1	95,000

The Chacco-Blue madness continues

Out of the 15 best prices obtained for foals or embryos, one-third came from this stallion. The best price was obtained by an embryo from the auction by Arqana whose catalogue stated: Proposed embryo, the foal, a male by Conet du Lys was born a few days before the sale. Sold for €42,000, he is a son of the famous Elektra van't Roosakker, further demonstrating the strong interest of buyers in the damline of Usha van't Roosakker.

If we look at the multiple offspring of this family and the volume of actual winners at the 1m60 level, such as the grey Cella (Ben Maher), it's not the highest proportion, but commercially speaking, there is no doubt that it represents an attractive source of income for those who breed with this family.

The Arqana auction, Ekestrian, ET-Auction sales and also the Flanders foals auctions organized in different countries also achieved good sales of embryos. In total in these various sales, 10 offspring passed the €30,000 mark.

Big prices in Wellington

For sport horses, as often happens in auctions at the beginning of the year, the best prices came from the USA. VDL Iowa was the top seller during the edition of the Winter Equestrian Festival sport horse auction in Wellington. With a great collection of sport horses purchased by the VDL stud,

SHOWJUMPING STALLIONS RANKED ACCORDING TO TOTAL € SALES

Stallion	Total Sales	Volume	Average
Chacoon Blue	867,500	18	48,194
Indoctro	751,950	2	375,975
Chacco-Blue	618,550	21	29,455
Cornet Obolensky	561,000	25	22,440
Emerald	384,250	18	21,347
Kannan	360,100	5	72,020
Diarado	353,000	7	50,429
Messenger	336,000	8	42,000
Vivant	299,000	11	27,182
Cornet du Lys	297,500	8	37,188
Exelero 2/ ex Chac Boy	296,000	7	42,286
Cardento	277,550	1	77,550
For Pleasure	275,000	8	34,375
Falaise de Muze	273,000	1	73,000
Diamant de Semilly	255,000	12	21,250
Baloubet du Rouet	224,000	9	24,889
Baltic VDL	213,850	1	213,850
Comme il faut	202,000	8	25,250
Million Dollar	199,500	5	39,900
Harley VDL	197,400	3	65,800
Zavall VDL	177,450	1	77,450
Denzel van't Meulenhof	168,350	1	168,350
Aganix du Seigneur	153,000	10	15,300
Casallco	145,500	5	29,100
Toulon	145,500	7	20,786

the eight-year-old gelding VDL Iowa, a Grand Prix prospect sired by Indoctro, was sold for \$645,000. This US auction posted very good results, with an average sales price of \$206,000 and the six best prices of the top 10 for the first four months of 2020.

For dressage horses, auction highlight Excellent Black (Painted Black x Donnerhall) took the crown and goes to Scotland for a price of €370,000, sold during the Excellent Dressage Sale. This auction showed good results with an overall turnover of almost €2.2 million, as the organizer explained, "We were lucky that many horses had already been viewed before the corona crisis. But even after that time, the worldwide interest appeared to continue for young to highly trained horses. Despite the lack of the warm atmosphere of live auctions in recent years, the online auction format proved to be very effective in linking talented horses to new riders and aspirant breeders."

Another good result for dressage horse came from the 92nd Oldenburg Spring Elite Auction which went online. The four-year-old licensed Movie Star (Morricone I x Bentley x Rubinstein I, bred by Ines Lohmann, Extertal, and exhibited by Friedbert Schaul, Heilbronn), was the top price at €250,000. This black stallion is a son of champion stallion Morricone I and the Grand Prix successful Toscana OLD under the saddle of Hubertus Schmidt. As the top price of this sale, Movie Star will delight a new customer in Great Britain.

On the stallion side, Chacoon Blue took the lead from his father Chacco Blue, as 18 of his offspring have been sold during the past four months, including 14 during the various online sales of Paul Schoekemöle, for a total that exceeds €850,000. PS Sales now offer online sales every two weeks, each time with interesting subjects and achieving good sales

prices. The Gestüt Lewitz stallions are, therefore, highlighted with good average prices. In addition to Chacoon and Chacco we regularly find among the most saleable stallions names such as Diarado, Messenger, Vivant, Exelero 2 (Chac Boy). Cornet and Emerald are still omnipresent with many offspring sold and good average prices for these horses.

As for sales organizations, note the arrival of a newcomer to the world of online sales: Youhorse organized by the Waldman and Everse teams in the Netherlands, which, for the first time, achieved a turnover of €0.5 million euros. ■

Find all the up-to-date auction results online: www.breedingnews.com for 2020, as well as archived results from 2018 and 2019.



Explosion W – son of third-ranked auction stallion Chacco-Blue, under the saddle of Ben Maher (GBR)

FOALS AND EMBRYOS SOLD FOR 25 000€ AND MORE (TOTAL OF 161 FOALS AND EMBRYOS SOLD) :

Name/YOB/Studbook/gender/sire - dam x damsire)	Bias	Price	Auction
Foal 2 (2020//c Cornet du Lys - Electra van't Roosakker x Carthago Z)	Jumping	42,000	Arqana, FRA
Embryo 5 (2020//unk Chacco-Blue - Otella di Fer x Diamant De Semilly)	Jumping	36,000	Flanders, NOR
Embryo 1 (2020//unk Toulon - Cascha della Caccia x Cassini I)	Jumping	35,000	Arqana, FRA
Bora Bora Giaco Es Z (2020//f Baloubet du Rouet - Minne I x Locato)	Jumping	33,000	Ekestrian, FRA
Embryo 13 (2020//unk Carthago Z - Azuela de Muze x Heartbreaker)	Jumping	33,000	Arqana, FRA
Embryo 2020-6731815 (2020//unk Don Juan De Hu - Poetin Z (Cl-1) x Sandro Hit)	Dressage	32,500	Ekestrian, FRA
Embryo-Et (2020//unk Tobago Z - Evita van't Zoggehof x Golden Hawk)	Jumping	32,000	ET-March, BEL
Embryo-20 (2020//unk Chacco-Blue -Touch Me x Toulon)	Jumping	30,000	Flanders, UAE
Embryo-3 (2020//unk Diamant De Semilly - Centa de Muze x Cento)	Jumping	30,000	Z-Online, BEL
Embryo-Et (2020//unk Padinus - Somara x Murano)	Jumping	30,000	ET-January, BEL
Embryo-16 (2020//unk Chacco-Blue - Akira x Cormint)	Jumping	29,000	Flanders, NOR
Embryo-10 (2020//unk Chacco-Blue - Zirkoon de Semilly x Diamant De Semilly)	Jumping	28,000	Flanders, UAE
Embryo-10 (2020//unk Kashmir van Schuttershof - Dalida van de Heffinck x Fetiche du Pas)	Jumping	28,000	Flanders, NOR
Embryo-10 (2020//unk Chacco-Blue - Lady D van't Roosakker x Echo Van 'T Spieveld)	Jumping	27,000	Z-Online, BEL
Embryo-5 (2020//unk Chacco-Blue - Soraya de la Pomme x Shindler de Muze)	Jumping	26,000	Sentower, BEL
Embryo-9 (2020//unk Comilfo Plus Z - Carlina IV x Carvalho BB)	Jumping	26,000	Z-Online, BEL
Embryo88 (2020//unk Cornet Obolensky - Goya x Kannan)	Jumping	26,000	Arqana, FRA
Embryo-9 (2020//unk Emerald - Kismet 50 x Kannan)	Jumping	26,000	Flanders, UAE
Embryo-12 (2020//unk Don VHP Z - Ohlala x Orlando vd Heffinck)	Jumping	25,000	Flanders, UAE
Embryo-8 (2020//unk Eldorado vd Zeshoek - Teekitiezze de Muze x For Pleasure)	Jumping	25,000	Z-Online, BE:

