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WORLD BREEDING NEWS

for Sport Horses

BN #284

Breeder interviews

Stallion profiles

Bloodline analysis



Rebeca LS La Silla

(2006) Rebozo LS / Casablanca La Silla - Cassini I
CSIO, CSI 5* GP, YH



Edward Levy & Rebeca LS, second place in the GP CSI5* 1.60m
Hubside Jumping Grimound in St.Tropez, France July 2020

*“For me, she is a crack, so carefull,
so energic, scoopy; she is a fighter,
always ok to wait, always ok to work,
she is a Queen...”*

Edward Levy.



Rebozo LS (2000)
Tlálóc M / Renata La Silla - Ramiro Z



Rebozo LS and his mother
RENATA LA SILLA

London 2012, WEG 2010, CSI GP, CSI YH



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CORRESPONDENTS IN THIS ISSUE: CELIA CLARKE | AGATA GROSICKA |
CHRISTOPHER HECTOR | LOUISE PARKES | SALLY REID | JO DE ROO | ADRIANA VAN TILBURG

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EDITORIAL

STIR UP THE AIR, AS THE CAUSE – THE SYSTEM – IS HEARD!



From the piece on page 18 by Frenchman Bernard Maurel, FEI dressage judge and former director of Haras National du Pin, a true horseman, we picked this quote: “[...] these horses [the Iberians], when they are young, are not always talented by nature for lengthening their stride. Effectively, it’s logical when selecting sport horses to prioritize the paces and the functioning of the back. Yet the existing exercises in dressage tests and the judging criteria are still orientated on the ‘paces’. To explain this point: Iberian horses generally need two years to learn how to stretch and extend ‘correctly’ (without hurrying and without too much help from the rider). Similarly, sport horses [Warmbloods] generally need two years to learn how to evolve on the way to collection, to achieve self-carriage and elevation ‘correctly’ (without losing elasticity and without being held too much by strong aids). Therefore, it’s difficult to propose tests and criteria suitable for all breeds.”

If you’re not aware of the discipline’s characteristics, you realize de facto that there are two main ingredients in competitive dressage: the amplitude, the flexibility, the regularity of the gaits, then the so-called ‘Haute Ecole’ movements. Over the past 50 years, the first requirement has become a priority, especially in judging young horse competitions, and it’s on this basis that FEI rules have evolved since the 1972 Munich OG. International dressage competition is now codified, formatted, standardized, locked down, thus enabling production to evolve, allowing its economic development.

Is this a good thing? A remarkable demonstration of ‘the function creating the organ?’ Should everyone be pleased that things have turned out so well. That international dressage is a rolling deal!

Yes, if you are an actor of the defined game (breeder, rider, owner, etc...). Yes, if you consider modern dressage competition as a sport with its own rules, in which the evolution of equipment plays a role such as in skiing, F1, cycling, yachting, etc...

But riding an Iberian horse in FEI dressage tests is like playing tennis today with good old wooden rackets against an opponent who plays with a kevlar frame! It’s your own choice man!

The first issue that bothers us in this story is this: Is the horse an accessory like any other?

The second, is even more delicate. Is the goal of dressage competition to first sanction – with a planned program – the overall impression of a horse in an arena, or the fingers of a rider on the reins in the execution of the figures?

If the good sense answers to these questions is “both”, it would mean that the choice of horse must be without consequence in the judge’s assessment. Therefore, in young horse competitions, dressage should be heard, understood, and an Iberian horse’s specificity, its ‘delay’ compared to the sport’s half-bloods raised for many generations, should stick to the discipline’s demands.

However, annoyingly, equipment-led sporting performance is measured objectively by a chronometer or laser metre. Not left to discretionary judges who adopt the evolution of the market’s ‘products’, the fashion trends, whether voluntary or induced.

How do we understand the ‘game’, as Iberians are historically, morphologically, and psychologically made for dressage, but appear not to have a place in modern competition, starting with training events dedicated to young horses.

Isn’t this segregation? Is it a mistake that amputates universality from competition? Is it normal that breeders of Iberian sport horses like the Associação Portuguesa de Criadores de Racas Selecta (APCRS), Asociación Nacional de Criadores de Caballo de Pura Raza Española (ANCCE), Associação Portuguesa de Criadores do Cavalo Puro Sangue Lusitano (APSL), Associação Brasileira de Criadores do Cavalo Puro Sangue Lusitano (ABPSL) are excluded from the party? Has the FEI failed in recent history to be a referee in this matter? Would it not be inspiring to have a more global, open vision in developing international dressage competition?

And what is the feeling of the WBFSH members, co-developers of the FEI WBFSH World Breeding Championships for Young Horses? Are these lines equivalent to, colloquially, throwing a cat among the pigeons... or, conversely, stir up the air, as the cause – the system – is heard?

Xavier Libbrecht

KWPN

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WBF SH TRIBUNE

BREEDING IS A PASSION; YOU MIGHT AS WELL LIVE IT INTENSELY



The SBS Studbook will soon celebrate its 100th anniversary.

In the lifetime of an association, a one-century journey brings back many memories, sometimes pleasant, sometimes painful, but also allows us to evoke

multiple experiences. From the 'cavalry horse', intended for the rise of the army, to the modern sport horse, the road has negotiated many turns long the way.

In the middle of the 20th century, animal husbandry was still based on empirical choices or was simply dictated by economic realities. A slow and random selection, before experiencing a spectacular runway these last 20 years. The systematization of sporting competitions for young horses, the processing and dissemination of zootechnical data, but above all the development and access to new reproduction techniques have largely contributed to this exponential development. From natural covering to ICSI, breeding has come a long way in just a few short decades.

From an indigenous mare, of a certain quality but with few genetic or sporting references, it was necessary to gradually build – without jostling, but by proceeding in small steps – by exploiting the Belgian land that made the reputation of the heavy horse.

Pragmatic, the judges of the SBS Studbook based their decisions on approving breeding stallions on the fundamental criteria of the amplitude of the gallop ('Große gallopade' as observed by Alwin Schokemöhle even before giving his opinion on jumping ability), strength, and responsiveness, to name the most important elements. This is how the pillars of SBS breeding were discovered, often at a very young age:

Kashmir van Schuttershof, Vigo d'Arsoilles, Ogano and Ugano Sitte and so many others...

The progression was so spectacular that the number of products from these sires (and their descendants) that were registered in neighboring studbooks very quickly exceeded the SBS collection itself!

At the same time, using new reproductive techniques, SBS breeders resorted to outcrossing, a choice respected and even viewed positively by those responsible for the SBS Studbook.

Because, for the SBS Studbook, a policy of absolute openness is essential. It has even become a state of mind that manifests itself in all areas: genetic, regulatory, and administrative, but above all relational. It not only allows you to listen to the wishes of breeders and stallions, but above all to adapt quickly if necessary.

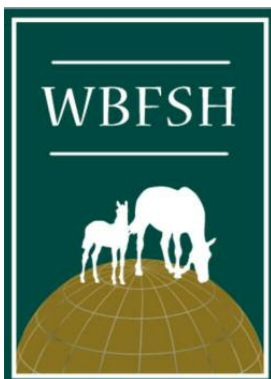
Very modestly, always looking for the 'short circuit' and financially affordable solutions, the SBS Studbook was a pioneer in many fields. For example, the free jumping events for two-year-old foals and fillies – completely ignored and even disparaged in the past – were initiated by our SBS breeders.

Another asset is that the riders of young horses have always been numerous, and they've never stopped improving their riding and... business skills. Of course, a privileged geographical location, at the heart of the European sport horse, has helped them.

And, as one of our breeders rightly pointed out, "Breeding is a passion. You might as well live it intensely."

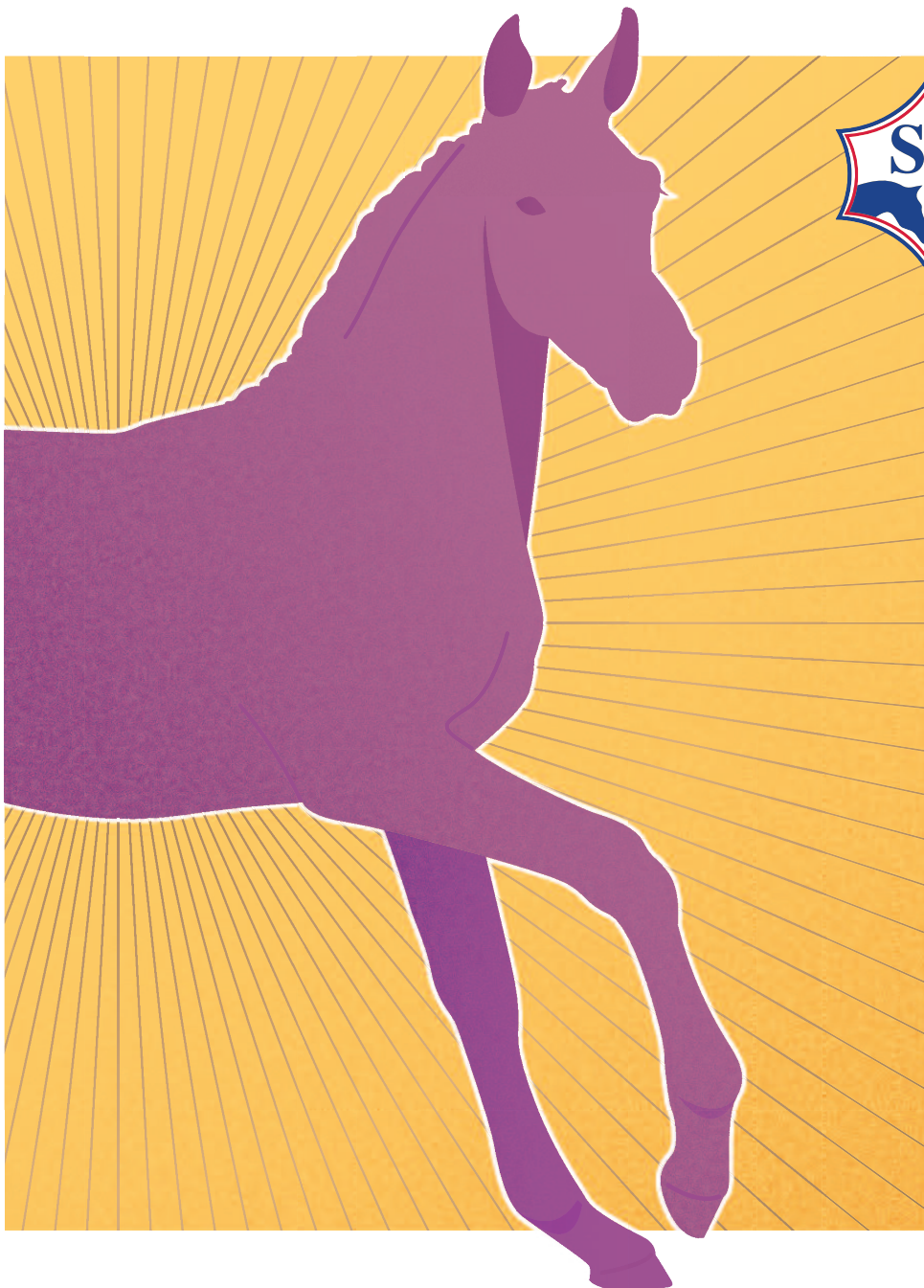
Dr. Marc Pierson
Secretary General
SBS Studbook

(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.)



Stud-Book Selle Français organizes
FROM 4TH TO 5TH SEPTEMBER 2020

Normandie Horse Show



Saint-Lô

THE FOALS CHAMPIONSHIP

BRIEFS

Young stallion sets top price as corona-induced alternative sale channels increase previous year's result: For the fourth time in 2020, bidding for the youngest Hanoverians reached an average price of €8,514 when 18 dressage foals found buyers from six countries. The solid price structure provided four hammer prices above €10,000, with price leader Force Majeure (Franco Nero x San Amour I) finding a new owner in the United States for €23,000. This Franziskus grandson represented the first generation from Franco Nero, and was bred by Stephan Herrmann from Northheim. Herrmann, in fact, delivered the most expensive auction foal in Verden to date in 2017, with Force Majeur's dam, the state premium mare A Speciality for You. The first four online auctions with a total of 82 foals were created at short notice as a result of the coronavirus. Compared to the previous year, both the average price and the volume of sales will likely increase overall in 2020 as the average price for the first four online foal auctions is €9,088 (€7,197 in May 2019), with a total turnover of €745,250 (previously €547,000). Around 100 online auction foals will be in Verden on August 8/9, although a limited number of pre-registered prospective buyers will be able to take a live look at the youngsters in Verden, complying with appropriate distancing, of course. Places will be limited, and pre-registration confirmation from the Hannoveraner Verband is obligatory. (Photo: Hanoverian Association)



Force Majeure (Franco Nero x San Amour I)

The catalogue of 17 foals predispositioned for jumping from the online auction in Westphalia was well received by customers and achieved an average price of €8,150. The top price was delivered by Dakino (Dominator Z), with a knock-down price of €12,000, and six foals were sold abroad. Bred and consigned by Günter Cottaues from Erfstadt, Dakino descends from a damline that was very successful in sport, as his grandmother was competitive in classes up to 1m60, and the bidding duel ended successfully for an international showjumper. Previously, a daughter of Dominator Z led the price stakes for fillies at the first online auction for foals predispositioned for jumping at the Westfälisches Pferdestammbuch e.V. at the beginning of May. The second most popular foal was lot #10, Karnevalist (bred and consigned by Peter Kersting, Delbrück). The Kannan x Monte Bellini son was knocked down to a loyal Bavarian customer for €10,500. Two further fillies achieved prices of €10,000. Cornetta Blue (Cornet Obolensky x Armitage) comes from the studfarm of Heiko Oltmanns and is closely related to Cornet Blue – a top-price settee at the first online auction for jumping predispositioned foals. Another Cornet Obolensky daughter at €10,000, out of a Cassini I dam, C'est la vie (bred by Pferdezucht Blüggel GbR, consigned by Julia Frydlyng) will soon begin her journey to Mexico. (Photo: Guido Recki)



RIP Contucci (Caprimond), 1993-2010: Hilltop Farm sadly shared the news of Contucci's passing last Friday. The great stallion lived a wonderful 27 years, with 22 of them spent at Hilltop. Contucci (Caprimond x Lungau) was bred in Germany by Klaus Storbeck and won the dressage portion of his 100-Day Test with an impressive 147.11 points. He was purchased by Jane MacElree in 1998 and has been a cornerstone of the Hilltop Farm stallion roster ever since. Contucci's impact on North American breeding has been significant. His accolades include the titles USEF Dressage Breeding Sire of the Year and USEF Dressage Sire of the Year, and he has been consistently ranked in the Top 10 of the USEF Sire Rankings for the past five years. Contucci proved time and again

his ability to sire winning offspring at every level, including producing performance champions. He has sired licensed stallions and many premium/elite mares and his influence on US dressage breeding will be felt for generations to come. Contucci's character endeared him to everyone who had the pleasure of working with him over his many years at Hilltop. He was truly a great one. (Photo: Alix Coleman)

The Swedish Warmblood Association is on track for the Swedish young horse championships in dressage, jumping and eventing; SWB Equestrian Weeks in September/October. The current Covid-19 situation with a limit on international travel especially, and a limit on crowds greater than 50 people, puts a damper on the two popular Elite Foal Auctions traditionally taking place during the championships. Enter the digital Elite Foal Auction! The selection of foals will take place during the month of August with the experienced duo Johan Ivarson and Andreas Jönsson at the helm. They will travel extensively through Sweden and seek out the stars of tomorrow joined by a video/photography team. There will be two collections of foals: one dressage and one jumping collection. "An online auction cannot compare to a live auction," says Helén Uddefors, CEO of SWB. "However, I believe this creates a unique opportunity to widen the exposure of our foals internationally which is something that has been a request from our breeders for some time now. Our breeders are ambitious and creative in using the absolute best bloodlines in combination with the Swedish breeding philosophy which should attract buyers from the international scene." The dressage foal collection will be online September 23-27 (SWB Equestrian Weeks Dressage) and the jumping collection will be online September 30-October 4 (SWB Equestrian Weeks Jumping). **H.B.**

The future! Where is sport horse breeding going?

BY CELIA CLARKE

Part III in our series: The Past, Present, and Future of Warmblood breeding poses the same fundamental questions to renowned experts representing a diverse range of interests and knowledge within the sport horse industry. Questions that are uppermost in many peoples' minds, especially given the unprecedented challenges the world is facing in 2020 with the Covid-19 crisis.

At this current moment in time, while some countries are gradually able to ease their lock-downs, others are confronting new breakouts in the pandemic, especially in the southern half of the United States, and the economic fall-out of the past months will have a far-reaching and perhaps unpredictable impact.

Earlier this year, some countries were already facing their own uncertainties with the oil-industry crisis, then being confronted with the coronavirus hot on its heels. However, the sport horse breeding industry has faced challenges in the past, and its players have certainly weathered more than their fair share of global storms. So, what does the future hold for the sport horse breeding industry over the next, five, 10, 15

years...? This article endeavours to provide thought-provoking and meaningful responses head on!

(Our respondents answers appear in alphabetical order, and are colour coded for ease of recognition. Where initials do not appear, it indicates that a respondent declined to answer a particular question for reasons of knowledge or expertise.)



Celia Clarke



DR. EVA MARIA BROOMER is a director of British Breeding, overseeing the equine programmes formerly run by the British Equestrian Federation, including a national foal and young horse evaluation series for sport horses and ponies. She also provides PR and consultancy services to the Anglo European Studbook (AES) and other clients in the breeding industry. Of German nationality, Eva was educated at Oxford University and earned her PhD from the University of Manchester. She currently holds a research Fellowship at Cardiff University and an Honorary Research Fellow position at John Rylands Research Institute in Manchester.

EMB



SIMON COOPER has worked in the UK, Hong Kong and New Zealand in senior level administrative, corporate governance and communication roles, predominantly within horseracing-related businesses. He has been Director of the General Studbook and company secretary of Weatherbys since 2016. His international roles include vice-chairman, International Stud Book Committee, and Member of Executive Council, International Federation of Horseracing Authorities. Previously Simon worked for New Zealand Thoroughbred Racing Inc (12 years), for Attheraces PLC in London (three years) and previously as Corporate Affairs Secretary and Head of the International Department at the Hong Kong Jockey Club (eight years). Simon is a Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Secretaries and Administrators (FCIS) and has a Diploma in Business Administration from Henley Business School.

SC



ANDRIES VAN DAALEN is Chairman of the Board of the KWPN. During his working life he has held various commercial positions at Vroom & Dreesmann and Wehkamp, among others. As a board member at Wehkamp, he contributed to the successful transition from mail-order company to on-line retailer. Between 2010 and 2016, he was director of RFS Holland Holding (the mother company of Wehkamp) and responsible for the construction of the largest automated e-commerce warehouse in the world in Zwolle. After the successful completion of this project in 2016, his active working life career ended. In the period from 1998 to 2006 he was a councillor and group chairman of a political party on the North Eastern polder council, and he also held various administrative positions. Regarding his commitment to the KWPN, from 2013 to 2016 he was chairman of the KWPN region of Flevoland. From 2016 he was chairman of the KWPN region of Overijssel and member of the Council of Members. In December 2017 he joined the KWPN board as chairman. His commitment to the KWPN stems from the fact that so many breeders, owners, enthusiasts and users have a passion for the KWPN horse and the KWPN is an association of and for her members. In addition to his work for the KWPN, Andries is chairman of the ZwolleFonds Foundation, the entrepreneurial fund for 650 entrepreneurs in the city centre of Zwolle, vice-chairman of the Supervisory Board of Deltion College (with over 17,000 students and 200 training courses in Zwolle), and a speaker at various international and national equestrian events.