Gender: c = male / f = filly (female)

unk = unknown / Cl = clone

February 15, 2020 The Auction by Arqana/Act III Online, France
 March 17, 2020 Embryo and Broodmare March Online Z Auction, Belgium
 January 31, 2020 Flanders Foal Auction, Sharjah, United Arab Emirates
 January 18, 2020 Flanders Foal Auction, Norway
 March 17-18, 2020 Ekestrian Elite Online Auction, France
 January 20 ET-Online January Auction, Belgium
 January 11, 2020 Sentower Park Horse Auction, Sentower Park, Belgium



Ranked second for dressage sires, Painted Black (1997: Gribaldi) – took the competition world by storm with Anky van Grunsven (NED)

HORSES SOLD FOR MORE €80,000 AND MORE

Name/YOB/Studbook/gender/sire - dam x damsire)	Bias	Price	Auction
VDL Iowa (2012/KWPN/g Indoctro - Zorina VDL x Chin Chin)	Jumping	586,950	WEF, USA
Excellent Black (2009/KWPN/st Painted Black - Donna Pinie x Donnerhall)	Dressage	370,000	Excellent, NED
Stella Tok (2012/BH/m Cardento - Capitu da Sta Helena x Baloubet Du Rouet)	Jumping	277,550	WEF, USA
Ivory TCS (2013/KWPN/m Falaise de Muze - Covella x Ukato)	Jumping	273,000	W E F , USA
Movie Star (2016/Oldbg/st Morricone I - Toscana x Blue Hors Bentley)	Dressage	250,000	Oldenburg, GER
Jade Fan Skulnenboarch (2014/KWPN/m Baltic VDL - Curiana x Douglas)	Jumping	213,850	W E F , USA
Kallan (2015/KWPN/g Kannan - Etersina x Indoctro)	Jumping	182,000	WEF USA
S-68 (2017/Hann/st Sezuan - Freixenet x Fürst Heinrich)	Dressage	180,000	DSP, GER
Nikita van de Leeuwkerk (2013/BWP/m Zavall VDL - Danora van de Leeuwkerk x Argentinus)	Jumping	177,450	WEF, USA
Morricone VDT (2017/KWPN/st Glock's Toto Jr - Velvet VDT x Ferro)	Dressage	175,000	KWPN, NED
Icely (2013/KWPN/m Harley VDL - Cely VDL x Douglas)	Jumping	172,900	WEF, USA
VDL Jillz (2014/KWPN/m Denzel van't Meulenhof - Cartina x Calvinos)	Jumping	168,350	WEF, USA
Jill Velvet (2014/KWPN/m Indoctro - Riadne Velvet x Burggraaf)	Jumping	165,000	Z-Online, BEL
Knock Out (2015/KWPN/st Ebony - Charming Vurona x Dreamcatcher)	Dressage	160,000	Excellent, NED
Fellini (2010/KWPN/g Ampere - Anouk x Jazz)	Dressage	150,000	Excellent, NED
Black Diamond (2010/KWPN/g Gribaldi - Wamora x Ro-Lex)	Dressage	150,000	Excellent, NED
Icokarde-EW (2013/KWPN/g Chacco-Blue - Elvixis x Sir Shutterfly)	Jumping	141,050	WEF, USA
Kifrieda VDL (Glenfiddich VDL - Gufrieda x Zirocco Blue VDL)	Jumping	136,500	WEF, USA
Jack Daniel's (Quasimodo vd Molendreef - Carona Z x Cannabis Z)	Jumping	131,950	WEF, USA
Bombino Bianco (2017/Westf/st Benicio - Franciska x Ferragamo)	Dressage	121,000	Westfalian, GER
Eclips MB Z (2015/Z/g Emerald - Monica Minka MB Z x Monte Bellini)	Jumping	113,750	WEF, USA
Flor Dressage Royal (2015/Oldbg/m Finest - Wanja x Dressage Royal)	Dressage	112,000	Oldenburg, GER
Diva Star de Hus (2014/Oldbg/m Don Juan de Hus - Carmina Burana x Rubin Royal OLD)	Dressage	111,500	Oldenburg, GER
Zarzueta 7 (2015/OS/m Diarado - Zorcetta x Concerto I)	Jumping	111,000	Oldenburg, GER
For Chacco PS (2016/Hann/g For Pleasure - Chaccara x Chacco-Blue)	Jumping	110,000	PS-Online, GER
Jannik PS (2016/OS/g Je t'Aime Flamenco - Conloubax Conthargos)	Jumping	101,000	PS-Online, GER
Indigo VDL (2013/KWPN/st Inshallah de Muze - Becherry x Stakkato)	Jumping	100,100	WEF, USA
Johnny Cash (2014/KWPN/st Bon Bravour - Bukkie x Flemmingh)	Dressage	100,000	Excellent, NED
Cha-Kanno PS (2017/OS/st Chacoon Blue - Siljann x Kannan GFE)	Jumping	100,000	PS-Online, GER
Mr Cornet VG (2017/KWPN/st Cornet Obolensky - Ezella x Indoctro)	Jumping	95,000	KWPN, NED
D-46 (2017/DWP/st De Kooning - Rock Z x Destano)	Dressage	95,000	DSP, GER
Facendo (2010/KWPN/g Fidertanz - Cenda de la Fazenda x Blue Hors Don Schufro)	Dressage	95,000	Excellent, NED
M-30 (2017/DWP/st Million Dollar - Capital Queen D x Con Capitol)	Jumping	95,000	DSP, GER
S-71 (2017/Hann/st Spörcken - Fürstin Laomi V x Fürst Piccolo)	Dressage	95,000	DSP, GER
Mooiman (2017/KWPN/st Desperado NOP - Dabola x Wynton)	Dressage	90,000	KWPN, NED
Chalondon PS (2017/OS/st Chacoon Blue - Lonyona x Glock's London)	Jumping	86,000	PS-Online, GER
Chacoon Fly PS (2016/OS/g Chacoon Blue - Sadonna x Sir Shutterfly)	Jumping	85,000	PS-Online, GER
Londarco PS (2016/OS/g Glock's London - Diacca PS x Diarado)	Jumping	85,000	PS-Online, GER
Funchal (2017/Oldbg/st Fürstenball - Amaryllis x Ampere)	Dressage	82,000	Oldenburg, GER
Gavarni (2011/KWPN/m Mylord Carthago - Covergirl x Andiamo)	Jumping	81,900	WEF, USA

January 25, 2020	DSP Stallion Auction, Munich, Germany
February 1, 2020	KWPN Stallion Auction, Den Bosch, the Netherlands
February 27, 2020	WEF Sport Horse Auction, Wellington, FL, USA
March 17, 2020	Z-Online March Auction: Embryos and Broodmares, Belgium
March 24, 2020	PS Online Young Jumpers Auction, Ankum, Germany
April 4, 2020	Oldenbourg Online Elite Auction Vechta, Germany
April 5, 2020	Westfalian Online Elite Auction, Munster-Handorf, Germany
April 18, 2020	Excellent Dressage Sport Horse Sale, the Netherlands

Welfare in horse breeding: Coitus vs ARTs?

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PHOTOGRAPHY: PETER LLEWELLYN

Welfare problems related to the way horses are bred, whether by coitus or by the application of artificial reproduction techniques (ARTs), have been given no discrete consideration within the academic literature. This paper reviews the existing knowledge base about welfare issues in horse breeding and identifies areas in which data is lacking.

We suggest that all methods of horse breeding are associated with potential welfare problems, but also that the judicious use of ARTs can sometimes help to address those problems. We discuss how negative welfare effects could be identified and limited, and how positive welfare effects associated with breeding might be maximised. Further studies are needed to establish an evidence base about how stressful or painful various breeding procedures are for the animals involved, and what the lifetime welfare implications of ARTs are for future animal generations.

Welfare problems relating to the way horses are bred – for example, stress related to long distance transport of breeding stallions or negative side effects of the application of artificial reproduction techniques (ARTs) – have been the occasional subject of conference presentations (for example, Campbell 2012, 2013, Mills 2013). However, they are not discussed a great deal within the horse industry, and have been given no discrete consideration within the academic literature.

This paper aims to address that deficit by reviewing the existing knowledge base on welfare issues in horse breeding, and identifying areas in which data is lacking. We then go on to discuss how negative welfare effects associated with horse breeding could be better identified and limited. ‘Horse breeding’ is defined for the purposes of this article as the processes which lead up to conception, pregnancy, and the management of stallions, broodmares, and foals until weaning.

In this review, we do not address welfare issues in horses that arise from heritable conditions (reviewed by Bettley and others 2012), nor welfare issues related to selective breeding for traits that humans find desirable (for example, extremes of size). Nor do we address the welfare issues of horse abandonment and neglect, identified by various equine charities and in the media as being caused by overbreeding of horses (for example, World Horse Welfare 2013).

Further, we do not, for reasons of space, discuss welfare issues that arise from the management of breeding animals. Instead, starting with the premise that breeding is a legitimate use of horses by people, our focus is on the welfare issues associated with the ways in which horses are bred, whether via ‘natural cover’ (coitus) or ARTs.

In the context of this paper, we are interested in ‘welfare’ in both negative and positive senses. We are concerned with protecting animals from negative experiences such as pain, discomfort, fear, and stress, and also with maximising positive welfare effects. Although attempts to identify positive welfare effects of breeding on horses (for example, whether a mare takes pleasure in raising a foal) run the risk of descending into conjecture, it is possible to associate the fulfilment of animals’ needs for social interaction, or the ability to exhibit some other normal behaviours, with positive welfare.

Welfare and health are linked throughout veterinary medicine, and this is particularly true of breeding, where vaccination of breeding stock and their offspring and control of venereal diseases are important tools in safeguarding welfare. However, in this article, we shall focus on issues that are welfare insults, in the sense that they can directly cause pain, discomfort, fear, stress, or other forms of reduced welfare to an animal or its offspring, and shall not consider welfare issues that might arise from infectious disease processes (although infectious disease can, of course, cause pain and distress).

A search of the literature was carried out using the terms: ‘horse breeding and welfare’; ‘broodmares and welfare’; ‘stallions and welfare’; ‘foals and welfare’; ‘welfare effects of assisted reproductive technologies’; ‘welfare effects of assisted reproductive technologies in horses’; ‘equine embryo transfer’; ‘equine artificial insemination’; and ‘equine assisted reproductive technologies’. The search for books and peer-reviewed papers was conducted using the Royal Veterinary College’s SCOUT system, PubMed, CAB direct, Biomed Central journals, and the Web of Science. Additionally, ‘soft’ data sources were searched using the same terms.

Technique-associated welfare problems: natural covering

In the wild, a harem stallion and its band of mares interact constantly, year round (McDonnell 2000). Equine courtship and copulatory behaviours, in common with those of most mammalian species, are complex (Chenoweth and others 2014), and are frequently initiated by the mare rather than by

the stallion (Chenoweth and others 2014; McDonnell 2000). In domesticated situations, although some breeders allow stallions to run loose with mares at pasture, it is much more common for horses to be bred either 'in-hand' (that is, the stallion is led by a human), or using ARTs.

Internationally, the studbooks responsible for registering Thoroughbred horses will only do so for the purposes of racing if the horse has been conceived by 'natural cover', that is, by intercourse between a mare and stallion. Thoroughbreds conceived by artificial techniques, for example, artificial insemination (AI) or embryo transfer (ET), may not be raced under these rules. They may, however, be registered in an auxiliary part of the studbook and compete in disciplines other than racing, for example, eventing or polo.

Mares being covered under a typical Thoroughbred stud farm system are restrained using a bridle and sometimes also the application of a nose twitch and hobbles, and have boots applied to the back feet to avoid them kicking the stallion. The stallion is typically led towards the rear of the mare, and expected to mount her with little if any opportunity to interact with her head end.

This is very different from the natural behaviour of breeding horses, in which the mare frequently solicits the stallion, the initial approach from the stallion is often to the mare's head rather than her hindquarters, and an elaborate process of licking, vocalising and (sometimes) trial mounting is undertaken before copulation occurs (McDonnell 2000).

In controlled, in-hand breeding the emphasis is on restraint of both horses. While the rationale behind such restraint is an understandable desire to protect both horses and humans from injury, it is arguable that there is the possibility of experienced frustration caused by preventing the animals from fulfilling behavioural needs (see also the fourth of the 'five freedoms', requiring the freedom to 'express normal behaviour' [FAWC 2012a]). No paper was found in the literature assessing the effect in terms of frustration or stress of a 'natural cover' system of this type on mares, foals or stallions.