AvD



JIM FLANAGAN's professional career has mostly been as a technical/professional/administrator in the public sector in Ireland. His work has included particular involvement in horses having chaired a National Advisory Committee and being nominated by the Irish Sporthorse Studbook as a Vice-President of the WBFSH for many years. Jim was President of EAAP (the European Federation of Animal Science) from 2004-2008. Headquartered in Rome, Italy, EAAP is an international non-governmental organization which aims to improve the knowledge and the dissemination of research results of domestic animals in farming.

JF



INGVAR FREDRICSON was a researcher in equine biomechanics from 1965 to 1983. During this time he also became the leader of an international racetrack improvement program and was then appointed CEO of the Flyinge Foundation of Breeding and Sports, a post he held until 1998. He became a Member of the Royal Swedish Academy of Agriculture and Forestry in 1991 and was made an Honorary member of the World Breeding Federation of Sport Horses in 2010. He was also awarded the Swedish Equestrian Federation's Honorary Plaque in Gold in 2019. He was aided in his contribution by his two sons Jens and Peder who are both well-known showjumpers.

IF



JOS MOTTERSHEAD has been involved in the breeding industry for almost 40 years. Together with his wife, Kathy, Jos lives in Oklahoma where he operates the education, consulting and breeding businesses Equine-Reproduction.com and Avalon Equine. He is also a past president and former long-time board member of the Canadian Sport Horse Association.

JM

THE QUESTIONS

(Respondents appear in alphabetical order)

1. What do you think will be the main development(s) in competitive equestrian sport in the next five, 10 and 15 years?

EMB One of the biggest challenges will be posed by the public perception of the sport and the importance to maintain the 'social licence to operate'. We must not dismiss and need to be prepared to respond positively to the question why we think it is ethically justified to ride horses and breed horses for this purpose.

SC Technology – for identity, traceability, health and welfare. Paper ID and traceability will no longer be acceptable in the face of fraud, disease control, and movement.

AvD In my opinion, animal welfare is becoming increasingly more important. Therefore, jumping courses won't get higher – but they'll get more technical. And in dressage, the movements won't become more complex; but harmony will continue to gain importance. This also requires suitable horses: healthy athletes with natural talent for the sport and a willing character.

JF Over the 15 year period: Increasing concern for the welfare of the horse and small changes to competition rules to reflect this;

- Five Years: Will be dominated by modification to competitions to cope with Covid19 .
- 10 years: Commercial sponsorship will be the dominant factor in maintaining competitions.
- 15 years: Competitive equestrian sport will be strongly influenced by a relatively small number of the large horse breeding/production enterprises.

IF A dangerous pandemic virus is spreading wildly over the world and nobody knows when it will be under control. Therefore, it is of course impossible to know how fast equestrian sport will recover. However, I think the interest in equine sports, in all disciplines and at different levels, will recover post Corona and further develop, leading to a huge demand for top-class horses, trainers, and well-organized horse shows. In addition, it will be very important that ordinary people will have possibilities to compete without spending a fortune.

JM I believe we will see an increase in animal welfare in sport. In most ways this is good and to be encouraged, but it may also become over-riding to the detriment of some sports with pressure from extremists. Racing over fences is

already threatened in Australia and that will be likely to spread. This may then carry over into other non-racing competitions such as eventing, which is a concern. It is to be hoped that the pendulum will swing and a healthy balance will be met. The positive aspects will be pressure to improve the various areas of sports which have posed an actual or perceived threat to the animals. In racing, improved racing surfaces where turf is not used; in eventing, greater development of safer jumps including the way they are set up and introduced to the horse, and an overall greater awareness of the need for better fitness and suitability of horse and rider – 'horses for courses'.

It's also quite possible that we will see an increase in 'stadium eventing', which to my mind is even further away from 'traditional eventing' than the short format was from the long format, and should essentially be considered a different sport and not a substitute. Generally, however, the welfare aspect will improve and be positive, but there is a danger of the loss of some sports.



2. Similarly what do you think will be the main developments in breeding science in the next 5, 10 and 15 years?

EMB I believe that ICSI and cloning will become more widely available and will transform the industry similarly to the introduction of AI and subsequently ET procedures. The challenges arising from this will be the impact on genetic diversity, as well as the economic pressures associated with potentially unlimited germinal products from certain stallions via cloning, and the potentially larger number of offspring from individual mares. While we must be prepared to respond to potentially well founded reservations about these innovations, they also have huge potential when it comes to the protection and preservation of endangered breeds.

SC Molecular technology: Recent advancements provide the means of interrogating the equine genome to a granular level, to potentially discover the underlying genetic mechanisms that explain how genetic diversity (and inbreeding) contribute to the manifestation of either enhancing or deleterious type trait features. To compliment this, there is now a range of genetic analysis software tools which enable thorough interpretation of vast datasets.

AvD The increasing use of genetic research and especially the use of DNA information when selecting horses. Health has always been an important part of the KWPN breeding goal; it's an important condition for a happy athlete. That's why we've been investing in DNA research for years, for example, into the inheritance of osteochondrosis (OCD). Osteochondrosis can cause pain and lameness, so reducing OCD is very important in terms of sustainability and well-being. That's why, in 2016, we

introduced the genome breeding value for osteochondrosis, which shows the genetic predisposition of the horse relative to the current KWPN population.

In addition, we're conducting further research into the possibilities of genome selection on other traits. In other animal species this has already made an important contribution to their respective breeding programs and is certainly also possible for horses. We're looking further into the possibilities for sport-related traits such as rideability, jumping- and movement technique and so on. We've already collected a lot of genotypes (DNA data) and are trying to make this information – as well as information about hereditary disorders – easily available to our breeders.

JF Over the 15 year period: estimation of breeding values for an increasing number of traits including fitness/health traits; application of population genetic procedures to include increasing number of traits in the breeding objective; a steady increase in the use of embryo transfer as a way of getting multiple progeny from the best mares will be facilitated by improvements in technologies and reducing cost; increasing “efficiency” in the use of semen where several progeny from a single semen straw will become more and more the norm – giving significant issues for stallion owners.

- Five years: Good progress in the calculation and publication of international breeding values for the more important performance traits.
- 10 years: Breeding values for multiple traits will be available and used by breeders to produce fitter and more balanced horses to meet the various markets.
- 15 years: Use of international breeding values will be the norm in horses as for cattle at present.

IF The demand for high quality sport horses will remain leading to increased specialization for jumping and dressage world-wide.

JM We are already seeing an increase in the use of ICSI and to a slightly lesser extent, nuclear transfer (cloning). I believe the techniques associated with these processes will improve, and in concert with that we will see an increase in practitioners, resulting in a lowering of costs and more widespread usage.

Cooled transported semen is now widely used, but is subject to limitations as a result of comparatively short duration of viability (~2 days). There is already work out of Australia underway to develop a semen extender which will prolong sperm viability up to seven days (it is believed it may be released this autumn). This would revolutionise the use of transported cooled semen, allowing transport between distant continents which currently is only practical to achieve with frozen semen. It would even make domestic breeding easier. Typically, semen extenders will not ‘work’ for all stallions – a

pre-season evaluation in different extenders is required each year to determine the best for the individual – so although this is the start ‘of something big’, there will undoubtedly need to be more work and development in the future.

Frozen semen too will advance. In the last 15 years we have seen an increase in the use of different penetrating cryoprotectants, usurping the role of Glycerol as the only such component used. Development of other frozen semen extender ingredients and a better understanding of some of the intricacies related to the process will improve the end product further.

From the mare perspective, there is ongoing research related to a better understanding of the mare's reproductive tract's responses to the breeding process, and management of common issues such as persistent mating-induced endometritis which has a significant impact in particular when breeding older mares. We are going to also see a reduction in use of antibiotics in the reproductive process, which in many cases have the potential to impact other species with antibiotic resistance. The southern hemisphere is already ahead of much of the western hemisphere (in particular the USA) in its thought processes on this subject. To achieve this but to still maintain and improve pregnancy rates in pathogenically-affected problem mares, suitable antibacterial and antimycotic products will be developed (there are already some in use) and become ‘standard practice’ for dealing with such issues.

The ability of genetic modification during the nuclear transfer (‘cloning’) process may open some interesting doors, particularly as a better understanding of the equine genome is developed. The ability to “turn off” certain potentially undesirable markers - such as one for fragile foal syndrome or OCD - has tremendous implications. It does however also come with as yet unknown risks - are there other factors associated with such undesirable markers which may in fact be desirable. One such example is HYPP in the Quarter Horse - a clearly undesirable condition in the performance animal, but the resulting muscle tremors created a greater muscle mass in the halter animal, which was a desirable trait which was what caused the genetic condition to become so widespread before recognition. As the genome becomes more fully understood, the prospect of producing a ‘custom animal’ to the n'th degree becomes quite likely.

Science is already working hard in many of these areas, but connecting science with the end user and breeder can sometimes be difficult to achieve. In this regard, the Internet has helped greatly, however it can also achieve a wider proliferation of “old wife's tales” and plain incorrect information, so development of reliable sources will continue to be important!



3. How do you see these factors affecting the structure of the breeding industry nationally and internationally, particularly the role and strength of the studbooks, the WBFSH, WHIRDEC and the FEI studbook-based championships?

EMB These challenges and opportunities are global, and therefore require global cooperation and an agreement among studbooks to respect each other, and to act fairly and transparently to create a level playing field, centred on the benefit of the horse and with the protection of the breeders in mind.

SC For breeding management strategies, genomic traits (particularly around inbreeding) can be now established at an individual level, ranging from an average estimate across an individual horse genome to identifying genomic regions within an individual horse genome that display higher levels of inbreeding to comparative individuals/breeds (Runs of Homozygosity – ROH).

AvD I think we have a role-model function and so do our championships for young horses. Therefore, we don't ask too much of young horses but appreciate their natural talent and harmony. In addition, I'd like to emphasize the importance of cooperation between studbooks and the benefits that'll bring to our members. Consider sharing sport data, information about breeding stallions and coordinating the approval or recognition system. I think there's much to be gained through collaboration by which it's perfectly possible to maintain one's own identity.

JF a. The structure of the breeding industry will become more concentrated in a smaller number of larger breeding enterprises.

b. Differences between 'breeds' will become more 'blurred' and studbooks will struggle to maintain and retain the 'uniqueness' of their breeds.

c. Life will become much more competitive for studbooks and I expect some significant studbook mergers.

d. The WBFSH will have to become a more efficient organisation with a smaller number of members, but these will be larger in size. It is likely to remain as the overarching international representative body of the sport horse breeding sector and provide more services to its member studbooks, to individual breeders through its members and to horse sectors not specifically aligned to individual studbooks.

e. WHIRDEC is likely to survive but it will need to be more focussed on specific questions it addresses and more efficient in coming up with recommendations.

f. FEI studbook based championships are likely to retain their current popularity as important international events in identifying and recognising the best young horses and their studbooks.

IF All stud books must cooperate better internationally to, among many other things, fulfil the INTERSTALLION idea. The market of fresh transported and frozen semen must be more transparent, especially to make frozen semen more used. Various reproductive methods need therefore to be internationally compared statistically. In general, the cooperation between scientific research and equestrian sports and breeding must increase.

JM Recordation of bloodlines has been recognised as important for a long time now, and some of the newer reproductive methods make it more so. 'Cloning' has been a matter of contention with some for many years since the first cloned equids (mules) arrived back in 2003. In other areas (notably polo), the technique has been embraced. The registries which have resisted registration have, however, increased the risk of compromise of their studbooks, as offspring of a cloned male will carry the same DNA as the offspring of the cloning donor, making differentiation impossible. If there is no avenue for registration of the cloned animal, there is an increase in temptation to register incorrectly as sired by the donor and not the clone. Cloning is here to stay - like it or not - so accommodation should be made to achieve accurate record-keeping.

The 'elephant in the room' which causes much rolling of eyes and animated discussion in some circles of course is the Jockey Club's refusal to register products of AI. Going back to my comments above about an increase in animal welfare and the development of semen extenders with significantly longer viability, it will become more difficult for this august group to continue to justify such practices as dual-hemisphere 'shuttling' of the animal, and causing stallions to live cover as many as 300 (or more) mares a year.



4. How do you think will these factors will affect: (i) the selection and choice of breeding stock and the variety of genetic choice? and (ii) the ability of breeders and Studbooks to fulfil the requirements of owners, riders and trainers throughout all levels of sport, from the leisure rider right through to the elite competitor?

EMB Genetic diversity continues to be a concern, and one could consider that innovation in reproduction technologies could lead to further narrowing of the gene pool. However, both cloning and ICSI could on the contrary become a vehicle for diversity, preserving the genetic material of animals that have been gelded, for example, or may be lost for other reasons, and permitting the breeding and creation of offspring from mares who may not have been able to reproduce otherwise. It is up to us to handle existing and future technological innovations responsibly and turn them into a force for good. The need to balance the requirements of the sport and the leisure industry is another interesting topic.

As breeding for the sport is becoming more and more specialised, we need to ask ourselves whether those equines who do not succeed would continue to make suitable animals for the leisure industry, both in terms of physiognomy and temperament.

SC ROH allows for subsequent gene ontology database mining to greater understand potential annotation effects i.e. where regions of inbreeding are identified, are these genomic regions linked to a biological function or trait type and are such inbreeding regions the consequence of selective breeding strategies over several generations. Weatherbys Scientific, for example, is using genome-wide SNP markers (Single Nucleotide Polymorphisms) ranging from ~100s (low density), to ~50K (medium density) to ~670K (high density) SNPs per individual horse and key contributing ancestors could feasibly undergo complete Whole Genome Sequencing (WGS). Commercial price points are reaching a level whereby we could foresee the complete current Thoroughbred population and future foal crops all genotyped using medium to high density genomic technologies.

AvD It's becoming more and more important to breed sport horses that enjoy the work because they have a healthy constitution, functional conformation, talent for what is required of them, and a willing character. The horses, the professional riders and the amateurs enjoy this.

JF i. Advances in breeding technology will increase the intensity of selection with a consequent risk of reducing the genetic variance/diversity and increasing the level of inbreeding with its associated reduction in 'fitness'. However, new breeding technologies will enable the number of traits subject to selection to be increased and to include fitness/health traits as well as performance traits. Thus, it is likely that the sport horse of the future will be a more 'balanced' and robust animal.

ii. There has always been the dilemma in sport horse breeding that the requirements for the elite levels of the sport are not the same as for the majority of leisure horse use. This is likely to remain. Breeders will aspire to breed horses that meet the needs of the elite sector and achieve high prices, and hope that if this does not transpire that their horse will find a buyer in the leisure sector. Inclusion of many more traits in the breeding objective and inclusion of more traits in the genetic evaluation of horses will enable breeders to better meet the needs of all potential customers for their horses.

IF The development of equestrian sports and the demand for top quality sport horses will give the studbooks a new role. Their main task will most probably be to follow the international competitive equestrian sports thoroughly enabling them to give objective advice to their members about suitable mounts for their mares, without any

considerations for the studbooks with who the stallions are registered. The studbooks which are most successful in marketing and selling horses will attract most breeders to their registries.

JM i) The horse breeder tends as a whole – with some exceptions – to be more of a 'spontaneous' rather than 'scientific' breeder when it comes to stock selection. In the bovine world, if a cow or bull has a low pregnancy rate or poor calving rate, it becomes hamburger. In the equine world, if the animal runs fast, jumps high, or looks 'pretty' (whatever that may be), it is a 'problem breeder' and much money is spent trying to replicate those bloodlines – along with potential fertility issues. There is a tendency to breed to the 'latest, greatest' rather than creating a foundation stock. The F1 cross tends to be regarded as more desirable than the F4 or 5 animal. This is in part as a result of an ever-changing competitive world, but is also a reflection of some good marketing tactics. Increased scientific developments and understanding may move the mechanical processes forward, but I am unconvinced that such advances will greatly change the selection processes.

ii) The scientific breeder will have at their disposal a greater variety of techniques for improving everything from genetic selection and management through to the actual production (breeding/pregnancy/foaling/young stock growth) process. These all, however, have to be accepted and embraced and that will never be universal - at least in the span of 5, 10 or 15 years. As most of the studbooks have heavy input from member-breeders – in many cases having that group present on their Boards – there will continue to be resistance to change. Small steps will be made, but acceptance of some advances will not, no matter how potentially valuable they may be. Who would risk money on a bet that the Jockey Club will accept registration of foals produced by AI in 5, 10 or 15 years? Not I – or at least, not very much money!



5. What do you think are the strengths and weaknesses of the current national and international sport horse breeding scene, and how should it develop to turn any threats into opportunities?

EMB One of the biggest challenges is the long term economic viability and sustainability of breeding. Particularly those who breed and raise their stock responsibly and invest in optimum care to protect welfare are often, and this seems to be the case across different countries, making a loss. Bearing in mind that equestrianism overall is facing increasing public scrutiny, and bearing in mind that we want good breeders to continue to breed good horses, as good practice is vital to the long term viability of the studbooks and to genetic diversity, we need to ask ourselves how we can protect and promote these breeders. By thinking of ways to

reward excellence in the areas of welfare and responsible breeding, studbooks may be able to direct resources where they can be a force that safeguards the future of breeding and the sport.

AvD As the equestrian sector, we're too inward looking. To create support for our sport, we need to tell the outside world – the people who are not familiar with horses – and show them what we do, how we do it, and why we do it that way. We're currently not sufficiently communicating how much we enjoy equestrian sport and breeding; our passion for and dedication to it; and what we do for our valued partner in this branch of sport: our beloved sport horse. Ignorance breeds intolerance, so this is still an important task for everyone in the equestrian world.

JF Strengths: A large number of relatively small 'dedicated' breeders that help, inter alia, to retain diversity. Breeding sport horses in many instances is more a hobby than a strictly commercial activity, and is unlikely to be dependent on financial returns.

Weaknesses: Inadequate financial return from breeding activities; and the tendency for breeding to be more concentrated in larger, more commercial operations.

IF Sport horse breeding is international already today and will be even more so in the future. Therefore, studbooks need to be reorganized.

JM Strengths: Availability of top bloodlines from all corners of the world.

Weakness: Availability of top bloodlines from all corners of the world! This leads to ignoring those same top bloodlines which are available domestically. Support your local breeders.

"The grass is greener on the other side of the fence" – it's seen everywhere. Support of a domestic market strengthens that market. Of course, periodic introduction of new bloodlines is essential to prevent stagnation or in-breeding, but there is a strong tendency in breeders of many breeds or registries – and particularly the Warmblood/sport horse – to look overseas for semen sources, youngstock, or even animals of a competitive age. Each and every major producing country has their own excellent sources, which should be better supported and utilised by that country's own breeders, trainers and riders.



6. Overall, how positive is your view of where the industry will be in five, 10 and 15 years and why?

EMB I feel overall optimistic about the future. We are certainly facing challenges as an industry, but to me those challenges are above all an opportunity to grow and innovate and become better at promoting equine welfare and genetic

diversity. In the short and medium term, we will see transformation driven by innovation in reproduction technologies and by the welfare challenge. This will be seen as threatening by some, but as an opportunity by others. In the long term, however, provided we approach these changes with positivity and see them as an opportunity for improvement and growth, I am optimistic we can emerge stronger.