Further welfare concerns associated with the use of 'natural cover' in the Thoroughbred industry relate to practices that are designed to maximise the economic benefit of breeding. A successful Thoroughbred stallion may cover up to 200 mares in a breeding season, which requires him to 'perform' two or three times a day, since the season is artificially limited by the studbooks (February 1 to July 15 in the Northern Hemisphere). Such heavy breeding schedules are an acknowledged cause of loss of libido (McDonnell 2011), and as such may indicate mental or physical stress.

The practice of 'shuttling' Thoroughbred stallions between Northern and Southern Hemispheres so that they can

be used for breeding activities year-round has the potential to further compromise their welfare by subjecting them to the stress of long flights, novel surroundings and unfamiliar pathogens.

Time limitations

The artificial regulatory time limitation on the Thoroughbred breeding season also carries welfare implications. Naturally, mares are seasonal breeders. In the Northern Hemisphere, they would typically cycle regularly between about March/April and September. Under the rules of racing, all Thoroughbreds are given a nominal birth date – January 1 in the Northern Hemisphere – and race according to that nominal age. Because Thoroughbreds typically race from age two upwards (depending on the type of race) and many races are classified by age, a foal born in early January will have a competitive advantage over a foal born in June, which must race in the same age group. There is thus substantial economic pressure for mares to foal early. This requires mares to conceive at a stage of the year at which the majority of barren or maiden mares would naturally still be in seasonal anoestrus. Consequently, the use of artificial lighting, high planes of nutrition and drugs to stimulate reproductive cyclicity outside of the physiological breeding season in mares is commonplace (Sharp 2011). Where veterinarians and breeders are successful in stimulating mares to conceive early in the year, the resultant early-born foal may be confined indoors due to inclement weather and may experience a lack of grass when turned out; both challenges to the expression of normal behaviours (FAWC 2012a).

Many of the welfare concerns associated with the practice of natural cover could be alleviated or abolished by the use of AI. This allows for semen to be collected from a stallion, divided into aliquots, and either frozen, delivered chilled or used fresh. Since one ejaculate typically contains enough



Semen collection using a phantom mare

semen to achieve pregnancies in four to seven mares, all but the busiest stallions need to be collected from only once a day at most. Because semen can be shipped internationally, there is no requirement for the stallion to travel. Typically a 'dummy mare' is used to collect the semen. Although this does not abolish the risk of injury to the stallion completely, it does mean that there is no risk of injury between a stallion and a real mare. Furthermore, when the semen can be shipped to the mare owner, mares and foals no longer need to be transported to stud, which reduces stress and exposure to pathogens.

Assisted reproductive techniques

The vast majority of non-Thoroughbred studbooks now allow the use of ARTs. Although some non-Thoroughbred breeders still opt to use the kind of in-hand 'natural cover' system described above, breeding using AI and/or ET has become the norm for many breeds.

The use of ARTs, however, is not without its own welfare implications (Table 1). In considering the use of ARTs, we should be aware of short term and longer term welfare issues that affect animals either subjected to or derived from ARTs (Young and others 1998, Farin and others 2004, Farin and others 2006, Campbell and others 2014, Kim and others 2014).

For stallions, potential welfare issues relate to what might be described as an attenuation of the freedom to express normal behaviours. The use of a 'dummy mare' minimises the risk of injury to the stallion without requiring restraint of a live mare, but also means that many successful breeding stallions in AI programmes never actually touch a mare or contact urine, faeces or urovaginal secretions of mares (McDonnell 2000). Such attenuation of normal behaviours is perhaps reflected in the fact that low libido in comparison to that seen in harem stallions is a recognised problem in stallions whose breeding behaviour is controlled by people (McDonnell 2000).

However, for the most part, potential welfare implications of the use of ARTs in equine breeding apply to mares or offspring, rather than to stallions. The most commonly used ARTs in equine breeding are AI and ET (Hartman 2011). Oocyte collection, gamete intrafallopian transfer (GIFT), in-vitro fertilisation (IVF), intracytoplasmic sperm injection (ICSI) and nuclear transfer ('cloning') are also viable techniques, although their application is less common in general practice than in specialised reproduction laboratories. A detailed discussion of the technical aspects, relative success and merits of equine ART procedures is outside the scope of this paper, but can be found in McKinnon and others (2011) and is reviewed by Hinrichs (2012).

With the exception of cloning (see below), little attention has been paid to the welfare implications of equine ARTs. However, techniques such as AI, ET, and even GIFT (gamete intrafallopian transfer) are much more commonly undertaken than cloning. Therefore, welfare issues associated with these techniques, if they exist, potentially affect a significant number of animals across the globe each year.

Mares can be inseminated with freshly collected, chilled or frozen semen, using simple transcervical, deep intrauterine or hysteroscopic insemination. It is recognised good practice to restrain a mare in stocks during these procedures, both for the safety of the personnel involved and to reduce the risk of a rectal tear occurring if the mare moves suddenly. Whether a mare is additionally sedated varies, and seems to depend upon the temperament of the mare and the perceived difficulty of the procedure. The majority of mares who are restrained in stocks and inseminated with fresh or chilled semen are not sedated. It is not common practice for mares to be provided with analgesia during AI (although where sedatives are used, some sedatives do have an analgesic component). No studies on pain and other negative states related to AI in mares were found in the literature.

Embryo transfer

Similarly, there seem to be no studies on whether ET is painful in mares. Although ET is known to be painful in other species, especially those in which embryo flushing is a surgical procedure (Jirkof and others 2013), the fact that flushing and transfer are both usually now non-surgical procedures in mares and that the mare's cervix dilates easily even in dioestrus makes it likely that ET is a comparatively unpainful experience for mares. Nonetheless, it is common practice to sedate mares both during flushing and ET, but not to provide analgesia other than that incorporated in sedation. The rationale for such sedation is probably to reduce the risk of rectal tears and to make the procedure technically easier by preventing the mare moving. Hartman (2011) also suggested (apparently from clinical experience) that sedation is necessary during embryo flushing as fluid expansion of the uterus can be uncomfortable for the mare.

It is certainly true that the potential welfare issues for a donor mare, including those associated with the flushing procedure and with repeat injections to attempt to induce superovulation when used (Meyers-Brown and others 2010), exceed the potential welfare issues for the recipient mare (in whom non-surgical transfer differs little from a conventional AI).

Overall, ET has greater potential to cause welfare issues than AI. Often, more than one recipient mare is prepared per donor mare, to increase the chances of achieving synchronisation of donor and recipient. This means that the number of invasive rectal and ultrasound examinations per pregnancy is increased compared to AI. Particularly where recipient mare numbers are limited, greater pharmacological manipulation (often involving repeated injection) of mares may also be necessary to achieve synchronisation than is necessary to manipulate the reproductive cycle for AI.

Embryo transfer can offer some positive welfare benefits insofar as the possibility of shipping preserved embryos abolishes the need to transport mares and foals. Flushing an embryo from a mare at risk of a pregnancy-related injury, for example, increased risk of a ventral musculature rupture

TABLE 1

Summary of different procedures used in modern equine breeding, frequency of use,

and the pros and cons of each technique from a welfare point of view

Technique	Frequency of use	Negative welfare effects	Positive welfare effects
Artificial insemination	Very common	Lack of controlled studies. Anecdotally likely to be minimally painful/stressful for most mares. Attenuation of normal reproductive behaviours for stallions. Anecdotally no evidence of long-term welfare effects on animals conceived by artificial insemination	Reduces number of times/day stallion has to ejaculate. Reduces risk to stallion, mare, and personnel during breeding. Abolishes need to transport stallions internationally and to transport mares and foals to stud. Ability to freeze semen facilitates castration of males, which makes it easier to manage social interaction between them and other animals.
Embryo transfer	Common in some countries, very common in others	Lack of controlled studies. Increased need for invasive examination and pharmacological manipulation compared with artificial insemination. Embryo flushing process may be stressful/painful.	Facilitates breeding from mares who would be at high risk of injury (for example, ventral rupture) if they carried the foal themselves. Possibility of shipping preserved embryos reduces the need to transport mares and foals.
Oocyte retrieval and transfer	Uncommon	Lack of controlled studies in mares. Known to be associated with increased heart rate and peripheral cortisol levels and development of adhesions in other species. No conclusive evidence of long-term welfare effects on foals conceived by oocyte retrieval, although these are known to occur in other species in association with particular uses of culture media.	
Cloning	Rare	Increased risk of abnormalities in foals at birth, increased requirement for neonatal intensive care.	

during pregnancy due to previous colic surgery, also has the potential to improve that individual's welfare by abolishing the need for it to carry a foal to term.

Oocyte retrieval and transfer

Oocyte retrieval (Carnevale 2011b) provides a method of achieving pregnancies in mares in which reproductive pathologies render ET unsuccessful (Galli and others 2001, Carnevale 2011a). In mares, unlike cattle, IVF has proved relatively unsuccessful (Hinrichs 2005). Oocyte retrieval is therefore more commonly used in conjunction either with transfer of the oocyte into a recipient mares' oviduct and simultaneous deposition of sperm in the oviduct (GIFT), or transfer of the oocyte into a recipient mare's oviduct followed by transcervical insemination of the recipient. Alternatively, the oocyte can be fertilised in vitro using ICSI, and the embryo created is placed in the recipient mare's uterus using ET.

Although various techniques for oocyte retrieval have been described (Carnevale 2011a), the most commonly used is transvaginal ultrasound-guided follicular aspiration (Cook and others 1993, Galli and others 2001, Carnevale 2011a). Transvaginal ultrasound-guided follicular aspiration in women

is known to be associated with pain, the severity of which is dependent upon needle design (Wikland and others 2011). The insertion of a needle through the vaginal wall carries associated risks of pathogen transmission and of vaginal rupture which are assumed to apply also in animals (McEvoy and others 2006). In sheep and goats, repeated transvaginal oocyte retrieval has been associated with the development of adhesions (McEvoy and others 2006). In cattle, one study associated transvaginal ultrasound-guided follicular aspiration with an increase in heart rate and peripheral cortisol levels, although the authors commented that those effects may have been in reaction to epidural anaesthesia rather than to oocyte puncture specifically (Petyim and others 2007). Another study failed to demonstrate any significant difference in alteration of cortisol levels or milk production between cows subjected to repeated ovum pickup and control animals (Chastant-Maillard and others 2003).

Perhaps because the number of mares having oocyte retrieval performed on them is much lower than the number of farm animals being subjected to the same ART, we know less about welfare compromising side effects in mares. Although the effect of repeated aspiration of follicles on fertility has been studied (Mari and others 2005), the specific question of

whether oocyte retrieval in mares causes pain or discomfort does not seem to have been addressed. Cook and others (1993), although not aiming to investigate whether oocyte retrieval caused pain, did incidentally report that ovaries appeared to become painful after aspiration of several follicles, and that one of 30 mares showed signs of pain after aspiration. Despite the lack of specific studies on whether oocyte aspiration causes pain in the mare, it is nonetheless normal practice for mares undergoing oocyte retrieval to be restrained in stocks, sedated and provided with systemic analgesia (Cook and others 1993, Galli and others 2001, Carnevale and others 2003, Carnevale 2011a). The perceived need to restrain the mare may be related to concerns about causing rectal tears and about the ease of follicular aspiration, as well as about pain. Similar provision is made for mares into which an oocyte is being surgically transferred, in combination with local anaesthetic (Carnevale 2011b). The need for analgesia during transfer is perhaps more obvious since an incision is being made. Recipient mares also have to undergo aspiration of their own preovulatory follicle(s) in order to ensure that the oocyte that is fertilised following transfer originates from the donor and not the recipient mare. Neither surgical transfer nor aspiration of the recipient's own follicle is necessary if oocyte retrieval is used in conjunction with ICSI and a non-surgical ET rather than GIFT.

Relatively little evidence is available about the effects of oocyte aspiration on foals created using retrieved oocytes. In cattle, where oocyte retrieval is often used in combination with IVF and ET, that combination has been associated with fetal oversize, compromised placental competence, and perinatal deaths due to cardiovascular, pulmonary or other limitations (McEvoy and others 2006). The welfare problems encountered with bovine oocyte retrieval followed by IVF and ET may relate to technique and the length of time and conditions under which oocytes and embryos are held in vitro (McEvoy and others 2006).

Fetal oversize in particular has been shown to be related to culture conditions, including the addition of serum to embryo culture media (Everts and others 2008, Smith and others 2009, Angulo and others 2010). It does not, therefore, necessarily follow that similar problems would occur in mares undergoing oocyte retrieval and GIFT, or ICSI and ET. Indeed, where information about foals conceived using these methods is available in the literature, there is no evidence that these techniques have negative effects on the health and other aspects of the welfare of foals, at least in the short term.

Cloning

Recent publications about the efficiency of producing 'clones' by equine somatic cell nuclear transfer, and discussion among stud books and regulatory authorities about the registration of clones and their offspring (FEI 2012), have promoted consideration of the welfare implications associated with this particular equine ART. Current cloning techniques result in recognised welfare problems in farm animals (Renard

and others 2001, Houdebine and others 2008, FAWC 2012b). Problems begin during the embryo stages, when loss rates are higher than rates associated with other ARTs (EFSA 2010), and continue right through to the adult stages of the lives of cloned animals (Renard and others 2001).

In equine reproduction, production of embryos using somatic cells as the source of nuclear transfer is now both a research tool and a clinical service (Hinrichs 2005, 2006, 2012). Because the number of cloned foals is still small (estimated at 100 to 200 worldwide [Hinrichs 2012]), and perhaps because there is not the same public concern about the possible effects on human health (EFSA 2008), data about the health and welfare of equine clones is sparse compared to that available for clones of species that are primarily used for food production. What little data is available comes primarily from the efforts of the group led by Katrin Hinrichs at Texas A&M University to collate information relating to the production of 'cloned' foals (Hinrichs 2006, Johnson and others 2010). This group reported that 26 per cent of cloned embryos transferred by them resulted in the birth of a live foal. This is a higher success rate than that of Galli and coworkers, who produced three live foals from transfers of more than 100 cloned embryos (Galli and others 2003, Lagutina and others 2005).