SC We will be in a better place! More knowledge through more agile and clever technology will give us a greater knowledge of what we are doing right and, more importantly, what we are doing wrong for the integrity, health and welfare of equine breeds.

AvD I am quite positive that sport horse breeding and equestrian sport will be in a good position over the next 15 years. People generally like horses and horse-related activities. Horses will be involved in many ways in the lives of people – elite international competitions will be important but only a small part of the overall horse scene.

IF Urbanized people often look back to nature and other soft values. The equine family offers much of this. The serious environmental situation of the world will affect every sector of the society, such as economy, attitudes towards people, and a lot more. However, equestrian sports have for a long period been increasingly popular in Sweden and many other wealthy countries and will probably remain so. In my opinion, the equestrian sport, at all levels, probably also will have a good future in the not so rich countries, as well.

JM "There is something about the outside of a horse that is good for the inside of a man." It's an addiction. Consequently, the industry will still be plugging along in 5, 10 and 15 years unless some outside force comes along to prevent it.



7. Is there anything else you would like to add about the future of the industry as a whole and/or as it will affect individual countries, studbooks and breeders?

SC The greatest threat, to my mind is allowing technology to 'interfere' with the equine, such as cloning (see below – clone from a clone and a clone!) and gene-editing and sexing semen. For example, nature ensures that the division of the Thoroughbred foal crop globally is 50% colts and 50% fillies give or take 1-2% variance. All of these technologies are interfering with the natural order. Gene-doping, for example, will endanger the integrity of equine sport. The worst-case scenario of gene doping will happen at the breeding stage, by modifying eggs, sperm, and embryos. If this happens, it could have a major impact on the whole future of horse sports.

The second scenario is if this was triggered by genetic medication, it would have possibilities to create genetically modified horses in the next generation. Detecting genetically modified horses needs more study, more time, and more resources. Gene doping is not a rumour anymore.

IF Here, I would like to point out an economically huge, economically strong, and mostly ignored group of buyers. It comprises riders who would love to take up riding again at the end of a long and successful family and business career. Many would buy high-status pleasure horses especially bred and reared for them. These horses must be smart, elegant, safe (older people are afraid of getting hurt), and durable. In addition, it should have good self-balance, soft medium-sized gaits, and medium but honest jumping ability, making it a pleasure to ride. Let us hope that some studbooks will also add 'pleasure' into their breeding goals in addition to specialization for dressage and jumping. In my opinion there are thousands and thousands of wealthy buyers in the world waiting these high-status pleasure horses.

JM I've probably already said enough to ruffle more than a few feathers!! :))

Some concluding thoughts

So there we have it.... In both of the two previous parts of this article, it has been clear that the Warmblood and sport horse breeding industry does not operate in isolation from the influences made on it by the outside world, so what sort of influences will it be subjected to over the next 15 years? An impressive range of well thought out and well-informed responses based upon experience of a wide range of studbooks across many countries (including – but not limited to – Australia, Canada, Germany, Ireland, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Sweden, the UK and the USA), and more years of practical experience of the breeding industry than we care to count have tried to address the questioned issues. We are certainly very grateful for all of the contributions made by the panel. Thankfully the overall opinion seems to be that our industry will survive at least the next 15 years – albeit possibly in a somewhat different form from now – but that in doing so it will face considerable challenges.

The current economic, social, and legal threat of Covid-19 is, of course a given, but we must not forget, when planning our own species' journey, that the equine population is facing an increasing threat from various forms of biosecurity risk (the northerly spread of West Nile Virus and African Horse Sickness being but two of the most easily identifiable) as well a worrying tendency to such genetic issues as Warmblood Fragile Foal Syndrome.

All this makes the need for united action across all sectors of our industry – from international organisations such as the WBFSH and WHIRDEC (see the contribution by Jim Flanagan), through national federations and studbooks

to individual breeders, owners, riders, trainers, and veterinary surgeons – to ensure that careful and informed use of the latest breeding technology strengthens (rather than weakens) the genetic strength and fitness for purpose of the breeding herd (as stressed by Simon Cooper). However, this must be done tactfully as it needs to address some contradictory pressures. These include the need for both more specialist animals for high class sport and for more generally laid back all-round less demanding horses for the ever increasing leisure market.

Allied with the increasing use of popular and successful competition stallions not necessarily from proven bloodlines (as highlighted by Jos Mottershead) and the increasing tendency to clone successful geldings – including some championship winners, precisely because they were gelded having shown unsuitable temperaments for competition when entire, or would have already been deemed unfit for breeding by experienced grading judges because of conformational faults or undesirable pedigrees – this is a potential genetic minefield as several panel members point out. On the other hand, such an increasing leisure market might well expand into previously untested waters (such as the possibility of breeding horses designed to meet the specific needs of the older/returning rider as suggested by Ingvar 'Fredric' Fredricson, so all is not lost.

Above all, though, in all of this, we have to bear in mind the needs and welfare of the horse. With the increasing exposure of our sport to public scrutiny – not only through television broadcasts but also through every kind of social media – and a much wider viewing audience which is often made up of non-participant and not particularly well-informed members of the public, we must all do everything we can to ensure that everyone in the industry – from the breeder through to the rider and trainer (and not forgetting the national and international bodies by whom we are all governed), that we not compromise our 'social licence to operate' as highlighted by Andries van Daalen and Eva-Maria Broomer. Therefore, we must all do everything we can to ensure that changes in format (as a possible shift from short-course to stadium eventing, and the reducing of team member numbers to avoid drop scores) and related issues cannot be seen as in any way damaging the horse. After all, unlike flat racing, Olympic equestrian competitions are ultimately meant to demonstrate and test rider competence and should not become exhaustive, and exhausting tests of equine endurance under stress.

It would be interesting to address these issues again in five, 10 and 15 years' time to see if this 'time capsule' of an article has held true over the intervening period, so perhaps someone will take that task on in due course. And of course, if we ask similar – but slightly amended – questions to riders, trainers and official representatives of the Olympic disciplines even now we might well get different answers and a different emphasis. Perhaps we will do that in the near future....

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Choosing the right partners is vital for a good marriage!

BY ADRIEN CUGNASSE / ANAA

PHOTOGRAPHY: HERVÉ DELAROUQUE, CEDRIC VLEMMINGS, ANAIS LEVÉ, PETER LLEWELLYN

In a good crossing everything is important. There is in particular the physical complementarity of the two parents. But that's a horseman's thing that no one can theorize. For everyone else, breeders of sport horses have a lot to learn from their racing friends.

Passionate about racing and breeding, Hubert de Rochembeau was a teacher-researcher before working on the genetic improvement of animals at INRA (the French national institute for agronomic research). In a series of articles published by the daily *Jour de Galop*, we asked him questions about selection. In his responses, he referred in particular to the work of the American Joseph E. Estes. The latter is at the origin of the founding concept of many large Thoroughbred breedings of our time: The performances are more reliable than the

pedigree. Estes has conducted long-term statistical studies, trying to determine the recurring elements in the best American racehorses. In his book *The Estes formula for breeding stakes winners*, chapter four is entitled 'Select for Merit, not for Pedigree'. At the beginning of this chapter, J.E. Estes quotes the great American geneticist Jay L. Lush: "Selection on pedigrees is only a means to accessorize complete selection by performances. It allows decisions to be made for individuals who have equivalent individual merit.



If today we measure the positive influence of Ryon d'Anzex on the Anglo-Arab studbook, we must also remember the relative weakness of the pedigree of this very good competition horse. This is also the case for Galoubet A (Almé), Clinton (Corrado I), and Diamant de Semilly (Le Tôt de Semilly). This means that the first sort must be done on performance, the pedigree comes next, and the model in a third step. A horse that has competed at a good level or, even better, who has produced subjects of this calibre, has qualities to transmit, and the health and the mind to perform well in competition.

Conversely, how many stallion-class winners have become good competition horses and great stallions since the 1990s? Almost none! No one can say with confidence that a three-year-old will become a very good competition horse. Studbooks that have a large number of births can afford to sacrifice part of their workforce by encouraging breeders to use very young stallions. This is especially a question of trade. But with regard to the Anglo-Arab, given the scarcity of its numbers, it must preserve its rare births as much as possible by encouraging breeders to use proven stallions as breeders. Or where appropriate, those who have at least proven their ability to perform at a high level.

From Tesio to Ryan des Hayettes.

The selection of sport horses is relatively recent in terms of the history of breeding. It started in the 1960s and can be considered to have really been launched with the first performing stallions in the 1980s. Four decades of decline is not much, but is still a lot.



Potter du Manaou

In racing we can consider that selection really took off in 1780 with the creation of the Epsom Derby, the test of selection of males par excellence. Racing breeders, therefore, have seen a much larger decline than their equivalent in sport. Whichever breed you breed, it's always good to learn from the best.

Federico Tesio is considered the largest breeder in the history of the Thoroughbred. Installed in the north of Italy, he cumulated the handicaps: an eccentricity compared to the big European centres of the time, and with relatively limited financial means compared to the major stables of that era. And yet, at the time of his death in 1954, he was recognized as the greatest. Even by the English who tend to view with suspicion any non-English speaking breeder or trainer.

A good 10 books are devoted to him, not counting translations and re-editions. And for good reason. We owe him in particular (and among others) for two champions who have become legendary international stallions, Ribot (double winner of the Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe), and Nearco (the grandfather of Northern Dancer).

Tesio trained his own production for a long time, which he knew perfectly well, and his strength came from the fact that he never stopped improving as a breeder. But he made many mistakes early in his breeding career. His knowledge of pedigrees was impeccable and those who knew him attest to a permanent questioning. One of his quotes became famous: "The Thoroughbred exists because its selection is based not on experts, technicians or zootechnicians, but on a piece of wood: the finish post of the Epsom Derby."

If this sentence is transposed to equestrian sports, it can be translated as follows: The quality of the selection does not pass the verdict of breeding competitions or stallion certification juries. It depends entirely on high level performance in horse racing.

Yves Lauwers' success

Yves Lauwers is certainly one of the breeders who has obtained the best results in France in terms of the ratio of high level winners/number of births. In an interview he gave to us a few months ago, the man from the stud farm at Les Hayettes explained this: "There are no rules for crossbreeding, except to use horses that have jumped at a good level while coming from lines having produced quality horses. Besides, now, I only use mares that have jumped at 1m50 or more, or who have produced at this level. From time to time there are miracles, but at a high level horses with poor pedigree are now very rare. From the start, I was well advised by François Mathy who told me to orient myself towards mares that had proven themselves in competition. With Ryan des Hayettes (Hugo Gesmeray x Ryon from Anzex), the result is almost beyond our expectations."

The ideal is, therefore, to use confirmed stallions, who give a high percentage of winners and who have proven their ability to improve sporting mares to whom they are bred. The day a stallion has products on the track, you can erase

his pedigree or his performances: all that matters is the detailed observation of his production, what he transmits... Or what he doesn't transmit! And the same goes for mares. It does not matter that they produce champions in conformation or gaits, if the sporting quality is not there, it is necessary to pass it by.

Knowing the behaviour, faults, and qualities of the breeders that we use is certainly most important. And this requires constant attention from the breeder who must constantly visualize routes to have in his eye the qualities and faults of the production of such and such a stallion. Taking into account the fact that the females who have competed at a high level are not legion, the breeders must often be satisfied with a well-born mare, potentially damaged or badly valued, by avoiding those that are proven to lack quality.

The Irish Field is the number one Irish breeders' newspaper and, at the end of December, Micheál Orlandi gave a very interesting interview. One can read in particular: "The first question to ask is this: is this family alive, with quality horses consistently, or is it dead? You have to know the kinship of a potential broodmare by heart, in the sense that you have to know everything about her brothers, her sisters, her mother. A detailed investigation must be carried out before making the choice to highlight it. If the mare has already produced and her first foals do not show quality, it is necessary to pass."



Julius du Py (Potter du Manaou)



Ryon d'Anzex ridden by Fernando Fourcade (ESP) – CSI Barcelona, 1995

Prestige Kalone crossing

Bred by Magali Dessalles, Prestige Kalone (Potter du Manaou) tackled the World Cup level this winter with Philippe Rozier where he once again illustrates the very positive impact of Ryon d'Anzex (Massondo) on the Anglo-Arab studbook. Potter du Manaou's sire, Ryon d'Anzex, was not evaluated under the best conditions, so we will never really know what his true level of performance was. But he was an easy, respectful, flexible, generous competition horse with a good gallop and the trajectory inherited from his father. It is this last quality that he was supposed to bring to the very good Blague du Maury (Veloce de Favi) to give Prestige Kalone.

Well-born, Blague du Maury was placed in the 1m35 Grand Prix of Pompadour before taking part in the six-year-old final two weeks later. Not big but stocky, endowed with a remarkable technique, this granddaughter of Yasmine (Daninos) compensated for the somewhat flat model of Potter du Manaou and his technique 'à la Massondo', that is to say, not necessarily always very tidy. The blood of Ryon d'Anzex has a certain affinity with this family, having produced another

very good horse, Poemedamour de Buissy (Ryon d'Anzex), who shone at World Cup level across the Atlantic.

Prestige Kalone presents two very interesting inbreedings. The first is in 4x3 – in the fourth generation on the paternal side and in third on the maternal side – on Vertu (Vertubleu), an exceptional broodmare who had given several horses of very high level. The second, in a 4x5 on Arlequin (Massondo), a great improver stallion. One of the tricks of the racing breeders is to find the functioning inbreedings. The latter also look for what are called affinities between blood streams. That is to say, the lines whose meeting knows a success greater than normal.

In the past among the Anglo-Arabs, this was the case of the meeting of Nithard (Kesbeth), and with the three brothers Israel (Fantaisiste II and Lonlaine), Xylene (Joker VIII and Lonlaine), and Hylene (Fantaisiste II and Lonlaine). In Normandy, we remember the success of Ibrahim (The Last Orange) on the daughters of Ultimate (Umidwar), or more of us with Quidam de Revel (Jalisco B) and the daughters of Grand Veneur (Amour du Bois).



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The crossing of Tempo de Paban and Vadrouille d'Avril

In France, only two horses were born from the cross of Ryon d'Anzex (Massondo) on a daughter of Quatar du Plape (Emir IV). On paper, it is therefore a crossover which hardly exists. It's not entirely a surprise as these two stallions were close contemporaries. On paper we can say that the trajectory, the canter, and the good head of the male line of Ryon of Anzex x Massondo must cross well with the energy and the technique of Quatar de Plape. And in 2019, two examples seem to argue in favor of this assumption: Vadrouille d'Avril (Popayann) and Tempo de Paban (Jarnac). The latter unfortunately had an accident when he had just won an ISO 161 with Olivier Robert.

Before taking his early retirement, he had time to show us that he could take on a World Cup Grand Prix. Small in size, endowed with unusual respect and boundless energy, this pupil of Carmen Delmas Barrere well represents the idea that one has of Anglo-Arabs, knowing that he is an Anglo-Arab crossing. A crossover that was anything but diminishing in his case.

Jarnac (Ryon d'Anzex) brought his means to Huckleberry (Quatar de Plape), a mare who competed in 'B'

classes. This is about the very good family of Adour, that of Olga (Djanor). She also comes from a strain of Adour, that of Resena (Nithard), and ridden by Olivier Robert Vadrouille d'Avril ranked at 1m50 and won a class during the Aachen CHIO. It had been a long time since an Anglo had won a showjumping class in the program of this legendary horse show.

Bred by Claude Joigneau and Elza Bastiaens, Vadrouille d'Avril also represents the Ryon d'Anzex cross on Quatar de Plape. Her mother, Cinnamon d'Avril (Quatar of Plape) was a very good competition mare, performing at 1m40 or even 1m50. Vadrouille d'Avril is also one of the earliest examples of inbreeding on Quatar de Plape, the latter being both his father and his father Popayann (Ryon d'Anzex).

In this article, we have cited three active sons of Ryon d'Anzex: Jarnac, Potter du Manaou and Popayann. In 2019, the total of their three breeding seasons did not exceed 36 Anglo-Arab mares. However, each of them should project at least twice to hope to have an impact on the studbook. Don't they have more to contribute than three-year-olds about whom we know little or nothing? ■



Popayan (Ryon d'Anzex)

Holsteiner Verband first summer 2020 event

BY DÉSIRÉE DANN / HOLSTEINER VERBAND
PHOTOGRAPHY: JANNE BUGTRUP

The weekend of August 13-16 will be dedicated to the Holsteiner horse this year. For the first time the summer auction of riding horses, the elite foal auction, and the sales day will be held on the same date. In addition, the postponed state championships for dressage and jumping horses will also be hosted.

The events will take place at the Verband's facility in Elmshorn. According to managing director, Roland Metz, "We hope to achieve important synergy for clients and exhibitors alike by pooling the appointments. Especially for international buyers the change should be more attractive."

Roland Metz has selected 64 foals for the elite auction, drawing upon ample resources due to a very pleasing volume of registrations. In addition to Holstein's main expertise, jumping horses, there will be a small but nice lot of dressage horses on offer. Well known sires like Escolar, Quaterback, Franziskus or For Romance present typey and great moving promising talents for the dressage arena.

Within the collection of foals with jumping pedigrees customers can choose foals either from well-known and proven sires or from stallions still at the beginning of their breeding careers. Oldenburg's horse expert Gerd Sosath explained why it is important and right to use young stallions, during an interview he gave following the Verband's mare show in Elmshorn. United Way, Cornet's Quaprice, Origi d'O, Manchester van't Paradijs, Crack, Lewine, Corfu de le Vie, or Keaton are so named as examples. And, of course, there are the well established sires like Diamant de Semilly, Colman, Diarado, Caretino,



This typey and modern colt by Diarado x Connor (Rainer Clausen, Horstedt), from Holsteiner line 776, will be part of the foal auction on 15 August

Clarimo, Conthargos, Casall, Van Gogh, and, for instance, Comme il Faut is represented as well.

Those looking for a suitable sport partner ready-to-go can find one on the same day. Hendrik Schulze-Rückamp will auction off 15 Holsteiners at the riding horse auction, all ready for sport. Either a four-year-old youngster or a seven-year old expert, a lot of customers should be able to find the one right for them here. In addition, on Sunday following the auctions the foal sales day will be held. "In previous years numerous foals were sold on this platform of free trade between exhibitors and customers. This year we want to offer this same service again," says Roland Metz. Around 25 Holsteiner foals of various interesting pedigrees will be on offer on the sales day.

The large marketing offer of Holstein's first summer event will be surrounded by an attractive sports program. Due to the corona crisis, the traditional state championships for dressage and jumping horses could not be held during the Holsteiner Horse Days in June, and had to be postponed to the third weekend in August.

Exciting times will be had at Holstein's summer event. ■



Charlie (Colman x Caretino) has already been tested in young horse competitions, and the 6yo gelding will be one of 20 riding horses offered for sale during the summer auction

The place of studbooks at the dressage WBCYH

BY BERNARD MAUREL

PHOTOGRAPHY: FEI/CAREMANS AND PERSONAL COLLECTION

The dressage World Breeding Championships for Young Horses has existed since 1997, and have always been organized at Verden (Germany) then at Ermelo (the Netherlands). In each discipline, it's the countries who breed, select, and prepare sport horses that are concerned with these Championships.

For the dressage specialty, it's mainly Germany and Holland who are fighting to organise it. In these two countries, the number of horses selected is six per generation, four for Denmark and two apiece for the other countries. But the riders are often riding German or Dutch horses, so this means that it's not really a competition between different breeding countries and studbooks...

The Iberian horses have been participating regularly at these Championships, but in the tests there are some extensions required, and these horses, when they are young, are not always talented by nature for lengthening their stride. Effectively, it's logical when selecting sport horses to prioritize the paces and the functioning of the back. Yet the existing exercises in dressage tests and the judging criteria are still orientated on the 'paces'.

To explain this point: Iberian horses generally need two years to learn how to stretch and extend



Maria Caetano (POR) riding Coroado (APSL: Rubi x Xaquiro) into second place during the 2019 FEI Dressage World Cup™, Mechelen (BEL)



Bernard Maurel

'correctly' (without hurrying and without too much help from the rider). Similarly, sport horses [Warmbloods] generally need two years to learn how to evolve on the way to collection, to achieve self-carriage and elevation 'correctly' (without losing elasticity and without being held too much by strong aids). Therefore, it's difficult to propose tests and criteria suitable for all breeds.

Another remark about the lack of universal size for these Championships: they are located in Northern Europe, where travel and costs easily dissuade participation, with the exception of horses being trained by neighbouring professional riders (but they rarely compete in this category because they know it's a risk not to be placed). In general, when horses belonging to other studbooks than the main ones are presented, marks and placings are not always to their benefit.

The evolution of judging is a positive point: the judges are working as a collegiate group, which includes discussions, and follows well adapted FEI directives. At judges' seminars, it's regularly mentioned that judges don't want to see horses whose attitude looks like Grand



Prix horses. Priority is given to correctness of the paces, general suppleness, and quality of contact. Judges are looking to the education of the young horses, following the training scale, at the relevant age. The potential of the young horse is only valued if it functions with harmony and is ridden with fairness.

We have to say that the evolution of selection by the breeders, and the high quality work of the riders and trainers of young horses, allows the best ones to reach a good level in the dressage market.

As far as the results are concerned, every year we see the level of percentages rise. France regularly participates, with improving performances, and keep in mind the bronze medal won in 2007 in the five-year-old age-group by Jessica Michel with Noble Dream.

◆ Would the dressage discipline benefit from more openness?

The current economic system is well organized, and all its stakeholders will answer that everything is fine (increase in the number of entries, increase in percentages...). This leads, on the part of lovers of classic dressage, to a certain rejection of competition (and its excesses) and, on the part of lovers of Iberian breeds, a lack of interest in this competition, to which they sometimes return only with made horses and brilliance in the Grand Prix movements (contingent upon the appropriate riders ...).

◆ Technically, what should be done, and what should be asked from young horses in order that the Iberians can be part of the game ?

A delicate question, like everything related to technique, it would undoubtedly be necessary.

- texts with more exercises focused on the quality of contact, relaxation, the ability to self-carry, adapted for young horses, and less exercises focused on locomotion (the texts are already reasonable, except for the four-year-olds where a horse without a full, natural trot cannot be comfortable – but this test is luckily not considered as an FEI Championship);

- a renewal to keep repeating certain often poorly executed exercises, such as rein back, turning on the haunches, but by describing and preparing them in a different way;

But let's not forget that the arrival of Iberian crossbreds on the market makes the system evolve, and that the economy, especially during this period of sanitary crisis, has a strong impact on these considerations. ■



Who's who among the up-and-coming jumping sires?

BY CHRISTOPHER HECTOR

PHOTOGRAPHY: GCT/GRASSO, FEI/GREGG, PERSONAL COLLECTION

One of the interesting features of this little analysis of some of the more exciting newer stallions on the jumping breeding scene, is the emergence time and again, of the really old foundation stallions. Take the case of Grey Top, among others, currently one of the more popular jumping stallions in Hanover.

For this insight I am indebted to Jens Meyer, a walking encyclopedia of Warmblood mare lines, particularly Hanoverian lines. Jens' father was a Hanoverian breeder before him, and Jens worked for some years at the Hanoverian State Stud, Celle, before setting up his own power-house stallion station at Dorum. It is fascinating to hear him trace our modern sire back to some very, very old lines.

Grey Top

The Celle Stallion, Grey Top (Graf Top I - Silver Dream x Singular Joter) was last year awarded the 'Grande Prize' on the basis of the quality of his progeny. Let Jens tell the tale: "The line of Grey Top is a line I know well. There was a breeder, Mr Fritz Hagemann – he was an old guy out of the thirties – who didn't have enough stalls for all his horses so he kept them in a paddock. And he had an Agram mare,

Akita. It was a funny thing, he drove with a tractor from Celle to Dannenberg, which was 100 kilometres, to get a grey mare, that was his only wish. At the beginning of the sixties it was really popular to have a grey. It was incredible how many successful horses came out of this family. They had no idea about jumping, no one ever saw these horses jumping at the time. But it is incredible how important these old lines are in jumping breeding today."

Agram, by Alkoven I, stood from 1942 until 1962... A descendant of the foundation Thoroughbred, Adeptus, and out of a mare by Amateur who was a descendant of the Shagya Arab stallion, Amurath, who stood at the Celle Stud. Agram was the sire of numerous international jumpers, including Anaconda (Feudal II) with Alwin Schockemöhle and Mary Chapot, and Paul Schockemöhle's Askan (Almhügel III).

"We see that Akita is out of a Holsteiner mare, Libelle. It was not so easy then for Hanoverian breeders to use Holsteiner blood. So, Mr. Hagemann then takes the mare to Gotthard, and the foal was Goldine who was sold as a foal to Mr Melchior.

"Bred to Calypso II, Goldine produces Campanile, who is the mother of Silver Dream, who competed in serious 1m50 classes in Italy. Silver Dream had just one foal, Grey Top, before she went into sport. Grey Top was bred by Emiliano Lonzi, whom I know very well.

"The State Stud bought Grey Top as a foal. It is interesting to me how necessary, at this time, a horse like Grey Top is – he is not a super sport horse, he is a bit slow over the fences, but when you see him with the modern bloodlines – and I have seen many foals by him – how good they are with rideability



Killer Queen VDM (Eldorado vd Zeshoek x For Pleasure) ridden by Daniel Deusser (GER)

and scope. It is really interesting to see, when you have known a family for such a long time, that when a horse and a pedigree needs help it comes through from these old lines. When I compare it to Belgium, they look not for conformation, but Grey Top makes good conformation and that is why it is really necessary to keep those bloodlines.”

Stakkato Gold

Or we can look at the number one jumping sire in Hanover, Stakkato Gold (Stakkato - Wertherroeschen x Werther), who stands at the Sprehe Stud, to see the same influence of the old families and, in particular, Agram again...

JM: “I have had many discussions with Paul Schockemöhle about this, how important it is to keep the old families, but on the other hand, how difficult it is because many of the jumper breeders want to sell foals, and in Germany it is not like Belgium or France where you can sell foals on the pedigree, here you have to have a foal that looks impressive at the foal shows, so there is a danger of losing these families. But when I look at the pedigrees of Grey Top and Stakkato Gold, I am really surprised to see how important they still are.”

Consider the maternal line of Stakkato Gold, and we go back five generations to another mare by Agram, Alsterröschen, and another of those old-style breeders who followed their instincts rather than the whims of fashion.

“The breeder of Alsterröschen was Franz Luth. He was not happy with the stallions at the local Dannenberg station at the time and that is why he bred to Agram – at that time they had big, strong stallions at the station, heavy old-style horses, and he preferred Agram who was a lighter horse. So he said, I will breed Agram to an Agram mare, and everybody says, you are stupid! In the end, the world today must be happy that he has these bloodlines.

“It starts with Algave, she was by Agram out of a mare with just a number, 311516939. Mr Luth bred this mare back to Agram and then came the mare, Alsterrischen. In 1980 she produced Wildrose, by Wienerwald. I was there in 1984 so I knew her as a young horse. She was not a ‘nice’ horse, just six percent Thoroughbred, so Mr Luth took her to Calypso, the first Holsteiner stallion that Dr Bade brought to Celle. I rode Calypso in Celle. He was a Grand Prix jumping winner at that time with Michael Rüping, a really heavy stallion, but he was one of the first we had at Celle who was a competition horse. At that time in the beginning of the 1990s it was really special that he was allowed to use Calypso to breed, but in the end he produced Carmen, a really serious mare. She was a bit plain, dark brown, not special to look at, and again no one tried her in jumping.

“Then comes Mr Kamphorst from the border near Holland and he buys this Calypso mare from Mr Luth. Where he lives is very close to Jos Lansink, so he breeds to Libero. Mr Luth did not have a son to continue the breeding, but it was possible for another breeder like Arend

Kamphorst to keep the lines going in a straight direction.”

And the Libero filly out of Carmen, when bred to Werther, produced Stakkato Gold’s dam... “In the 1990s, Werther was very popular, and with Werther we have the mare lines Marcio xx, Dolman, Amateur, so in the end, we have very old breeding, and with this old breeding, we have a perfect match and produce this shiny horse, Stakkato Gold. It was a shame that he was just ridden by a junior rider, but I thought Stakkato Gold had the talent for the big sport.

“Stakkato Gold is a terrific stallion. He is a bit small in the frame, but has incredible rideability and jumping quality.”

The pick from Paul Schockemöhle’s band

Since Jens mentioned the most influential breeder in the world, Paul Schockemöhle, let’s find out who he nominates as his up-and-coming star, whom he suggests might be Chacfly (Chacco-Blue - Shentara x Sir Shutterfly), one of the younger stallions that stand at Schockemöhle’s establishment:

“He’s a seven-year-old chestnut stallion by Chacco-Blue, the mother by Sir Shutterfly – a full brother to Shutterfly of Meredith Michaels-Beerbaum – so he has quite a lot of blood, and is light, which is always good with the Chacco-Blue blood. He, himself, is very careful, a very good type, quite ‘bloody’. I would say he is on the border of being a little hot, but in a good way.

“He is very ambitious to jump and he has shown this a couple of times. He won quite a lot of small classes when he was five and six. At the moment he is one of the stallions in Germany who is really attractive for the breeders.”

◆ Do you think he will go on to compete in the big sport?

“I hope so. I want to bring some stallions into the sport. I believe it is good that people can see the stallions in sport, then they can judge them better.”

◆ What mare lines do you think Chacfly will work best with?

“I don’t really look at the lines, I look at the horse. Like I said, he’s a blood horse, but he breeds big, nice-legged foals. I wouldn’t breed him to a Thoroughbred type mare.”

Once again, Chacfly is rich in the blood of the stallions that ‘made’ the modern showjumper. He has five crosses of Cor de la Bryère, four of Ramzes AA, three of Ladykiller xx, two of Gotthard, one of Capitol, and even one cross of the great Selle Français, Almé.

Moving to the Netherlands

Continuing on our theme that everything old is new again, we cross the border into the Netherlands and seek out the views of equestrian journalist, breeding expert, and successful breeder, Jenneke Smit.

Smit is one of the most knowledgeable commentators on the Dutch jumping scene, which should not be a surprise

since she has been a breeding obsessive since her teenage years: "I have been focused on breeding since I was 13 years old. I do not come from a horse-related family so I had to find out everything myself. I bred my first foal when I was 17, and I have nine horses (seven out of my own breeding) at the moment, sired by Carthago, Montender, Bubalu VDL, Thunder van de Zuuthoeve, Untouchable, and Jilbert van't Ruytershof, all showjumping.

"I wrote my first articles when I was 18 years old and have worked as an independent journalist since 2008 – 12 years already. As a journalist I got to know quite a few people and have learned a lot from them. As a reporter I've been to the WEG in Caen, the European Championships in Aachen and in Rotterdam. My work is all about showjumping sport and breeding.

"I am really interested in bloodlines and write the text about the pedigree/damline information for several auctions in the Netherlands. I have always combined my work as a journalist with working with horses myself. I love that combination – deadlines bring a lot of stress, horses help me clear my head and make me happy. Currently I have a six-year-old and a seven-year-old mare in sport, who're doing well with Francesca Maggioro. She is one of the riders of the stable where I (and my nine horses) are living in Weert. And I have some nice youngsters coming up so the future looks bright."

Lambada Shake AG

So, who are her three up-and-coming prospects in the Netherlands?

First up, Jenneke likes the look of Lambada Shake AG, who is by Aganix du Seigneur (Ogano Sitte x Chellano) out of a Spartacus (Stakkato x Padinus) mare. Again we find some of the oldies but goodies. Ogano Sitte is by a real foundation stallion, Darco, out of Ialta Sitte. Aganix's dam, is by the Holsteiner, Chellano, but out of Atlanta Sitte – both mares going back to the founder of the Sitte line, the mare, Gute Sitte, out of the Thoroughbred, Anisette and by one of the Hanoverian foundation stallions, Grande. Gute Sitte, ridden by Eric Wauters[†], took home the bronze medal from the 1976 Montreal Olympic Games.

On Lambada's dam line we have Spartacus, who is out of Galina, who is a great-granddaughter of... Grande. His grand dam, Beau Monde, is by Padinus by Heartbreaker and out of Ladina who is by Grannus, a grandson of Grande. Beau Monde is out of Pinechas, a granddaughter of the Westfalen founding father, Pilot.

So what does Jenneke like about Lambada (Aganix du Seigneur - Grappa AG x Spartacus TN): "He is one of the most promising young stallions that the KWPN has approved in recent years. In his pedigree he has three proven sires: Aganix du Seigneur (Ogano Sitte - Cadix du Seigneur Z x Chellano Z), Spartacus (Stakkato - Galina x Grannus), and Padinus (Heartbreaker - Ladina x Grannus). All of them have proven to be very valuable breeding stallions and that

compensates the fact that the damline of Lambada Shake AG is a bit less outstanding, so far.

"He represents a small family and seems to have extraordinary qualities himself. What I like about Lambada Shake AG is that he is a very modern and athletic stallion, he has a light-footed canter with a lot of balance. He already showed his skills during the KWPN stallion approvals in free jumping, and later on he was approved with the exceptionally high score of 90 points. Under the saddle he doesn't only make an impression with his superb canter, but also with his perfect combination of scope and reflexes (blood).

"He is based at the stud of his co-owner Stal Hendrix, where he's getting all the chances he deserves. He's already showed some very promising rounds with his rider Tim van den Oetelaar. Also, his rideability is phenomenal for a four-year-old stallion. The score of 90 points was only awarded once before Lambada Shake AG, to Grand Slam VDL (Cardento) a few years ago. So they are the showjumping stallions with the highest ever scores in the KWPN performance test.

"Lambada Shake AG was bred by Alex Gisbertz from Beek (Limburg, the Netherlands). As a foal of just a few days old he was already showing amazing reflexes on a (small) jump, his breeder showed me a video. Lambada was then sold as a foal to his current co-owner, Jan van Meever. During the KWPN stallion selection Mr. van Meever sold a share in the stallion to Stal Hendrix and the Lammers family.

"This is what his breeder had to say about his breeding choices: 'Both Lambada's dam and granddam have a lot of blood and elasticity, that's why I used the stallions Spartacus and Aganix du Seigneur who both have a lot of scope. It's amazing that everything comes together in Lambada Shake, which was literally all I could wish for.

"Paul Hendrix has, of course, high expectations and has already bred quite a few mares to him, perhaps as many as 80. His first foals will be born in 2021. It's not so easy to predict how he is going to breed. Of course everyone hopes he'll give his athletic body, extremely good canter, and blood. His dam and granddam were a bit small so that's the tricky part. For now I would use him for not too small mares, although he is big enough himself (1m70). In breeding you always have to take several generations into consideration. I hope he's going to bring modern foals with a light-footed canter who will turn out to be very promising showjumpers. We'll see the first ones next year, so I am curious."

Jenneke is also frank when she discusses the temperament of Lambada, since both his sire, and grandsire were known for producing talented, but difficult horses: "About the temperament, yes they say a lot about the offspring of Aganix. Especially when they're young. But for Lambada Shake I don't expect any troubles, because in the performance test he showed a lot of willingness to work. I still think the performance test is quite a lot for three-year-old horses, so it gives a good indication when they show good character there."

Jenneke's second choice for an up-and-comer is Kitt SB (Emir R x Sam R): "From the first round viewing at the KWPN stallion approvals he showed an outstanding performance. For me free jumping says less about their quality than performances under the saddle, but so far Kitt SB has never disappointed.

"He is very modern, light-footed, with quick reflexes and a very athletic use of his body. I think they are things we need for the bigger sport. I am not a fan of those old fashioned, scopey and slow horses.

"Both the sire and the dam were bred by Stal Roelofs, and although they started their breeding with mares from old solid Dutch dam lines, they added a lot of blood to their dam lines and bred a lot of modern horses. Mr Herman Roelofs was always looking ahead, he had his own ideas about breeding and didn't care about other opinions.

"In the beginning he used to breed all the mares to the same stallions, including Joost, Ladalco, Abgar xx and Wagner. Later on he chose different stallions, such as Voltaire, Almé, Contender, Ramiro Z and Zeus.

"Roelofs has always been very selective when it comes to x-rays and performances in showjumping. That resulted in a high level breeding with very sound horses.

"A few years ago all his horses were sold in an auction and that's when the brothers Marthijs and Leo Brouwer bought quite a few, including Emir R, the sire of Kitt SB. Before that auction they'd already bought a part of Namelus R, who they still have at stud, plus they have other Roelofs stallions available through frozen semen. They probably also purchased Kitt SB's dam in this auction, but I am not sure about that.

"Just like his dam and granddam, Kitt SB is quite small (1m64). You see that a lot in the Stal Roelofs breeding. So I would use him for a bit bigger/longer mares who can improve when it comes to reflexes, light-footedness, and canter. I have seen some foals of Kitt SB and they are all very pretty, nice heads, and athletic conformation. So I would say: so far, so good.

"In the stallion competition Kitt SB showed some really good rounds, sometimes he was just a bit out of luck, and sometimes he jumps a bit too much. But he was also an overachiever in the KWPN performance test, so I believe it's in his nature. Kitt SB is totally different from his father, Emir R. Emir is performing well with Rolf-Göran Bengtsson, but for me he is always a bit of a slow, old-fashioned horse. But his offspring seems to have a lot of quality and more blood so that's very positive about him. The Brouwer brothers also have another very talented, small but blood-type Emir R son for breeding: Little London SB."

Jenneke's third selection in her trio of up-and-coming jumping sires is Jardonnay (Kannan GFE - Duzella x



Elektric Blue P (Eldorado van de Zeshoek x For Pleasure) in the hands of Austria's Max Kühner

Indoctro), so here's what the VDL website has to say about this young stallion: 'Jardonnay's pedigree exemplifies performance breeding. Sire, Kannan, has been one of the world's best producers of showjumpers. Progeny include Quabri de l'Isle, Quorida de Treho, Molly Malone V, Diva II, and Olympic [London 2012] champion Nino des Buissonnets. The influence of the 'preferrent' stallion Indoctro has been huge among these offspring, as well as the stamp of great-grand sire Lux – regularly sought when breeding great show jumpers.

"The combination of the powerful Kannan with the beautiful mare, Duzella (dam of Jardonnay VDL) seems to be outstanding. She, herself, is a celebrity as well. In 2011 Duzella was the Dutch champion of three-year old mares in Ermelo. One year later, Duzella's sister, Ella, was the Brabant province champion mare further confirming this damline. Jardonnay's granddam, Uzella, was awarded 'keur' and 'preferrent' in addition to producing the 1m45 showjumper Bocelli ridden by Guy Goosen. Great-granddam, Ozella produced Dubai, a gelding by Cardento, who is performing at Grand Prix level with Mavis Spencer. The 1m50 showjumper Tavarone is another Ozella son.