Although only dealing with the data from one laboratory, the study by Johnson and others (2010) suggests that the incidence of abnormalities at birth in 'cloned' foals exceeds that of non-cloned foals, and that cloned foals require intensive treatment if they are to survive the immediate postpartum period. Umbilical abnormalities (as in other species) seem a particular problem. However, the fetal oversize and consequent dystocia seen in cattle seem to not occur in horses. This is probably because mares generally 'regulate' the size of their foal in utero (Allen and others 2002). Similarly, the problems of hydrops of the fetal membranes, which occur in cloned cattle, seem not to occur in mares; this may be due to differences in placentation.

Limiting negative welfare effects

It is clear from this review that known and potential welfare issues are associated with the use of horses for breeding, whether the technique used be 'natural' or 'artificial'.

There is a strong argument to be made that some types of ART are useful tools for improving the welfare of breeding horses. For example, use of AI and shipped semen removes the need to transport mares, foals and stallions nationally or internationally, and thus reduces their exposure to stress and infectious disease.

Transportation of flushed chilled embryos rather than a whole mare has similarly positive welfare implications. A recent innovation by SportHorse Breeding (UK) whereby the studbook has agreed to allow geldings with previously frozen semen to be entered into the stallion grading scheme and, if they pass, to be registered as breeding animals, is another good

example of using ARTs to improve welfare. The ability to use geldings as breeding animals will remove the need to keep male animals entire, and should therefore make it easier to keep them in a system where welfare-enhancing social interaction with other horses is easier to manage. Additionally, knowing that geldings have the potential to be registered as breeding animals later in life might encourage owners to have semen frozen before the animal is gelded, and this in turn might reduce the incentive to clone a gelding after he has proven competitively successful in order to use his clone as a breeding animal. Given the welfare issues associated with current cloning techniques this too should be welfare-enhancing.

However, notwithstanding the potential of some ARTs to improve equine welfare, more information is needed about possible negative welfare effects of equine ARTs, particularly the newer ones. A lack of information about the safety and efficacy of new ARTs is not unique to animal reproduction and has also been identified in the field of human reproductive medicine (Dondorp and de Wert 2011). The current situation in equine reproduction seems to be a somewhat paradoxical one whereby analgesia is provided for some techniques (for example, oocyte retrieval) in the absence of an evidence base proving that the technique is painful, and not provided for other techniques (for example, AI) in the absence of an evidence base proving that they are not painful. Clinical experience suggests that most veterinarians are making decisions about the need to provide analgesia based on observations of the mare's behaviour and supposition about what might be painful. Generally, clinicians seem to err on the side of providing analgesia if they suspect that the mare might experience discomfort.

The ability of owners and veterinarians to make evidence-based judgements about the negative welfare effects of different types of ARTs and about the potential effect of using analgesia requires studies incorporating valid measures of pain, discomfort, fear, stress and other aspects of negative welfare in the mares involved. Such studies could include measurement of physiological parameters such as salivary or serum cortisol levels in horses before and after an ART is used (Peeters and others 2011). However, there are good reasons to be critical of physiological measures as stand-alone welfare measures, and to try instead to combine physiological measurements with behavioural indicators (Robertson and Sanchez 2010). Horses, like other prey species, tend to mask or minimise signs of pain and other welfare problems. Behavioural indicators are often subtle (Ashley and others 2005). Examples of such subtle indicators are activity level, level of contact with peers and humans (Pader and others 2011), and facial expression (Dalla Costa and others 2014, Gleerup and others 2014). It is possible to define numerical rating scales for behavioural and other indicators of pain in horses (Bussi eres and others 2008, Robertson and Sanchez 2010, van Loon and others 2014), and it would, for the purpose of assessing the welfare effects of ARTs, be relevant to develop specific genital/gynaecological pain scales for horses.

Further information is also needed about the effect of ARTs on the welfare of future generations of horses. AI and ET are techniques that have been used on mares for decades now. Hinrichs (2012) estimates that 25,000 ETs are performed worldwide per year. Common-sense suggests that if long-term welfare problems in offspring created using AI and ET were an issue, they would have become anecdotally obvious and been reported in the literature by now. It therefore seems likely that long-term welfare effects on future animals do not occur in association with AI and ET. However, there is a paucity of information about the long-term effects of more recently developed ART techniques, such as ICSI and cloning, on the welfare of future generations. Multicentre, long-term cohort studies of horses created using such techniques would inform decision making about the use and modification of techniques.

Conclusions

There is a general lack of data about the welfare of breeding horses, which could be rectified by the addition of such horses as a separate category to ongoing data-gathering exercises about general horse welfare.

Careful attention to the management of breeding horses in ways which enable them to express normal behaviours as fully as possible within the constraints of needing to avoid injury to horses and people would improve welfare, both by reducing negative effects and by increasing positive, welfare-maximising factors.

Breeders and veterinarians should also give careful thought to whether insults to welfare arising from recognised stressors could be reduced by employing ARTs. However, further studies are needed in order to establish an evidence base about how stressful/painful various ARTs are for the animals involved, and what the lifetime welfare implications of ARTs are for future animal generations. Only when that information becomes available will we be able to make sound ethical judgements about whether the (potential) cost of (possibly) stressful/painful techniques is outweighed by a welfare benefit derived from reduced exposure to stress associated with travel, mixing of animals, and 'natural' cover techniques.

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THE WB MEET THE PEOPLE WORKING TO SPORT HORSE B

THE B



JAN PEDERSEN – PRESIDENT

Town/Country of residence: Arden, Denmark

Studbook: Danish Warmblood – Chairman since 1994

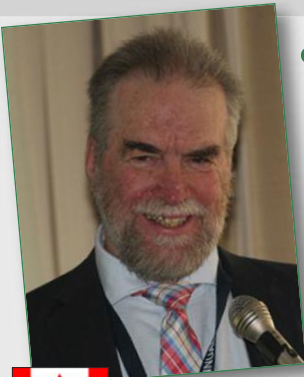
WBFSH tenure: President since 1999

Previous/current occupation(s): High School Teacher at Tradium Commercial College and Dania Academy, recently retired

Breeding career: Since I was 12 years old – to begin with together with my father. The focus of our breeding was always the dressage horse. We have five broodmares and a total of 20 horses.

Special achievement(s): A gold medal mare Andorra (Andiamo), and the approved stallion Münster (Münchhausen)

Personal philosophy: As breeding progress is closely connected with generational change, I stake a lot on younger stallions and the latest generation of mares.