Designated 'champion' of the 2017 KWPN stallion show in 's-Hertogenbosch, Jardonnay VDL went on to prove his quality receiving the KWPN license. Scoring 84 points in the KWPN stallion test, the scores for scope, canter, and reflexes were awarded 8.50, with the same for rideability, dedication and talent as a showjumper."

Jenneke makes the point that her third stallion is very different from her first two selections: "Jardonnay is a different type of horse than Kitt SB and Lambada Shake AG Z, two really modern and light horses. Jardonnay shows a lot of power and scope, just like we have come to expect from a son of Kannan.

"I interviewed his breeders a couple of months ago and was impressed by the good horses that they've bred out of



Jenneke Smit with her Carthago mare, Titia – a daughter of Grand Prix showjumping mare, Especial (Voltaire) ridden by Eric van der Vleuten (NED)

this small damline. We also had some horses out of this damline in our stable, they had quality too.

“Jardonnay VDL is currently jumping impressive rounds with Jur Vrieling. Okay, he is a magician (the rider), but I really believe in Jardonnay’s potential. Also his full brother, one year older Ikannan V G, is making a big impression. This spring he was jumping excellent rounds in the Sunshine Tour. Both Ikannan and Jardonnay have a big, powerful canter and a lot of scope in their jump. The rideability seems to be good and Jardonnay VDL is always trying his best.

“He is six years old, so his oldest offspring were born in 2018. I have seen some nice foals, good conformation and canter. His first sons will make their appearance at the first-round viewing of the KWPN stallion approvals this winter so I look forward to that.

“I think and hope he gives his good type, canter, and scope. I would dare to use him for a bit smaller, blood-type mares, partly because all horses out of his damline are big enough. Besides the size, also good temperament, good x-rays and quality on the jump (including scope) are anchored in this damline. For me that contributes to the fact that Jardonnay VDL is a very promising stallion. It would be nice if we finally have a champion stallion that really turns out to be a superstar in sport and breeding. Most others have disappointed so far.”

Jenneke is no doubt referring to previous KWPN licensing champions like Elion V, Durrant, Boss, and Hamilton, none of whom have made it to 1m50 level after their moment of glory at the licensing. As has been noted on several occasions, if you are looking for a jumper and, for that matter a sire, the odds are better if you look at the ones

that failed than the ones who won their licensing!

I suggested to Wiebe Ybe van der Lageweg that Jardonnay was perhaps not the most modern type, more an old-fashioned power stallion. “Old fashioned is maybe a little strong – he is a modern type but a little bit stronger. He was the champion at the stallion show, and then he did a good test, 80/81, something like that. He’s a very cool horse, very good brain, and he passes this on to his children. I have never had a stallion that so many breeders have said to me, ‘I have a foal by him, and it has such a nice character’, that really stands out.”

◆ **Do you think he will go on to be a Grand Prix competitor?**

I think so. He is a little bit late in his body, not a spectacular young horse but a good young horse. He normally always jumps clean, has scope enough, he’s a little bit like most of the Kannans, the older they get, the better they are, as young horses they are not spectacular, but they do a good job. He himself doesn’t make mistakes, he doesn’t have fences down, he’s careful and he’s easy to ride. When he was a three-year-old, he was already like a five-year-old. He accepts everything, wants to do everything.

◆ **What mares do you think he will cross best with?**

Not the short ones, and he needs a little bit of blood in the mare.

Eldorado van de Zeshoek TN

One stallion who is currently making waves is Eldorado van de Zeshoek TN (Clinton - Bijou Orai x Toulon), and one of his big fans is my colleague, and keen showjumping breeder and student of bloodlines, Gemma Alexander: “I really think he is going to be the ‘next big thing’. In the Al Shaqab Grand Prix last year his progeny went one/two – Killer Queen VDM (out of a For Pleasure mare) with Daniel Deusser won, while Elektric Blue P with Max Kühner was second. Both mares are only nine and just starting out at five-star level. Elektric Blue P is also out of a For Pleasure mare, but this time out of Derly Chin de Muze, a granddaughter of the famed foundation mare at Joris Brabander’s stud, Qerly Chin.

“Killer Queen won a big class at Aachen too, and Daniel said in the press release he thought it was possibly his best horse yet. They are all fairly plain, big, somewhat coarse bays with very little ‘bling’. But my god, can they jump!”

Jan Greve was for a long time the Dutch team vet, but is also a successful sport horse breeder. His stud, De Watermolen has been home to a succession of jumping stallions, the most famous of which was Voltaire (another licensing failure!), but Jan has always been on the lookout for the outcross, and it was he who brought the English Derby winner, Julio Mariner to Holland.

At the beginning of 2015, Jan’s son, Willem Greve took over the reins of Eldorado van de Zeshoek and immediately won the Grand Prix of Roosendaal. According to Willem: “Eldorado van de Zeshoek has unlimited scope and with his

power he can jump all the classes in the world. Thereby he is competitive, so I'm very happy to have him in my stable"

What does Jan Greve think of the horse as a sire? "Eldorado is a very strong horse, very scopey, he needs a blood mare and he can give her the scope. She gives the brains, and he the scope. I must say he breeds well, we saw him in the sport, but now in the breeding, he is breeding very well. The main quality of his progeny is the scope, there is no fence too big or too high – if the mother gives a little bit of quality, then it is perfect. He would fit very well in Australia with some blood horses."

Million Dollar

Let's finish with another of the hot youngsters, Million Dollar, also out of the Qerly Chin line, and, in another of the signs of the times, born in Belgium but welcomed with open arms by the Holstein Verband. This is how their website celebrated his arrival: 'With first information arising from Belgium about a tremendously jumping three-year-old stallion from the dam line of Qerly Chin in spring 2015, the people in charge were immediately interested when the Holsteiner Verband was offered this stallion by Plot Blue x Vigo d'Arsouilles x Cento from the successful damline and bred by Joris de Brabander.

'But wouldn't the produce of these three stallions be too heavy for breeding modern high-performance horses? An inspection of the stallion at his breeder's stable answered many questions. The stallion displaying the colourful markings of his sire Plot Blue, and a still youthful appearance, was anything but heavy. His movement was highly interesting, with an outstandingly regular, very ground-covering walk, a trot with good knee action, and a very efficient canter, powerful and with excellent carriage from behind. The free jumping proved more than convincing, very much to the purpose and very controlled, but on the same hand extremely careful,

with a good bascule, excellent, bouncy push-off, and the ability to be expected from his bloodline.

'His bloodline is characterised by an accumulation of sport performance of rare quality and concentration. His second dam, Daytona de Muze, was successful in jumper classes at 1m60 under Belgian rider Jody Bosteels, and has since been sold to the USA. His third dam, Wallon de Muze, was successfully competed under Michel Hécart (1m60), like her full sister, Walnut de Muze, under Harrie Smolders. His fourth dam, Qerly Chin by Chin Chin was successfully shown internationally by Eric Lamaze.

'Million Dollar's family is described by its founder Joris de Brabander as follows: "The horses from this line have good looks and good movement. They are easily ridden and have been demonstrating their performance in competition at international level for generations." Million Dollar was purchased by the Holsteiner Verband in spring 2015 and licensed at Zangersheide in April 2015. He was 30-day tested at Schlieckau in December 2015 and graded 8.25 for rideability and 9.75 for jumping ability. He has been approved for the Holsteiner breeding programme at the Elmshorn licensing in January 2016.'

Million Dollar has been placed in the stable of Jos Lansink where he is being introduced to competition by Frank Schuttert, having previously been ridden in young horse classes by Sweden's Ebba Johansson. Equestrian journalist and BN correspondent, Adriana van Tilberg asked Jos about Million Dollar's strengths? "I think it's his overall quality. He's just got this presence. He has this super character and is good to ride. Even though we can't predict the level he is going to jump in the end, he has got many good qualities. He definitely fulfils two qualifications, considering his character and good rideability. These horses really tend to go far."

To see the young stallion in action? https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=20&v=gorFAO4R3II&feature=emb_logo ■



Paulank Sport Horses and the Queen of Callowhill

BY LOUISE PARKES

PHOTOGRAPHY: LOUISE PARKES

Some breeders inherit a legacy of success, but Paula and Frank Cullen have created one all their own. Their Paulank prefix has attracted a large fan-club in recent years, to a large extent because of the profile of the eventing mare Paulank Brockagh who was retired to the place where it all began, in the rolling hills of County Wicklow in Ireland, just a few short months ago.

It is something of a fairytale ending to the magnificent career the mare enjoyed with British-based Australian, Sam Griffiths, in the saddle. Their performances together at both the FEI World Equestrian Games™ 2014 in Caen (FRA) where the team finished fourth, and at the Rio 2016 Olympic Games where she helped clinch team bronze and finished fourth individually, are the stuff of legend.

Paulank Brockagh conquered Badminton (GBR) in 2014 thanks to an epic cross-country run, and had a total of 35 international outings, 12 at five-star level, and top-ten finishes at Badminton, Burghley (GBR), Pau (FRA) and Luhmühlen (GER). It's an extraordinary resumé for any horse. For 10 years she gave her British owner, Dinah Posford, the best of times and flew the Irish-bred flag with pride. "The fun we've had with her and the joy she has brought us – you couldn't make it up!" Dinah says.

It was an emotional moment when the 17-year-old mare stepped off the ramp of the lorry and was led back to the

stable where she was born. But it wasn't the first time Paulank Sport Horses welcomed home one of their own. Their story is one of taking the long view, not the short road. And their vision and philosophy about the restoration of the Irish horse to the top of the popularity parade is clear, concise and considered.....

◆ Why is your enterprise based here at Callowhill in Newtownmountkennedy?

Frank: Some of the land would be in my family going back hundreds of years, it's a deep-rooted thing. They were essentially farmers and butchers, and the horse always figured in it in a small way.

◆ Have you been in the horse business all your life?

Frank: I've had a business in PR and Marketing based in Dublin. But Paula spent her entire life from childhood with horses.

◆ Tell us how that happened Paula...

Paula: An aunt gave me riding lessons for my eighth birthday so I started at Iris Kellett's Riding School in Mespil Road in Dublin. You could hire a pony for the summer so I did that for a few years, then went away to France for a bit, came home and did my British Horse Society Assistant Instructors exam and got a teaching job at Aughatore Farm in Wicklow.

◆ Did horses bring you two together?

Paula: Yes, Frank and a bunch of friends used to come for the odd Sunday hack at



Epic Badminton cross-country round for 'Brocks' and Griffiths



Paulank Brockagh and Sam Griffiths following their Badminton win in 2014

Aughatore and we became friends.

Frank: Then Paula went to work with Lalla Novo in Turin in a place called Mirafiore. It was a complete coincidence but Mirafiore was also the main factory for Fiat, and I worked for Fiat, so I used to go there once a month at that time and we would meet up. Italy has played a big role in our lives.

◆ How did you come to work with Lalla Novo Paula?

Paula: I went with friends to the Munich Olympic Games in 1972 and when we were out one evening some Italian friends said Lalla was looking for someone to work for her. So I had an interview with her and off I went!

◆ Lalla is a legend in Italian showjumping - what was she like to work for?

Paula: Good, very strict and incredibly professional. Mainly I was riding and schooling, I got on really well with her and 47 years later we are still the best of friends!

◆ Is that how you came to start selling stock to Italy?

Frank: Yes, in the early days we helped her buy horses here in Ireland. Our first foal – Paulank Kimble by Cruising – was bought by her husband, and they asked us to put her in foal so that when she arrived in Italy they'd have an Italian-bred animal on the ground.

◆ What sire did you put Kimble to?

Paula: Tommy Brennan (international horse agent and course-designer and Irish showjumping and eventing legend) told us that the most important thing was that when the foal is dropped in Italy that it's good-looking. Not everyone wants to jump to the top of the uprights, you want a nice quality horse that will do the basics for everybody. And if it's very good it's a bonus.

So we put her to Zero Watt who had won the Croker Cup (Best Thoroughbred Stallion) at Dublin Horse Show, and that foal became four/five-year-old National Champion in Italy. She was one of the few Zero Watts that jumped to 1m45.

◆ How did Paulank Kimble turn out?

Paula: She was a really good 1m45 showjumper (ridden by Caterina Poltineri and Luca Onofri) and was subsequently sold for Junior and Amateur jumping. We always said we'd take her back when her career was over, and when she was 17 she came home with the promise that she would be looked after for the rest of her life, she wouldn't be ridden, we would try to breed from her and that the first foal would be ours and the second foal would be theirs. That first foal is seven-year-old Paulank Squeak, by Clover Brigade, and she's jumping 1m25. Kimble is now 25, and out in our field with the rest of our mares!

◆ Has Lalla influenced your breeding business?

Paula: Yes, very much. She became disillusioned by the number of supposedly Irish-bred horses here. There was a lot of foreign blood being introduced into Ireland.

Frank: Which reverts back to our policy. When you come down here (to Paulank Sport Horses) you see an Irish horse, ideally a traditional Irish horse that has at least three generations of Irish breeding.

Paula: And in our case everything – with the exception, ironically, of Brockagh – is traditionally Irish-bred. When 'Brocks' was conceived 18 years ago, her sire Touchdown (Selle Francais) was a famous horse, and the campaign for Traditional Irish Horses didn't really exist so we were going for fashion.

◆ But you've changed your attitude to that?

Paula: Yes, because in the early days Lalla would buy 10 to 20 horses at a time here, but when she became disillusioned at not being able to find her view of the Traditional Irish Horse that really impacted on us. Breeding for purpose has been important to us now for many years and it's all about breeding to traditional lines. Based on certain principles, and increasingly we are refining that.

Even if the mare doesn't have it herself, the back-breeding should have performance. The odd mare might be



Frank Cullen with Lilly's colt foal

nice and not have jumped more than a metre, but she can produce quality horses that have a role in life. The progeny don't all have to be five-star eventers or Grand Prix horses.

◆ So Kimble set you on the road to where you are now, but who was her dam and your foundation mare?

Paula: Calendar Girl (sired by Triggerero [TB]) who was a yearling when we bought her at Tattersalls sale. The big influence was that her dam was by Frenchwood, a household name because at the time I was hanging around with Tommy (Brennan) it was one of those names that would constantly pop up. Frenchwood and Carnival Night mean little today, but they were big names back then. Cali had been shown in hand in the West of Ireland, she was very mature, and her dam, Ballinvullen Nan, was by Carnival Night.

◆ Do other Irish breeders share your philosophy about concentrating on traditional Irish breeding?

Paula: There's a slight move in that direction but we are still in the minority right now. We all want to breed the best, and the best of the best doesn't necessarily give you the best, but at least you have to try!

I'm just a bit concerned for some of the smaller farmers who dream of breeding a superstar and put an Irish Draught to a top-class Warmblood and believe they are going to get a horse that jumps 1m40 plus – it's not going to happen. People need to know that just because you use this fancy stallion that's coming in from overseas, you don't know how

his four legs track up, you do know that he can bascule over the biggest jump, but you don't really know anything else about him. I'm concerned for the future as long as that continues.

However the minority breeders are looking at the fact that in the eventing world and the leisure market, a nicely bred Irish horse still has a good market.

◆ How is the Irish-bred horse viewed right now?

Frank: I would have thought the Irish Sport Horse globally is a very respected brand, but the identity of the brand hasn't been nurtured correctly. It has lost its way. 'Diluted' is a word people use a lot. Our government needs to address this, we need incentives because they drive you on. It doesn't cover all the investment but it encourages you to continue.

Paula: Even we find it difficult to be continually enthusiastic. There's a real lack of understanding on the part of Horse Sport Ireland (national governing body). A lot of their support and attention goes to foreign-bred showjumping horses belonging to owners abroad.

◆ Is there any financial support for Irish breeders?

Paula: The TIHA (Traditional Irish Horse Association) recently received grants from the Department of Agriculture to fund breeding with traditional mares that have performance and, for first time ever, we got two mare grants towards stud fees. Bord na gCapall (a semi-State body established in 1971 and disbanded in the early 1980s) previously did it – as an organisation it was much more farsighted.

We are an export nation and our good stock gets sold before we realise breeding potential. So we need an incentive to encourage people to bring back successful performance mares, to create a list of them and a list of appropriate stallions and we should get some support for using one of those matches for quality breeding. But there is nothing like that right now.

Eventing mares should have won at least one 5-Star, showjumpers should have jumped well at Grand Prix level - set a standard and apply incentives to them.

◆ You originally started out showing Welsh ponies. When did your interest switch to horses?

Frank: In the late 70s Paula bought two filly foals sold as one lot at the December sale in Tattersalls in Dublin. Paula only liked one of them which was by Chou Chin Chow, sire of David Broome's Sportsman who was king of the showjumping world at the time. She paid 200 guineas for the two of them.

She was very proud of her Chou Chin Chow but it turned out the other one was by Tower Walk who had won the 2,000 guineas and was standing at stud in England at the time for £4,000 sterling. Ten months later that 100 guineas

made 3,000 guineas at Goff's November sale and that's what got us into horses!

◆ What do you think is the one thing you've done right in the course of your breeding enterprise?

Paula: Trying as owners to get our horses into the correct hands, even if we have to invest ourselves first, so that they end up being properly broken and come through the system properly to see if they have talent. That has been the most important thing. And luck – in my opinion we all need a certain amount of that!

◆ Does the Irish horse now need more thoroughbred blood again?

Paula: In the eventing world people are now looking at going back to a little more Thoroughbred in the breeding. At the end of the day we probably have to put our hands in the air and say our first priority is looking down the eventing route. Sure if you have something that jumps 1m40/1m50 it's an added bonus, and if it doesn't have what is needed to go eventing at the higher level it will be a nice quality horse for any rider.

The commercial bread-and-butter horse has to be good-

looking and fit for purpose and the Thoroughbred is definitely helping that, rather than the Warmblood. You're looking for a horse with heart and a genuine nature. People forget the leisure market, there's always a good market for a nice horse that a rider will be safe on – they are worth their weight in gold.

◆ Where do you think the Paulank Sport Horses business is now, and what is your business model?

Frank: We're at the point where people are coming to us because; A) we've had success, and B) we're applying certain standards and principles.

And we've always tried to keep in touch with people who buy our horses. Some people sell and get it out the door as quickly as possible but we are the opposite. We want to know how every horse goes and what becomes of it.

Paula: Having our prefix helps because people are recognising it. There are quite a few in England, America, Australia, and Germany and we ask the owners not to change the name. When Brocks won Badminton we got huge publicity, and it all helps.

We have seven breeding mares one of which is retired, and if Brocks had a filly foal in the morning we'd be delighted because our first thought would be to keep her for breeding.

◆ The plan is to eventually breed from Paulank Brockagh. How is that going?

Paula: We learned a lot from Kimble coming back, we were in too much of a rush with her so we are putting no pressure on Brocks.

She was used to a very different life as a top-class competition horse so she has to learn to relax. Her first day home she was across the corridor from a gelding and when he came out of his stable she went bananas! We experimented with a lot of different friends for her in different paddocks and she's now teamed up with a three-year-old filly who is a very a gentle person. Up to that she seemed to be bullied by everyone else. Brocks is still coming in at night because she likes her routine.

She's now known as the 'Queen of Callowhill' and we are very excited about the prospect of getting her in foal.

◆ How long before we get some news on that?

We'll keep you posted! ■



Paula Cullen with Paulank Calla Lilly (Ghareeb xx) with colt foal by Road to Happiness

Brazil celebrates 15 years of National Sport Horse Festival

BY ROBERTA MILANI / ABCCH

PHOTOGRAPHY: PETER LLEWELLYN, AND BH

The XV National Festival of the Brazilian Sport Horse will take place in São Paulo, Brazil, in middle November. The Brazilian Sport Horse Breeding Association (ABCCH) grows every year and is proud of the results achieved at home and abroad. The non-profit organization is responsible for promoting, within the established standards, the development of the breeding of the Brazilian Sport Horse (BH).