CHRIS GOULD – VICE PRESIDENT

Town/Country of residence: Mayerthorpe, Alberta, Canada

Studbook: Canadian Warmblood Horse Breeders Association – founding Chairman, retired, currently Director of Communications

WBFSH tenure: CWHBA delegate since 1995, former member of the Audit Committee, and now Vice President, Internal Cooperation, since 2015

Previous/current occupation(s): Operating Touchstone Farm as a Warmblood breeding, training, and teaching facility since 1975. Formerly a political scientist working as an aid to Canadian Prime Minister Joe Clark

Breeding career: I started breeding horses while at university, in the late 60s – with a half Thoroughbred ranch-bred mare birthday present. Three generations later her great-grandson competed for Canada at the Beijing Olympics in three day eventing. We expanded to over 200 horses by 2008, using imported stallions, first a direct son of Abglanz. Now reduced to slightly fewer than 100 horses, using mainly frozen semen. We have one home-bred son of Escudo I, still at stud, and too many mares!

Special achievement(s): Horses that have competed at National and FEI level in all three Olympic disciplines, plus driving. Eight eight licensed or approved stallions

Personal philosophy: While performance is the goal, a good temperament is indispensable, but beauty and harmony create the inspiration.



PAUL HUBERT – VICE PRESIDENT



MARION HUGHES – VICE PRESIDENT



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WBFSH BOARD TOWARDS A BETTER FUTURE FOR THE BREEDING INDUSTRY

BOARD

DR. STEPHAN KELCHTERMANS – VICE PRESIDENT

Town/Country of residence: Helchteren, Belgium

Studbook: BWP – equine veterinary surgeon responsible since 1994

WBFSH tenure: Vice President, Finance Department since 2017

Previous/current occupation(s): Equine veterinary surgeon with own practice specializing in gynecology and orthopedics since 1987; Member of BWP Health Label Committee since 1994; Member of BWP Appeal Committee for stallion x-rays since 1994; Founder and President of Belgian Foal Auction since 2001; FEI treating veterinarian since 2013

Breeding career: Owner of Studfarm Kunselhof since 1981. Horses and horse breeding have been my passion since my childhood. I bought my own first - horse when I was 12 years old, and bred my first foal at the age of 17.

Special achievement(s): I breed on average one foal every year. Despite this small number, I have bred several approved stallions and 1m40 horses. I now breed with the fourth consecutive generation that has the BWP Health Label.

Personal philosophy: The reason why I became involved with the WBFSH: (1) There is a lack of information available for breeders as well as for potential clients! (2) The x-rays of an approved stallion must be available online. Breeding has become a worldwide business and need to improve credibility with welfare organizations; (3) Worldwide offspring data must be online. (If I buy an exclusive foal, I should be disappointed if there are 20 full brothers or sisters); (4) Due to the proliferation of misinformation, the danger of inbreeding rises; (5) Sport information combined with breeding information must be available in one database; (6) Breeding must be improved by scientific research.

In today's breeding world, the whole industry must work closely TOGETHER with an open mind!



NORBERT CAMP – VICE PRESIDENT

Town/Country of residence: Wachtberg (near Bonn), Germany

Studbook: Trakehner Verband – President since 2016

WBFSH tenure: Board member since 2018

Previous/current occupation(s): Managing Director in the pharmaceutical industry, with a few Shareholder Committee assignments since retiring

Breeding career: I kept sport horses until my retirement, then started buying foals and breeding. Started with a mare I'd owned for many years who had extraordinary sport performance. I am currently breeding with two mares

Special achievement(s): One licensed stallion and one top auction horse out of acquired foals. One own-bred premium mare is now being prepared for sport and breeding

Personal philosophy: Breeding is more than just business, it's a mixture of knowledge, facts, science, and experience, on the one hand, and limited predictability, but positive and negative surprises on the other hand that makes it so unique. Engaging for Trakehner as one of the few remaining pure breeds underlines even more the element of passion. Nevertheless, it is finally for any breed the ultimate goal to maintain competitiveness. Definitely a particular challenge following the rules of pure breeding, while building a strong brand with broad awareness and clear points of uniqueness.





THE WBFSH EXECUTIVE MEET THE PEOPLE WORKING TO SPORT HORSE B

THE EXECUTIVE



KLAUS MIESNER – CHAIRMAN OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, EXTERNAL COOPERATION DEPARTMENT

Town/Country of residence: Warendorf, Germany

Studbook: German FN – Executive Director Breeding, Member of the Management Board WBFSH **Tenure:** Since the foundation of the WBFSH, serving as representative for the German FN, the umbrella organization for 13 German breed societies, first as Executive Department Cooperation, currently as Executive Department External Cooperation.

Breeding career: My family and I are running a farm with sport horses (dressage and jumping). We have raised colts for several years, some of whom have been licensed and/or later shown successfully in sport with my wife, or under the saddle of one of my daughters. At present we are using all our horses for sport, none for breeding.

Special breeding achievement(s): A six-year-old own-bred mare by Fürstenball x Sandro Hit, who qualified for last year's Bundeschampionate, and shows very good potential for the future. There have been other top sport horses and ponies with my wife and daughter who have also been special to me.

Personal philosophy: Living with family and horses under one roof gives you everything you need, even when times are hard



KARINA CHRISTIANSEN – SECRETARY OF THE BOARD AND THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Town/Country of residence: Århus, Denmark

Studbook: Danish Warmblood

Previous/current occupation(s): Breeding manager at Danish Warmblood since 2000

Breeding career: While I'm not a breeder myself, I've always had riding horses. Currently, I have an eight-year-old DWB gelding at medium level dressage.

Personal philosophy: In my position as breeding manager for DWB, I believe it's an advantage not to be privately involved in the presentation of mares and stallions. But because of my education in agricultural science, I've always had a special interest in horse breeding and how it can be improved.

Personal philosophy: The studbook with the best selection procedures will achieve the greatest

breeding success.



EDWARD KENDAL – EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, INTERNAL COOPERATION DEPARTMENT

Town/Country of residence: St. John's, Newfoundland, Canada

Studbook: Canadian Warmblood Horse Breeders Association

WBFSH tenure: Five years as CWHBA delegate

Previous/current occupation(s): Professor of Medicine, Memorial University

Breeding career: I'm not a breeder myself, but rode for a very brief period in the 1970s and have since always been involved with the horse industry at an organizational level. My volunteer work with various equestrian organizations has spanned nearly five decades, and provided in-depth insights into the business. Some of my work has been undertaken to support my daughter, Victoria, who is an active rider, trainer, facility manager, and volunteer in her own right.

I welcomed the opportunity to become involved with the WBFSH, at Chris Gould's invitation, with my key interest being the development of wider visibility/awareness of the organization. For example, publishing value-adding analysis of pan-industry data and/or developing secure data-exchange platforms. Oversight of assisted breeding technologies are also a promising area for WBFSH development as these activities are not being pursued by member studbooks so, in my opinion, will enlarge the value of the industry.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE TOWARDS A BETTER FUTURE FOR THE BREEDING INDUSTRY

THE COMMITTEE

BÉRENGÈRE LACROIX – EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBER, BREEDING DEPARTMENT

Town/Country of residence: Saumur, France

Studbook: Selle Français – Director of the studbook since 2018

WBFSH tenure: In various capacities since 2008 – managing the UELN code database, dealing with European regulations and communicating information via the European studbooks by leading the World Horse Identification and Registration Data Exchange Committee.

Previous/current occupation(s): 10 years with IFCE (French Horse and Riding Institute) as project leader on the creation of a tool for the genetic selection of equids based on SIRE (French national database) functionalities, international data exchange in collaboration with the WBFSH and the FEL, responsible for relations with studbooks and foreign partners. Also, head of the office of imported horses into France; ie registration of Selle Français horses born abroad.

Breeding career: I don't have a studfarm, but my father is a horse breeder – Selle Français and Ardennais (draft horses) since 1976, alongside Aubrac cattle and Texel sheep. As a passionate horse person, I sometimes breed with him, choosing the stallion (usually young), naming foals – it's a family achievement.

Personal philosophy: Passion, common sense, authenticity, sharing, and reason.

Personal quote: Ordinary little pleasures make life extraordinary!



RUDI EERDEKENS – EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, FINANCE DEPARTMENT

Town/Country of residence: Bree, Belgium

Studbook: Belgian Warmblood – Managing Director

WBFSH tenure: 20 years as Chief Financial Officer – introduced to the Federation by my friend Rik van Miert, who became vice president, finances, and asked me to fulfill the executive work representing BWP.

Previous/current occupation(s): I joined BWP in 1993 to manage the organization, as they wanted to hire someone from outside the breeding world. I became aware of the studbook while working for a rural youth organization that included a horse riding department. I was also provincial secretary for the rural equestrian federation, which was founded within the rural youth organization. Later, BWP was created by people from the equestrian organization – so they all have the same history and are now housed within the same building.

Breeding career: I am not a breeder myself but spent a lot of time on farms during my childhood where I came into contact with animal producers, which gave me a real overview and general idea about breeding.



ALISON CORBALLY – EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT



ALTHOUGH WE APPRECIATE THAT MANY EVENTS HAVE BEEN CANCELLED OR POSTPONED DUE TO THE COVID-19 VIRUS, SOME AUCTIONS ARE BEING HOSTED ON-LINE, SO WE ARE CONTINUING TO PUBLISH THIS CALENDAR WITH WEBSITE INFORMATION, AND ALSO BECAUSE SHOWS MAY RETURN AT DIFFERENT TIMES DEPENDING WHEN RESTRICTIONS ARE LIFTED IN CERTAIN COUNTRIES

2020

JUNE

10-13 Vechta (GER)

Oldenburger Summer Meeting
Tel: +49 (0)441 93550
Fax: +49 (0)441 935599
info@oldenburger-pferde.com
www.oldenburger-pferde.com

13 Vechta (GER)

3rd Oldenburg Special Edition Auction
Tel: +49 (0)441 93550
Fax: +49 (0)441 935599
info@oldenburger-pferde.com
www.oldenburger-pferde.com

22 Viernheim (GER)

DSP 'Shooting Stars' foal auction
Tel: +49 (0)35 207 89631
verkauf@pzvst.de / www.pzvst.de

JULY

18 Verden (GER)

Hanoverian Riding Horse Auction
Tel: +49 (0)4231 6730
Fax: +49 (0)4231 67312
hannoveraner@hannoveraner.com
www.hannoveraner.com

23 Vechta (GER)

Oldenburg Elite Broodmare Show
Tel: +49 (0)441 93550
Fax: +49 (0)441 935599
info@oldenburger-pferde.com
www.oldenburger-pferde.com

27 Nördlingen (GER)

DSP Foal Auction
Tel: +49 (0)35 207 89631
verkauf@pzvst.de
www.pzvst.de

27 Berlin (GER)

DSP Auction of jumping foals
Tel: +49 (0)35 207 89631
verkauf@pzvst.de
www.pzvst.de

AUGUST

3 Donaueschingen (GER)

DSP Foal Auction
Tel: +49 (0)35 207 89631
verkauf@pzvst.de
www.pzvst.de

4 Verden (GER)

Herward von der Decken Show
Tel: +49 (0)4231 6730
Fax: +49 (0)4231 67312
hannoveraner@hannoveraner.com
www.hannoveraner.com

5-9 Verden (GER)

Dressage World Breeding Championship
for Young Horses
Tel: +49 (0)4231 67 37 68
turnier@verden-turnier.de
www.verden-turnier.de

7/8 Verden (GER)

Hanoverian Auction of Foals and
Broodmares
Tel: +49 (0)4231 6730
Fax: +49 (0)4231 67312
hannoveraner@hannoveraner.com
www.hannoveraner.com

18-22 Ermelo (NED)

KWPN Championships
Tel: +31 (0)341 255555
Fax: +31 (0)341 255535
info@kwpn.nl / www.kwpn.nl

29 Vechta (GER)

19th Elite Oldenburg Foal Auction
Tel: +49 (0)441 93550
Fax: +49 (0)441 935599
info@oldenburger-pferde.com
www.oldenburger-pferde.com

30 Vechta (GER)

28th Vechtaer Oldenburg Foal Market
Tel: +49 (0)441 93550
Fax: +49 (0)441 935599
info@oldenburger-pferde.com
www.oldenburger-pferde.com

31 Chieming-Ising (GER)

DSP Foal Auction
Tel: +49 (0)35 207 89631
verkauf@pzvst.de
www.pzvst.de

SEPTEMBER

2-6 Warendorf (GER)

Bundeschampionate – German national
young-horse championship
Tel: +49 (0)2581 63 62154
Fax: +49 (0)2581 63 62212
vertrieb-fnverlag@fn-dokr.de
www.fnverlag.de

7 Chieming-Ising (GER)

DSP Future Dressage Champions foal
auction
Tel: +49 (0)35 207 89631
verkauf@pzvst.de
www.pzvst.de

16-20 Lanaken (BEL)

Showjumping World Breeding Champi-
onship for Young Horses
Tel: +32 (0)89 73 00 30
Fax: +32 (0)89 71 84 10
studbook@zangersheide.com
www.zangersheide.com

OCTOBER

2/3 Vechta (GER)

93rd Oldenburg Fall Elite Auction
Tel: +49 (0)441 93550
Fax: +49 (0)441 935599
info@oldenburger-pferde.com
www.oldenburger-pferde.com

9/10 Verden (GER)

Hanoverian Elite Auction of 2yo stal-
lions and foals with Gala Show
Tel: +49 (0)4231 6730
Fax: +49 (0)4231 67312
hannoveraner@hannoveraner.com
www.hannoveraner.com