The aim is to guarantee and encourage the study of the breed so that there is an appropriate crossing that guarantees the impression of the best of national genetics, highlighting the characteristics of temperament, strength, blood, elasticity, and technique.

Year by year, it has been proven that the Association is on the right path, and with positive results, ABCCH managed to make the name of the Brazilian breed memorable, as in the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games in Australia, where no fewer than nine representatives of Brazil's national breed participated in two equestrian disciplines: jumping and eventing, achieving a mark unsurpassed until today. They were:

- Adelfos Joter (Athlet - Condina x Caletto I): A member of the Swiss Olympic showjumping team (Markus Fuchs);
- Aspen (Lorado - Draga x Lancero): Showjumping team



Calei Joter (Calandus - Leika x Lord), Brazilian showjumping OG team bronze ridden by Andre Johannpeter



Marco Method (Bubis - Vicunha x Eversoul) ridden by Manoel Torres (COL)

bronze with Doda Miranda (BRA)

- Calei Joter (Calandus - Leika x Lord): Brazilian showjumping team bronze ridden by Andre Johannpeter
- Cassiana Joter (Caletto II - Silvana x Silbersee): Ditto – ridden by Luiz Felipe Azevedo
- Marco Method (Bubis - Vicunha x Eversoul): Member of the Colombian showjumping team ridden by Manoel Torres
- Fellini do Feroletto (Villa Valeria - Cardenal Dauapa xx x Rio Bravo II xx): Eventing team, ridden by Carlos Paro
- Landheir do Feroletto (Landritter - Brasileira do Feroletto x Villa Valeria Cardenal): Eventing – André Paro
- Amazonian Dream (Buvant - Fleurisette xx x Locris xx): Eventing – Gustavo Pagoto
- Eden (Pelot - Delta x Chifle): Eventing – Serguei Fofanof.

Another source of pride is that three of the above-mentioned horses had already participated in the Atlanta 1996 Olympic Games in the United States:

- Aspen: Showjumping team bronze ridden by Doda Miranda, eighth individually
- Calei Joter: Ditto – ridden by Andre Johannpeter
- Eden: Eventing - ridden by Serguei Fofanof

Harvesting the fruits of serious and effective work, the Association continues to strive for the dissemination of the



Eden (Pelot - Delta x Chifle) with Serguei Fofanof (BRA)

breed, guiding and encouraging crosses of high genetic value, and incorporating new breeding and training techniques in the constant search for a national horse that can perform with perfection within the different disciplines of equestrian sport.

Our numbers

ABCCH records between 550 and 1,000 registered foals per year, all with proof of paternity by DNA and with microchip.

ABCCH data shows the following animals registered by period (BHs and imported stock with genealogical registration issues by ABCCH):

- 2014 (720 animals: 330 colts; 390 fillies)
- 2015 (901 animals: 414 colts; 487 fillies)
- 2016 (566 animals: 292 colts; 423 fillies)
- 2017 (782 animals: 359 colts; 423 fillies)
- 2018 (584 animals: 289 colts; 295 fillies)
- 2019 (744 animals: 338 colts; 406 fillies)

In order to disseminate and improve the breed, the Association promotes events, including the already traditional National Festival of the Brazilian Sport Horse, which consists of jumping events exclusively for young horses, from four to eight years of age, and the Exhibition at the national level.

Among the activities of the event,

breeders and owners have the opportunity to register their products for various evaluations such as: jumping competitions, foal exhibition, approval of stallions and 'competition' mares, national championship in free jumping, parade of stallions previously approved at the past events, BH Horse Show of Dressage, in addition to lectures on the most diverse subjects of interest to breeders and riders, such as nutrition, pasture, tax issues involving equines, training of young horses, horse shoeing, purchase examination, among others....

The Brazilian Sport Horse Festival

Clube Hípico de Santo Amaro located in São Paulo (BRA) is the chosen venue for the Brazilian Sport Horse Festival. This year, 2020, BCCH will host the XVth edition of the Brazilian Sport Horse National Festival, from November 12 to 15.

Faced with the Covid-19 pandemic which hit the world in mid March of this year, many uncertainties have obviously arisen and adaptations are being made to safely and comfortably welcome all guests and participants to this event which every year exceeds all statistical expectations. ■



Aspen (Lorado - Draga x Lancero) OG showjumping team bronze with Doda Miranda (BRA)

Henton Lodge Hanoverians where quality is the prize

BY SALLY REID

PHOTOGRAPHY: TAKE THE MOMENT, PEGASUS COMMUNICATIONS, AND COURTESY NZSH

From an international point of view (especially a German one), Hanoverians are still new to New Zealand. That is to say, there's quite an interval between the 1730s when the State Stud was established in Celle, and the 1970s, when the breed reached NZ shores. However, from a New Zealand perspective, they're the longest-established Warmbloods of all.

In fact, the New Zealand Warmblood Association began life as the Hanoverian Breeders' Association and the first three European Warmblood stallions to arrive here were pure Hanoverians: Winnebago (Winnetou - Wulfine x Wulf), who came in 1977; Distelfink (Diskus - StPr Doreen x Ducker) in 1981; and Allermund (Absatz - StPrSt Alcantara x Aumund) in 1982. So, it's fair to say that a stud which was founded that same year (1982) is a true pioneer of NZ Hanoverian breeding.

That stud, Dave and Bridget Sutton's Henton Lodge, has certainly grown since its inception, but remains a 'boutique' establishment where quality is prized above all else. Its focus has always been on producing horses who can jump, but of course there have been (and currently are) some super Henton dressage stars. However, jumping blood prevails, and the stud has had three winners of the Top Jumping Bred Foal at the annual NZ Hanoverian inspections, and has twice won Best Jumping Bred Family. The winning foals are the 2018 fillies Henton First Impression (French Buffet xx - Showtime MH x Stolzenburg) and Henton Finesse (French Buffet - Henton Exclusive x Escudo I), and the colt Henton Viceroy (Viscount - Henton Elite x Escudo I), who was also born in 2018. Interesting that the fillies were both by the approved Grand Prix jumper French Buffet xx.

From humble beginnings...

It was indeed a very small beginning – a single foal by Distelfink – for the Suttons, but by 1998 they were ready for total commitment. They had been using Thoroughbred mares in the intervening years, and replaced these with two Hanoverians, Distelene and Delphi. Both had Thoroughbred genetics, both were sired by the D-line stallion Distelfink, and both played a crucial role in the establishing of Henton Lodge.

The broodmare Delphi (Distelfink - Isla Park xx x Crown Lease xx) has been a particular stand-out for Henton. She was bred by Berny Maubach, whose own stud, Vollrath, was, like Henton Lodge, established in 1982. Her dam, Isla Park xx, was an unraced Thoroughbred with a lot of British blood through the sire. Delphi had five foals for Vollrath, including

three full siblings by the imported Hanoverian Dynamit (Dynamo - Elfi x Eger II). One of these, Vollrath Dornkaat, was the National Novice Dressage Champion in 2006.

Between the years 2000 and 2013, Delphi had nine more foals for her new owners, Henton Lodge. She is the dam of the international eventer Henton Attorney General (Anamour), who won Boekelo in 2014 with Lizzie Green (nee Brown). This horse also played a big part in New Zealand's Nations' Cup team win at Tattersalls in Ireland in 2014, where he finished second. He was later sold to Rosa Onslow of Scotland.

Three of Delphi's progeny are full siblings to Henton Attorney General: the nine-year-old Henton Ambassador, who is rising very impressively through the eventing ranks with Matthew Grayling; Henton Armani, who is competing successfully in dressage with owner Jenny McGee, and to carry on the dam line, the six-year-old mare, Henton Abstract Art, who is owned by the stud and just beginning her eventing career with Renee Faulkner.

Meanwhile, there's a quartet of very good Henton mares on the current competition circuit. The first of these is a 15-



Dave and Bridget Sutton



Henton Armada ridden by Christen Lane

year-old former eventer and now Grand Prix showjumper, Henton Faberge (For Edition - Galatoire x Genius), who won her Mare Performance Test in the Hanoverian Breeding Programme in 2011 and is owned by Henton Lodge. Her sire, For Edition, won his own performance test in 2003 and carries the blood of For Pleasure through his sire, Forsyth, as well as Thoroughbred blood through his dam, Leggeria (Leggerio - Odessa x Kronprinz xx). Her dam, Galatoire, is out of a Thoroughbred mare, Raenga xx (Postillion xx).

Henton Faberge never really came to terms with eventing, but took effortlessly to showjumping with the very capable young rider Emelia Forsyth. She won the HOY 1m35 title in autumn 2019 and had her first World Cup start in the spring that year, finishing eighth in a strong class over a challenging track. She also won a 'silver' qualifier at Takapoto Estate in 2019 and had a very good win in a 'gold' qualifier there in 2020. Her final appearance for the shortened 2020 season was the Olympic Cup at Horse of the Year, where she finished sixth.

And, while Henton Faberge definitely prefers showjumping, her older full sibling, the gelding Henton For Fun, was sold to the UK and evented successfully at ON and two-star level ridden by William Fox-Pitt, with wins at Gatcombe, Barbury and Aston-Le-Walls.

The second of this mare quartet is nine-year-old Henton Armada (Anamour - The Showstopper xx x Telereign xx) who won the CCI3*-S at Puhinui in February, leading from start to finish, and has had plenty of other successes, including the CCI3*-S at Taupo last spring. She is ridden by Christen Lane who owns her in partnership with husband Tom Lane.

Also by Anamour (Aarlborg - Lucille x Lombard) is the third mare, the gorgeous chestnut Henton Audacious

(Anamour - Distancia x Distelfink), who won the CCI2*-L Young Horse class at Puhinui in December 2019 and is looking very promising indeed. She is owned and ridden by Abigail Long, and is just seven years old. Anamour himself is a breeding legend in New Zealand, and, as mentioned above, is the sire of Henton Attorney General, H. Ambassador, H. Armani and H. Abstract Art. He was bred at Zuchthof Bösch in Germany, from Stamm 1189109, Schridde 439.

The fourth mare is 10-year-old Henton Serenade (Satisfaction - Distancia x Distelfink), a half-sister of the seven-year-old Henton Audacious. Serenade is owned and ridden by veterinary student Bailey Rutter, and won the ESNZ's very competitive 2019-20 University Showjumping Series. Like Henton

Faberge, Henton Serenade started her career as an eventer.

No longer on the competition circuit but certainly deserving special mention is Henton Evita Xtreme (El Bundy I - Delphi x Isla Park xx), who has 'elite' status in the NZHA studbook. Dr Ludwig Christmann gave this beautiful dark bay two 10s for free jumping at her Mare Performance Test, describing her style as 'spectacular'. To date, she is the only mare in this country to have achieved the double-10 jumping honour. Her sire, El Bundy was the winner of his Stallion Performance Test in 2001 and, of course, has the superb jumping blood of his own sire, Escudo I.

Henton Evita had a short but successful competition career to Grand Prix level in the hands of Vicki Wilson, and was then retired to the broodmare paddock for Sharlene Workman of Xtreme Sport Horses. "She consistently passes on her refined looks, elastic movement, and athletic qualities to her offspring," says Workman. Evita has some up-and-coming youngsters to watch out for, including Enzo Xtreme by the imported Holsteiner Cassiano, and Eagle Xtreme (Zirrock Xtreme).

Another good Henton mare, also with the blood of Escudo I, is Henton Class Act (Contendro - Henton Elite x Escudo I) who is owned by Judith Matthews of Matthews Hanoverians. She was one of two mares to receive 'elite' status at this year's Mare Performance Test under Jens Meyer, and has an excitingly bred colt from 2019: Carbon Copy MH (Cornet Obolensky).

There are numerous other Henton horses at various levels of eventing, showjumping and dressage in New Zealand at the moment, and one more of Delphi's children at home serving as Dave Sutton's "best-ever" hunter. "She's named Lee, after the very talented Lee Morris at Equibreed NZ who used some very innovative techniques on Delphi to



*Henton Attorney General and Lizzie Green (née Brown)
on their way to winning Puhinui 2010*

get her breeding cycles up and running again after a few failures,” says Bridget Sutton, who is interviewed below.

◆ How do you think those first three Hanoverian stallions, Distelfink, Winnebago and Allermund, would look against the stallions of today?

Today’s modern stallion is very much lighter in frame, and in particular longer-legged. The German Hanoverian Society has selected this more modern type from within and from outside the Hanoverian Studbook, with a particular emphasis on careful introduction of just the right Thoroughbred blood. There have also been marked improvements in conformation and temperament.

◆ How have your breeding goals changed over the past 30 years?

In the early days I could not find anything to ride that I liked. I had read about the NZ Hanoverian Society and was fortunate to have access to a lovely Silver Dream xx Thoroughbred mare, so ventured into the breeding game. The first foal by Distelfink carted myself, very much the amateur, to what is now CCI-3* – I was hooked. Those early days saw our breeding numbers remain quite low and with no ‘prefix’. In 1998 we decided to make the stud, although still boutique, into more of a business, hence the ‘Henton’ prefix was developed, which is a play on my maiden name ‘Henley’ and married name ‘Sutton’.

◆ What major changes have you seen in NZ-bred Hanoverians over those three decades?

Following on with the German Society over the same period, breeding the lighter-framed, longer-legged, more modern Warmblood horse, who looks more like a Thoroughbred, but moves, jumps, and has the conformation and rideability of a Warmblood: these same changes have filtered through to New Zealand.

◆ How many mares do you have these days, and are they all registered Hanoverians?

We would not have any mares other than registered Hanoverians. These days, after moving a few mares last winter to new homes, we retained four selected ones to continue with the Henton brand. All four are due to foal this spring to top international stallions, via frozen semen.

◆ Do you still like to see a percentage of Thoroughbred blood in their pedigrees?

For eventing, it is nice to see a percentage of Thoroughbred blood. Some of our mares are up to seven-eighths Hanoverian, so we have been using Hyperion – a son of Heraldik xx – and French Buffett xx with success to keep the progeny ‘modern’ and fast across country.

◆ What particular qualities do you look for in a broodmare?

The mares must be of good conformation, have a good constitution, and a good brain. At the last German inspection, when those three foals* were classified as ‘premium’, the German representative mentioned more than once, “Well, look at the dam, this is why this foal is a premium.” [*Henton First Impression, Henton Finesse and Henton Viceroy, as mentioned above.]

◆ How many foals do you breed per season?

We now have the four selected broodmares and have reduced our breeding to every second year.

◆ Do you use local or imported semen?

In the past, before he passed on, we were huge supporters of Anamour. Although he was dressage-bred, crossed over our jumping mares, the mix was perfect for the event horse. We now seek only frozen semen from the very top stallions from Europe.

◆ What do you look for in a stallion?

Firstly, we investigate their scores at the Performance Test – movement, jumping scope and style, conformation. Then the performance record of their progeny, if they have any on the ground at competition age. Lastly and most importantly,

the 'rideability' score of a stallion. This is paramount. As most of our market is aimed at non-professional riders – which is quite a different case from that in Europe – the rideability (temperament, trainability, willingness to work with the rider) of the individuals is very important.

◆ Over the years, which stallions have had the most influence on Henton bloodlines?

Distelfink was huge in the early days, and Anamour was until recently another firm favourite of the NZ-based stallions. When the borders were opened to the use of frozen semen in this country, the opportunities became endless. Our first foal by frozen semen, Henton Elite, by Escudo I, was born in 2001. She had a limited competitive career and is still in the broodmare band.

We have had great success with Escudo I and his son El Bundy – the 'E' line has very strong jumping and dressage bloodlines and is very fertile. The other line of influence is from the famous For Pleasure, through For Edition – we had such early outstanding horses by him that we have purchased more than one shipment of frozen semen. Other lines we like are from the famous Heraldik xx, through Hyperion xx. Also we have used the current champion sire of event horses, Contendro I, and we are expecting the first foals this season by his son Come.

◆ Have you visited any of the Hanoverian breeding farms in Germany? If so, which ones, and what did you learn/gain from the experience?

We have visited Germany several times, with the highlight always being a visit to the town of Verden, the home of the Hannoveraner Verband. The charming town, which proudly displays life-size bronze foals in the main street, is the centre of the Hanoverian breed, boasting the famous Niedersachsenhalle where the auctions are held throughout the year for Hanoverian-branded horses. We have also visited several stud farms in the greater Hanover area. The biggest

take-out is how lucky we are in in New Zealand, with our temperate climate. The winters in Germany are harsh and all young stock live in large free-range barns; our youngsters get the physical and mental benefits of developing naturally in green, lush, rolling paddocks.

◆ Which Henton-bred horses have brought you the most pleasure and pride in your career?

The obvious first was Distinction, who carted me, the amateur, successfully to eventing highlights. He ended his days in the hunting field and was finally laid to rest on an elevated spot on the farm, so he could watch future generations that he inspired. Many a happy tear has been shed for, of course, Henton Attorney General both in Europe and in New Zealand, where he won almost all the top competitions, including Puhinui (now) CCI4* in 2010. He was followed by his half-brother Henton Executive and his win with Matthew Grayling, Puhinui CCI4* in 2013.

Of course, we are looking forward to another successful season with Emelia Forsyth and Henton Faberge, and another stunning young horse to watch is Henton For Glory* – part-owned by Henton Lodge – who is ridden by Donna Smith. [*DSE Henton For Glory (For Edition - Henton Exclusive x Escudo I) is a half-brother of the Premium filly Henton First Impression mentioned above. He finished second in 2019's Five-Year-Old Horse of the Year and in the New Zealand Young Event Horse 2019.]

We're also excited to be following Bailee Rutter who has had many successes with Henton Serenade show jumping, and Henton Excalibur, now being capably piloted by Oliver Edgecumbe.

We love to watch them all: at the recent March Puhinui there were seven Henton horses competing across the grades. We managed to watch all seven cross-country rounds, and three of them won their respective classes, with most of the others collecting a ribbon – not a bad day at the office for team Henton.



Henton Evita's Mare Performance Test in 2013: l-r Sharleen Workman of Xtreme Sport Horses, Vicki Wilson (presenter), the late Eric Ropiha (NZHS classifier), Dr Ludwigg Christmann (Hann), and Robin Potter (NZHS studbook keeper)

◆ How does the annual NZ Hanoverian classification tour help you, as breeders?

The tours give NZ breeders the opportunity to confirm that they are on the same breeding path as the rest of the Hanoverian breed societies around the world. It gives us the opportunity for independent, unbiased, and experienced assessments at mare classifications, foal inspections, and mare performance tests. The tours ensure that a New Zealand-bred Hanoverian is of equal standard to those bred in Germany, the home of the Hanoverian horse. ■

Bred in Poland, registered with the Holsteiner Verband

BY AGATA GROSICKA

PHOTOGRAPHY: OLIWIA CHMIELEWSKA

The third edition of the Holsteiner Foal Championships in Poland organized on July 5 at the Olimpia Horse Stud, Nowe Dabie, proved that there is neither stagnation caused by the Covid-19 lockdown, nor a slower breeding season syndrome!

Open-air sporting events were allowed to reopen in Poland from mid June – but behind closed doors, although this breeding championship attracted many entries, with breeders and owners ready to present this year’s offspring to the jury.

In fact, this third championship for Holsteiner foals in Poland gather over 40 Polish-bred foals registered with the Holsteiner studbook. The judges, Stephen Haarhoff and Peter Claussen from the Holsteiner Verband, shortlisted nine colts and four fillies from this great selection of showjumping foals, who were then judged again to determine the final result:

- Champion colt – Chubakko x Quite Capitol, bred and owned by Szymon Mukalski
 - First vice champion – Comme Il Faut x Zirocco Blue, bred and owned by Marek Wasiewicz
 - Second vice champion – Casall x Cascadello, bred and owned by Roma Kosicka,
- followed by those placed from fourth to eighth place:
- All Star x Giacomo, bred and owned by Andrzej Golas,
 - Connor x Corrado I, bred and owned by Dariusz Gronowski,
 - Emerald x Clinton, bred and owned by Roma Kosicka,
 - Comme il Faut x Quidam de Revel, bred and owned by Tomasz Olszewski
 - Cornet Obolensky x Levisto, bred and owned by Tomasz Olszewski

- Champion Filly – Casall x C-Indoctro, bred and owned by Waldemar and Wojciech Kasperscy
- First vice champion – Emerald van’t Ruytershof x Levisto Z, bred and owned by Tomasz Olszewski
- Second vice champion – Million Dollar x Mylord Carthago, bred and owned by Waldemar and Wojciech Kasperscy
- Fourth – Cornet Obolensky x Calido, bred and owned by Dominika Lech

The champion filly bred by Waldemar and Wojciech Kasperscy was also awarded the title of Supreme Champion of the show. This delicate and very classy filly of a modern type (ET) born on May 24, 2020, and representing Stamm 104A – Cassall - Contendra III DL (C-Indoctro x Contender x Reichsgraf) is the full sister of Contendro Girl, sold during Berlin 2017 Longines Global Champions Tour to Spain’s Sergio Alvarez Moya.

The breeders of the winner could also claim the second vice champion filly, born on February 22, 2020, Stamm 730B – Million Dollar x Imcarthina (Mylord Carthago x Quintero x Cor de la Bryère), as well as two other short-listed foals: a filly born on March 5, Stamm 776 – Untouchable - Icasilla (Casall x Coriander) and a colt (ET) born on May 17, Stamm 104A – another full sister of Contendro Girl.

Tomasz Olszewski not only co-organized the show but also brought 11 foals to this championships, including two short-listed colts, and the first vice champion filly by Emerald van’t Ruytershof x Levisto Z.

Olszewski summed up the Championships and also shared his breeding philosophy by saying; “When it comes to our event we are very happy with the outcome, although we had only two weeks to get ready for it. We received very positive feedback from breeders, as well as our Holstein judges who also valued the location of Olimpia Stud Farm.

“What really mattered for us was the quality of presented foals. Such championships are also a great opportunity for breeders to meet and see what other breeders are presenting. It influences our way of thinking. Sharing knowledge and experiences can change our approach. We are also very happy with the improvement in Polish sport horse breeding. At the moment the Belgian national team includes two horses from Poland: Quel Homme de Hus (Quidam de Revel) and



Champion filly and supreme champion Casall x C-Indoctro



Champion colt Chubakko x Quite Capitol

Nevados S (Calvados Z), which shows us that Polish sport horse breeding is moving in a good direction.

“At the moment Polish breeders can choose any stud book they want, but the Holstein Association is very unique for many of us. ‘Charakter, charisma, klasse’ is not only a slogan, but it’s way of thinking. Holstein blood in breeding is everywhere, and without it showjumping horses wouldn’t be where they are

today. Quality is why we choose this studbook.

“Now, of course, with all the great stallions available on the market, we have more options to refresh the bloodlines and increase our chances for a great horse. What’s more, two years ago Holstein Global was created which also allows non-Holstein mares to be registered, but only under certain conditions. It means that the Association is reacting to changing circumstances in the world of breeding.

“On my farm we have a herd of around 10 broodmares, mainly from Holstein breeding. They come from proven damlines like Levisto and Diarado, mares to are daughters of Cardento’s full sister (Stamm 741), a Casall mare who is a sister of Caretano, a full sister to Contendro I and II (Stamm 104a), a Quidam de Revel mare who is a daughter of Chellano I’s sister, a granddaughter of Corrado I and II’s full sister (Stamm 6879), and a My Happy Guest xx mare is a sister of Quel Homme de Hus (Stamm 4847). We have also a Caretano mare who reached 1m60 level under the saddle of Julien Epailard, plus another mare by Acodetto who was a vice champion in the 2009 Holstein mare championship.

Together with my friend Krzysztof Gorski, we bought a dam of Quel Homme de Hus a few months ago, and she is one of our biggest breeding hopes.

“My main goal is to breed top quality horses, but at the moment we don’t have sport horses. We sell most of our foals abroad, and each year keep two or three fillies. In 2018 we sold a Cornet Obolensky x Levisto filly at the Flanders Foal and Embryo Auction who was a top-price foal. This year her full brother will be also offered in this auction taking place at Sentower Park in Opglabbeek (Belgium) in September. A Comme il faut x Quidam de Revel colt will also be there

“In the 2021 foaling season we are expecting a few foals by Chacco Blue, Casall, Cornet Obolensky, Harley VDL, Conthargos, Eldorado, Emerald and few

others. What’s very interesting, our friends from Germany told us that due to the Covid-19 pandemic there are many more pregnancies for the 2021 foaling season than there was this year, so maybe the coronavirus will produce some future top horses who will be born next year.”

Szymon Mukalski, the breeder of the champion colt (Chubakko x Quite Capitol) was very happy with his award: “It is actually my first foal, so I’m very happy with our victory and quite surprised at the same time. It’s beyond my expectations. I’ve had his dam, Unuba-A (Quite Capitol -x Calando I x Meteor xx, Stamm 206) for a few years and decided to breed her to this young stallion, Chubakko, from the Beerbaum stallion station. I’ve been watching him for a while and thought it could be a great match.

“Now I want to invest in a herd of broodmares and to begin with another Holstein mare. Genetics has always been my scope of interest since my zootechnic studies, and now I have conditions to develop my passion. It’s quite addictive. This success has given me wings and motivated me to go further. Next I want to present my colt in the August ‘Open’ Championship for all Warmblood breeds at the Salio Stud.

“Why do I breed Holsteiners? Because of their character, charisma, and looks. The Holstein Verband is also very, not every horse can register. Conditions are tough – either you fulfill them or not. On the other hand they’re very helpful and proactive. We Polish breeders have the potential to breed good quality horses and to make them stand out. With the help and advice of more experienced breeders I’m learning a lot.”

Some of these great foals will be seen at the upcoming August 2020 Polish Open Foal Championship for all Warmblood studbook members of the WBFSh, and many will be represented at the show which is scheduled to take place at the Salio Horse Stud, just outside Lodz, in central Poland.

Bred in Poland... registered wherever the breeder finds suitable! ■



Presentation for champion colt (l-r) Jan Godek, Szymon Mukalski, Dagmara Mukalska, Peter Claussen, Stephan Haarhoff

Luc Hofman: the breeder behind ‘Van Sombeke’

BY JO DE ROO

PHOTOGRAPHY: JO DE ROO

Equina Van Sombeke was the first non-French showjumper to become champion in France. Via her daughter Ta Belle Van Sombeke, La Belle Van Sombeke is the grandmother of outstanding showjumpers such as Glock's London (London 2012 OG silver medal), World Cup horse Casimir de la Pomme, Taran de la Pomme, world champion A Pikachu de Muze, Wabelle de Muze, Golden Hawk/ex Figo de Muze, and Dabelle. Equina and La Belle were both bred out of Verina (Hann: Widukind de Lauzelle).

Verina was “A dam that could not be ridden,” said Luc Hofman, founder and owner of studfarm ‘van Sombeke’. “The horses out of this lineage are very sensible and can react very quickly. That’s not always easy, but in the arena it is a great quality.”

Luc Hofman (1938), born and bred in Sombeke, was a teacher. He and his wife, who passed away a few years ago, had five children, Geertrui, Liesbeth, Karlien, Bruno and Veerle. Besides teaching, Hofman had other skills because during his leisure time he was a successful football player

and trainer (champion in 1956-1957), as well as a painter. But horses were always especially close to his heart. He was a rider, gave riding lessons, and founded the LRV Waasmunster pony club. Above all, in the world of horses he is well-known as a breeder, with his own-bred products known by the ‘van Sombeke’ suffix. “The reason is obvious,” Hofman said. “The name comes from the village where I live. Do you know the region? It’s very beautiful.”

Luc is a passionate horse lover who, during our interview, told many interesting stories: “After the Great War of 1914-18, my father, Jose-phius, was a war cripple. He was injured and transported to a hospital in France. When he returned to Belgium, he brought a big French book about horses. I was crazy about this book, so crazy that my father once decided to hide it. Afterwards, I searched for the book, but in vain. My parents were members of ‘Davidsfonds’ and received many books. All those books were kept, while the book about horses was disappeared. My parents ran a shop selling everything from butter and barbed wire to lingerie.” At a certain time the street where the shop was located had to be widened, so the Hofman family was expropriated. “We had to clean up everything, including all our books. Then I thought ‘now I am going to find the book about horses’. But, that wasn’t to be,” Hofman declared.

It was because of this book, however, that Luc Hofman became interested in horses and, finally, thanks to someone who lived in the same village, his passion grew. “A little bit farther on lived a farmer who owned two riding horses, and his son, Hugo, was a member of the Belsele riding club. Each Sunday, he rode and passed our house. I heard the noise of the shoes and was on the look-out. Once, he visited us, saying he wanted to found a riding club in Sombeke, together with Elversele village, and asked if I would participate. At that moment I was a teacher and had never ridden a horse. He spoke to several people, including my brother and a doctor. A brilliant story, because he wanted to found a club with three people who had nothing to do with horses. He proposed that the doctor should buy 10 saddles, and after attending a Christian ceremony one Sunday, Hugo said to



Luc Hofman – a passionate painter, too

me, 'go home, look for a pair of boots, and come back. We are going to start.' I accepted his proposal, we saddled the horses, and that was the very first time that I'd ridden a horse. I must have been 27 or 27 years old at the time."

A chance meeting can have consequences.

There is another coincidence in Hofman's life, this time involving a horse. We are talking about 1975. In that year, Verina was born as a daughter of the stallion Widukind de Lauzelle and the dam Patrisse. Hofman said: "It is an amazing story. A member of the Waasmunster riding club owned a horse. He participated with that horse at our training facility. There were several exercises, and while watching that horse jumping over cavaletti, I said to myself, 'that's so beautiful and good.' I really loved that dam. However, at rural tournaments Verina jumped badly. Every time she entered the ring the jury was in danger. So, the rider decided quickly to stop riding her and Verina was moved to a famous dressage stable. Six months later he brought her back because no one could ride her.

"Some months or even years later, I didn't own a horse to ride. Just previously I'd attended a dressage clinic in 'De Polkenhoeve' in Stekene. Hans Gerard, at that time a famous dressage rider, said during the presentation of the last horse in this dressage clinic 'now I am going to ride a horse that nobody wants to ride.' That was Verina, and I had no idea that she was staying there. So, when Hans Gerard mounted her, what was her reaction? For 10 minutes, she reared and bucked. Gerard stayed in the saddle, and after 10 minutes Verina gave up so he started to ride her properly. But once again I fell in love with Verina – the way she moved was outstanding. Afterwards, Verina came back to her owner in Sombeke so I asked him if I could ride her. He was happy that at least somebody would ride his horse and accepted my offer. He lived close to my house, so I saddled up Verina and rode homewards. On the way she was snorting the whole time.' Hofman remained sitting in the saddle!

'But,' he declared, 'I also had bad experiences with Verina. Once I was riding her in the Waasmunster woods and the ground was very sandy. One could hardly cycle on this surface, and at a certain moment I saw two four-in-hands approaching in our direction. I thought to myself 'I know Verina. Now I am a lost man.' The spot where we were destined to cross was 15 metres wide – we crossed and I survived. I was so happy so I said to Verina, 'now you may canter.' We went faster and faster... A stupid idea! Then, at a certain moment, I can't even remember how it happened, Verina dragged me through the sand. When she stopped, I was still holding the reins, but my nose was bleeding and I'd lost my cap and spectacles. I sat down, when a young boy approached wheeling his bicycle. He asked, 'are you hurt?' What a question! I asked him to look for my spectacles, which he found, so I remounted Verina and rode home. I then spent three days in hospital.

Hofman told another story: "I was doing a course at the

Hicewa riding school 'running a manège'. Wim Lemmens was one of the instructors, and during the practical part of the course I was riding Verina. Each time a car arrived or departed the riding school she started to rear and buck, until someone advised me, 'if you want to continue doing this course, you should ride another horse.' I didn't take this advice, but in consultation with the owner and the veterinary surgeon we decided to temper her reactions by giving her a tranquilizer to calm her down. Her behaviour improved so we could decrease the medication, and afterwards I could ride Verina in a good way. Once, Wim Lemmens asked me to ride Verina and I overheard him saying Frank Van Dijck that 'when you are riding her, you really don't know what you are feeling.' He was telling the truth. When she was trotting, for instance, I was always hoping that the teacher wouldn't ask me to do other exercises because she gave me such a good feeling when she was trotting."

There is not only a riding store attached to Verina, but also a breeding story: "In 1980, I asked the owner if I could use Verina as a broodmare. Earlier, she had given birth to Equina Van Sombeke (Pik Bauer), who moved to Jean-Claude Vangeenberghe's stables and was given the sport name Just In Time. In partnership with Edouard Couperie Equina became champion of France, and attracted so much attention that even French journalists visited Sombeke in order to write a story about Verina.

"Equina has only a small production, for instance Haxelle Dampierre." This daughter of Papillon Rouge performed very well at international five-star level. Equina is also the grandmother of several international showjumpers, including Navy Blue Tarroy (five-star 1m60 in partnership with various riders), Arioto (five-star 1m60, Marc Dilasser), and Bianca Star (five-star 1m40-1m45, Pierre Marie Friant).

In 1987, Hofman chose the stallion Goliath Z to cross with Verina, and out of this combination La Belle Van Sombeke was born in 1988. "I chose Goliath Z because of his dam, Heureka Z, one of the foundation dams of Studfarm Zangersheide. Heureka was a beautiful horse, which is very important. Moreover, she jumped at a high level. La Belle was taller than her dam, because Verina was small, like several other horses out of this family, while La Belle was taller and slender."

But how was her character? "La Belle was not easy. She was very attentive. The sensory organs of this grey mare were very well developed, but once she entered the arena she was focused and knew what she had to do." According to Hofman, La Belle had enormous potential: "At the end of the 1980s, free jumping contests started to be organized. I was of opinion that I had to collaborate with things from on high. We are talking about 1990. La Belle was two years old and had never entered a manège when a free jumping contest was organized at the Hicewa riding school. La Belle participated totally unprepared. She didn't know what she had to do. Her first two jumps failed. Then she refused once. But her third was incredibly high and wide. The next jumps were also quite impressive. La Belle and I left the arena and



Luc Hofman and Oh Belle van Sombeke

three interested buyers immediately followed me. She'd attracted attention."

Hofman mourned the fact that a few years later he made a mistake: "The ground had frozen hard, then the weather became milder, so I thought to myself 'I will leave La Belle outside.' I didn't have a good presentiment. I put her out to grass and noticed she was lame when she came back. Her injury never healed completely, which is why we decided to end her sporting career and to make use of her exclusively as a broodmare. However, at a certain moment we were unlucky as things went wrong. The foal passed away and the dam had some problems so was moved to the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine. The medical team resolved the problem, but they told me that I couldn't use her anymore for breeding. So, I decided to sell her.

"Dany Van Lombergen and Marc Kluskens bought La Belle and made use of the embryo transfer technique. In 2001, La Belle became the dam of four descendants: Blue Bird, Bonnibelle, Ba Belle van't Roosakker, and Beauty-Belle van 't Roosakker. The Kannan daughter Ba Belle performed at five-star level, in partnership with Cayetano Martinez de Irujo. Beauty-Belle jumped under the saddles of Tobias Meyer and Patricia Eggenberger. Beauty-Belle produced the successful showjumpers VDL Groep Eureka van't Roosakker (five star, Maikel van der Vleuten), and Fa-Belle van't Roosakker (five star, Cindy van der Straten).

Hofman was fortunate, however, that he had already some descendants of La Belle, including Serena, Ta Belle, and Walkure Van Sombeke. "Walkure was not as famous as Ta Belle, despite the fact that she also jumped at high level.

She was sold to Qatar, and in combination with Querlybet Hero she produced Fa Belle Van Sombeke. When Fa Belle was born, she was snow-white, which is quite rare. The filly had great eyes, and while standing up she even didn't stagger. Really amazing. I had never seen that before. I broke in Fa Belle myself and she learned everything very quickly. In partnership with Philip Poppe, she jumped at 1m40 to 1m45 level. Fa Belle was then sold and can look back at a brilliant career under the saddle of Claire Putters. Fa Belle was a really marvellous horse and I remember well when Claire participated with her at the international showjumping tournament in Mechelen. I was one of the visitors, so I was looking for Fa Belle. When I saw her again,

tears were in my eyes. As a breeder, Fa Belle is my greatest success."

Out of Fa Belle, Hofman bred Ka Belle Van Sombeke, by Taran de la Pomme. "Nowadays, Ka Belle is performing at 1m30 to 1m40 level, in partnership with Philip Poppe. She has the potential to jump at a higher level because although she is small, she's very attentive. Once she enters the arena, she is very focused until the end. So, she is a very typical 'Van Sombeke'."

Partnered with Jessica Mendoza, Jonker Van Sombeke (Toulon), a half-brother to Ka Belle Van Sombeke, performed on the international three- and four-star circuit. In 2013, Hofman crossed Ka Belle with Thunder van de Zuuthoeve, out of which combination a filly was born, called Oh Belle Van Sombeke. "This year, the six-year-old Oh Belle produced a colt, Urestes Van Sombeke. It's the first foal bred by my daughter Geertrui, after choosing the dressage stallion Just Wimphof. Earlier, Oh Belle produced a daughter by Toulon and an I'm Special son. Meanwhile, Oh Belle is in foal to By Cera d'Ick.

"Ka Belle also produced a Vigo d'Arsouilles son called Quanov Van Sombeke. He is a very beautiful four-year-old chestnut with strong movements. He is probably the most friendly 'Van Sombeke' horse ever. Recently, he was sold and is now competing in the classic cycle."

Talking about Serena van Sombeke, a daughter by Remondo out of La Belle van Sombeke, Hofman said: "In 1996, the one-year-old Serena won the national BWP conformation contest and one year later she won a free jumping contest in Sint-Niklaas. Serena produced several

valuable horses, in both options, showjumping and dressage. The most famous descendants in the option dressage are Aga Khan, a son of Ferro out of Serena, as well as Fabella (in partnership with Kara Bosman), via her damline a granddaughter of Serena. Aga Khan was an approved stallion for BWP, whereas Fabella produced three approved stallions.”

Ta Belle Van Sombeke is the most famous descendant of La Belle; born in 1996 she is a daughter of Olympic stallion Chin Chin (Constant). “Ta Belle was a grey dam and just like her mother not tall. At a young age Ta Belle was sold to Joris de Brabander.”

Talking about Ta Belle, de Brabander said: “She was very easy to ride, very honest, and jumped very carefully. She didn’t have the greatest scope, but she was very competitive. Almost every time she participated in a 1m35 showjumping class, she won. She didn’t have sufficient scope to perform at 1m50 level. She did that several times, but she was not able to do it, although she was always doing her best. She was also a little bit afraid of water jumps, but in general it turned out better than expected.”

Thanks to Ta Belle, Luc Hoffman enjoys a very good international reputation as a breeder. In partnership with Jos Lansink, she won for instance the Zuidlaren Grand Prix, then produced six 1m60 level horses herself. In Ta Belle’s offspring we meet international showjumpers, such as Glock’s London/ex Carembar de Muze (silver medal at the London 2012 Olympic Games), Figo de Muze/aka Golden Hawk (five-star level, Shane Breen), A Pikachu de Muze (2006 six-year-old world champion in Lanaken), World Cup horse Casimir de la Pomme, Taran de la Pomme (five-star level, Karlina de Brabander and Kevin Staut), Dabelle (five-star level, Greg Patrick Broderick and Darragh Kenny) and

Wabelle de Muze (Damien Haelterman).

Talking about Ta Belle, Olympian Jos Lansink said: “She had a little bit of character, so I think this is the reason why she came back from the United States. Maybe she had too many qualities for the rider and developed more character. I certainly don’t want to say that she had a bad character. Certainly not! But, mostly, good horses have a special character, because otherwise they are often not that good. The good ones need to be special. Ta Belle was special and therefore also did very well. She wanted to let us see that she was present. If you could manage that, she was in favor of you, then she was a fighter in the arena.”

When asked about the feeling she gave him, Lansink said; “Ta Belle didn’t give me the feeling that she had the utmost scope, but I could motivate her. She wanted to be careful, that’s how she jumped. And of course, winning Grand Prix classes is something that every rider wants.”

Reminded about winning the Zuidlaren Grand Prix with Ta Belle, Lansink explained; “Exactly. We also won a heavy showjumping class in Aachen. She was a very nice showjumper. Despite the fact that she was small, she had a very good canter. I can still remember her very last performance. She jumped faultlessly in the Vienna Grand Prix, but the surface was in a very bad condition. The organizers treated the surface in order to make it firmer. This was disastrous for Ta Belle because in some places the surface was hard, in other soft. Ta Belle made one fault in the jump-off and was injured. It’s a pity, because otherwise she could have won this showjumping class. Ta Belle was a very fast showjumper, but this injury in Vienna meant the end of her sporting career. Fortunately, Ta Belle was a mare.” Lansink is now breeding with a daughter of Ta Belle, a broodmare called Naëlle Z, who is a full sister to Olympic showjumper Glock’s London.

Hofman told us that two mares are called La Belle Van Sombeke: “The eldest was born in 1988 as a daughter of Goliath Z out of Verina. The youngest was born in 2011 and is a daughter of Houston out of Cera Van Sombeke. Cera is a daughter of Walkure.” The youngest La Belle is competing and, according to Hofman; “For a while, she also participated in rural tournaments. The then owner once said to me ‘you can’t imagine what she can do, but she is so delicate.’ That’s a family characteristic. The horses belonging to this family are very sensitive and powerful. Moreover, they are very beautiful and friendly.” ■



Luc Hofman and Oh Belle van Sombeke with the colt Urestes van Sombeke

Dress rehearsal becomes a successful production...

BY THOMAS BACH JENSEN / DWB
PHOTOGRAPHY: RIDEHESTEN.COM

The Danish Warmblood 'live-streaming' auction in collaboration with Blue Hors turned into a huge success, with many online bidders as well as telephone and in-house bidders at Blue Hors. The most expensive foal achieved a knock-down price of DKK275,000 (€37,000).

Although the Danish Warmblood streaming auction due to the current assembly ban had to be conducted in front of a limited audience, auctioneer Casper Cassøe managed to create a really good atmosphere in the show arena at Blue Hors, where 22 foals came under the hammer for the first auction ever held at Blue Hors.

During three days prior to the physical auction, interested parties were able to place their bids on the foals online. At Blue Hors each foal entered the arena with a starting amount equalling the sum that had already been bid online, and with the auctioneer announcing of the countries that had placed the highest bids for each lot.

Thereafter, the auction proceeded as normal with bidders on the phone as well as in the arena, and the simultaneous online bidding also working very well. Foals were eventually sold to buyers from Switzerland, Austria, Great Britain, and Germany, although other bids came from France, Spain, the Netherlands, the USA, and Dubai – so a



Auctioneer Casper Cassøe



Jestis La Liga (Blue Hors Livius)

truly international perspective.

Chairman of the Danish Warmblood Auction Committee, Ulrik Kristensen, was extremely pleased that 18 foals were sold for an average price of just under €12,000, and he also expressed his satisfaction with the commitment and set-up for the auction by Blue Hors. "We had a considerable number of online bids, including from many new bidders from many different countries. It has proven that with this concept we reach more people as the online platform provides access to a wider network of buyers. Therefore, it is not unlikely that a similar concept will be integrated into future auctions. At least we can conclude that this test run was a success," says Ulrik Kristensen.



Harrysmindes Castello (Blue Hors Kingston)

The auction committee was also very pleased with the auction, where fast internet bidding easily kept pace with the other bidders. Ulrik Kristensen is convinced that the Danish Warmblood's collaboration with ClipMyHorse has been a really good investment for the breeders, because a streaming auction reaches far in the equestrian world, saying, "Now we look forward to the Danish Warmblood foal shows, where we inspect foals for our next auctions."

Most expensive foal sold at 37,000

Among the buyers at the auction were several regular customers such as Frandsbjerg Horses, who acquired two lovely showjumping foals. In a duel against an internet bidder, Blue Hors dressage rider Nanna Merrald acquired the lovely filly foal Sevilla Pilekær (Vitalis x Apache), while her employer managed to purchase five foals, including the reserve champion and the champion colt from the Blue Hors foal championship, Harrysmindes Castello (Blue Hors Kingston x Dancier) and Jestis La Liga (Blue Hors Livius x Aljano). Jestis La Liga is a colt foal in a league of his own and a foal that many people dreamed of acquiring, with online bids coming from the Netherlands, Germany, and Great Britain as well as from bidders inside the arena. Finally, Blue Hors breeding manager, Martin Klavsen, succeeded in purchasing this special colt with a final bid of €37,000. He said, "This is an exceptional colt that we were determined to secure for Blue Hors, so we are thrilled that we succeeded."

The next Danish Warmblood foal auction takes place on Sunday, August 16, at Blue Hors and will also be a live-streaming auction. ■



Sevilla Pilekær (Vitalis)

Thormählen's life spanning nearly eight decades: Part 2

BY ADRIANA VAN TILBURG

PHOTOGRAPHY: PERSONAL COLLECTION

In part one of Harm Thormählen's nearly eight-decade career in breeding special sport horses, he recalled the early years, up to his 50th birthday, and how horses like Rappel, Retina and Gera have significantly contributed to sport horse breeding worldwide. In part two of this interview, below, Thormählen concludes with fascinating insights into his life-long passion for horses and breeding looking at the past 25 years to the present day.

◆ Breeding and business moved on between your 50th and 75th year. Besides being active on your own farm you were traveling to shows and also being active as a judge for OS, Z and even in Ireland you were very active. Your name became a brand. What has happened during these years, and how has it been for you?

The story here continues with Fein Cera. She was sold to Alison Firestone Robitaille, who sold her to Peter Wyld. Fein Cera was the best jumping horse at WEG 2002 in Jerez de la Frontera and was part of the team gold of the 2004 Athens Olympic Games. Eventually I was able to get Fein Cera back and she lived here happily until she died last year.

I made sure I had enough offspring from this line, even though it was a close call with Cera and Fein Cera. Both only produced one daughter. With the line of Retina and Rappel I made a mistake, I sold almost all the mares, so from Retina I had to buy back several offspring, and from the line of Rappel I only have a few mares. But I needed the money to to keep the farm going.

There is a whole organization behind keeping the farm in good condition, making sure everybody is getting paid

who is working here, keeping the horses in good condition with hard feed, hay, and straw for bedding in the winter and for mares and foals in the summer. Now I do it differently, I try to keep the fillies from the lines until I have a foal out of them, or I sell them as a three-year-old when I have enough from a certain branch. The latter is, however, highly unusual. But working in this way I was able to breed Echo of Light and Ornellaia, whom I sold as a foal to Princess Haya, and who jumped eventually at 1m60 under the saddle of John Whitaker.

Cera and Fein Cera were also the last mares who have been to an official mare performance test, as now test the horses myself with my team at home. Cera even had a bad mare performance test. She stayed eight weeks at Böckmann to be covered by Landadel (this would be Fein Cera's only foal), she wasn't in training and we only did it to register. She didn't have any power.

Cero (Calido I) traces back to Larsa, he was purchased as a young horse by Princess Haya. Francois Mathy Jr. came here to try Cero, and Gera's line really influenced the years from 2000 to 2010 on my farm.

The [banking] crisis of 2008 hit the breeding world very hard, and that was the first really negative period for Holsteiner breeding since the horse was switched for the tractor. This was a time when many breeders stopped breeding and coverings dropped dramatically. When I wrote my Master's certificate 40 years ago, I had to calculate how much it costs to have a foal and how much it costs to rear them until they are three years old. I really learned a lot from that and that is why I am not keen to sell foals. I have the possibility to keep the horses to a certain age and select then.

For 10 years I have been a judge for OS (Springpferdezuchtverband Oldenburg-International e.V.). When I started as a judge the OS existed from 50% Holsteiner blood, also with Holsteiner mare families. During the World Equestrian Games of Tryon in 2018 there were 15 OL/OS horses for jumping, and only seven Holsteiners. What was even more special was that during the BEMER Riders Tour in the Neumünster finale, there were so many strong OS horses and the representation of the Holsteiner



Harm Thormählen with Lacapo

horse was weak. I am worried about the Holsteiner breed. A lot of our good genetics went to Paul Schockemöhle, Leon Melchior – now Judy Ann Melchior – and also in general to the Netherlands and Belgium. It became mixed with French blood. Holstein waited too long to open up to foreign blood, and the breeders made the mistake of selling the best mares.

The Irish mistake being emulated

Ireland is a very interesting breeding country for showjumping horses. In the 1950s and 1960s, and at the beginning of the 1970s, they were the best rider nation in the world, and Irish horses were world class. Then everything broke down and it took 30 years to recover. Ireland had already made the mistake ahead of Holstein to sell all the good horses and to continue with what was left. It doesn't work to want to breed top horses if you've sold all the top horses.

Breeding organizations on the mainland continued to develop and make progress, while in Ireland they had to start once again from the beginning. I have already been going for 20 years to Ireland, judging at the Royal Dublin Horse Show, and so on. Twenty years ago I was so disappointed at how weak the quality was of the young horses in Dublin during the final. I became part of selecting the horses for the Dublin Horse Show and for 15 years I have seen very positive development. They have also opened to foreign blood and have improved the quality. For example with Cavalier Royale (Cor de la Bryère - Ligustra x Liguster, Stamm 474A, bred by Manfred and Anke Johannsen) and Courage (Capitol I - Vamara x Cor de la Bryère, Stamm 474A, bred by Christiane Brockmann). The problem is when you sell your top horses the clients will stay away too because there is nothing to buy. The clients who have success and joy with the horses they buy will return.

◆ How do you see the future?

That is quite easy. Besides Professor Dr. Schmidt and me, everybody has stopped with breeding in this area. We close the gaps from the other breeders who have stopped. Philipp Baumgart, the cousin of my wife, will take over my farm and is already fully involved in the sport horse business. He was also manager of the Lewitz breeding operation of Paul Schockemöhle and has many contacts worldwide.

Breeding will have to produce horses that have scope, and they have to be fast. Sport is now more complicated for the horses and there are not too many top-level horses today. I believe Cera would be able to fit into the sport of today because she was so fast and had scope. Unfortunately, she came a bit late to Otto Becker, but they immediately became German champions and won four Grand Prix classes. I would say she was even better than Fein Cera with her speed and technique.

I understand that breeders use embryo transfer, but it does take someone from the mares, and especially using ICSI with the sport mares. When the mares are young enough

they can handle it, but when they are older it is hard for them. I don't really think that auctions with embryos will be the future. It's the 'new rich' people who are organizing these auctions who have their clients on the beach in Costa Rica or somewhere else and are bidding on their phones. To me these people are not horse people. It is more important that those embryos that are born and being well managed. The management is much more important, the breaking in and riding of young horses is something that is for horse people. Treating and feeding them well and taking good care of them. It is all so much more than buying the genetics.

If I look back I see that the horses became more sensitive. Also in the education of the horses you notice this, you have to be patient and be gentle with the horses. These top sport horses have to be very intelligent and sensitive, the horses don't accept big mistakes. Also the mind of the horse is for many people very difficult to understand because they don't show emotions for as example a dog who is much clearer with his mind. You have to respect the mind of the horse and that only works when you have good staff.

It is also a problem to find good staff. We were very lucky that there was a documentary broadcast over several episodes about our farm showing the bad and the good. Because of this documentary we had a lot of people who wanted to work for us. We were selected from five different breeding areas where the breeding directors proposed three breeding farms and we won. I thought that I could sell the normal horses better through this project. That didn't happen, but it became teaching material at schools for working with horses and we had a lot of good people who wanted to do their education with us.

OS and Zangersheide will become very strong and will be tough competition for the other studbooks. All the others have to stay sharp and continue their progress. For the horses the situation will also become more difficult, they are week in week out underway and have no break anymore. But their mind needs to be able to process everything, so between the shows they need a break. In the past there were only a few indoor shows in the winter so the horses could take a break, and now the horses are even in the winter every weekend on the road.

Concluding nearly eight decades in breeding

Harm and Ingela Thormählen have influenced the sport horse breeding in a unique way. With Capitol I he bred a stallion that became one of the most influential sires of the last 40 years. With Fein Cera he bred the best horse of the World Equestrian Games of Jerez de la Frontera in 2002. At the age of 75 years he still has the fire in his eyes when talking about breeding and the future. Now, a great successor in the shape of Philipp Baumgart is in the starting gate, waiting to take the reins from this remarkable gentleman and sport horse breeder when he finally does decide to retire. ■

Welcome to Poland's Young Horse Championships

BY ANNA CUBER / PZHK

PHOTOGRAPHY: KATARZYNA WISZOWATY, KATARZYNA BRODA

Where? When? Which horses? What disciplines? The Polish Championship for Young Horses is scheduled to take place from September 17-20, 2020 – to be precise, the championship for riding horses that are organized by various studbooks depending on breeding infrastructure and sport in any given country. There are also differences in rules, but it creates the first opportunity to see young horses 'in action' under saddle, rather than free jumping or at liberty.

During these competitions it's possible to observe young horses in a jumping or dressage arena, negotiating cross-country obstacles, or in a marathon. To many owners, they see their own-bred horses as the best. Only after comparing them with other horses do they sometimes view the differences in quality. This possibility to compare horses within their own age-group is most important, as well as the presentation under a rider.

Breeding of Warmbloods is, of course, different to Thoroughbreds, for example, whose quality may already be tested at the age of two when they race for the first time. On the other hand, a late-maturing two-year-old half-bred horse is still a 'juvenile,' and a great unknown. One has to wait a long time for the final evaluation, and success in sport depends upon many other additional factors, which are often beyond breeder's control, for example on appropriate managing, feeding, or a rider's skills and wisdom.

In Germany the National Federation (FN) in Warendorf is responsible for the Bundeschampionate. It is not only responsible for sport but also has a significant influence on the breeding department. In France, a separate association is responsible for the organisation of competitions for young horses (a classical scheme for professionals, as well as amateurs), which is obvious, because over 1,200 young

jumping horses are entered at the event. In the Netherlands, the thriving KWPN association is responsible for the events and (with the exception of the pandemic situation) jumping, as well as dressage competitions are held during their KWPN Days. The Belgian Championships are also run along 'classical lines, where clear rounds count.

In Poland, competitions for young horses, qualifiers for the young horse championships, and the championships themselves are breeding events and, therefore, the Polish Horse Breeders Association (PZHK) is responsible for their organization and qualifications. PZHK comprises breeders from eight studbooks, including three that are specifically saddle sports.

In many countries, including Poland, the young horse championships are organized according to rules that are different from traditional sport events, and include showjumping, dressage, eventing, driving, and sport endurance. For two years now, following the example of the Bundeschampionat, PZHK has organized their young horse championship in the same location, where jumping, dressage and eventing horses meet at the enchanting and perfectly organized Stragona Strzegom Centre. Located in the south of Poland, it has hosted the FEI Eventing World Cup Final, as well as the European championships for ponies, and age-group championships for four-, five-, and six-year-old horses in the three disciplines.

In jumping, an additional age-group for seven-year-olds has been added, and every horse participating in the championships has to meet qualification criteria formulated in the annual rules for a given discipline. In each discipline four-year-olds are also evaluated on the so-called 'triangle' for constitution, functionality, and usefulness for a given discipline.

Because the competitions in jumping and eventing (four and five-year-olds), and dressage (four-, five-, and six-year-olds) are evaluated for style, involving a subjective view, the Polish Horse Breeders Association invites foreign judges to sit on the judging committee. These guest judges are not familiar with the horses, nor have they trained them, so they have fresh eyes on the competition and share their



Paweł Warszawski and Green Line M sp (Cassillio [Holst] - Generacja sp x Le Voltaire [KWPN]), bred by SK Moszna

knowledge and experience with the other members of the committee. Qualifiers towards the last day's young-horse championship finals are held in parallel for all the disciplines, with only the finals occurring separately.

Several times, Boudewijn Schepers, one of the creators of the BWP grandeur, and for many years the chairman of the BWP Stallion Commission, has been invited to sit on the jumping committee (the most popular of the disciplines). His impartiality, knowledge, and serenity, whether it's been during the assessment of jumping horse exteriors or the jumps themselves, has meant that for two years no one has made any complaints and there has been no dissatisfaction among the competitors.

From this year onwards, the Polish jumping championship for young horses will not evaluate one overall value, but three separate features, as follows: jumping potential, agility, and quality of the canter. These features are most important to a showjumping horse, and the distinction and separate scores will allow the breeder and owner to learn more about the horse. It should be remembered that the style classes receive a commentary from the committee, so every owner can learn as much as possible about his/her pupil.

Dressage breeding gaining momentum

In Poland, dressage horse breeding has only recently gained momentum, thanks to, among others, the initiative of Cichon Dressage, and more horses with strictly dressage pedigrees are taking part in this competition. These horses are evaluated based on individual programmes. Each horse is alone in the dressage arena, but another horse is allowed to prepare in the practice arena alongside the fences. It is important that the arenas used for dressage are both outdoors and indoors. Last year, the foreign judge invited to evaluate young horses was Dr. Carsten Munk from Germany who in great detail and with high precision discussed each horse in his comments.

Eventing for launching a career

Eventing is a three-in-one discipline which, according to many, despite the current situation in speciality breeding, is where as many horses as possible should launch their sporting careers. It tests courage, jumping skills, and the rideability of a young saddle horse. Eventing requires comprehensive training, and a horse in such training avoids... boredom! Its day is not limited to going from a box to an indoor arena, and back again. Moreover, a rider who begins from eventing won't be afraid of horses. This was true in case of Reiner Klimke and the famous Polish sportsman, Jan Kowalczyk, an Aachen competitor and many times Polish champion.

Strzegom Centre

The owner of Strzegom Centre, where our Polish

Championships for Young Horses are held, is Marcin Konarski, a former member of the FEI Eventing Commission, currently the coach of the Polish National Team in eventing. He considers it a point of pride to invite the best judges who are experts in evaluating young eventing horses. Last year they were Jane Tolley (UK) and Gerd Küst from Germany, judges who are also well recognised in their home countries.

In these Polish championships both horses with Polish passports (de facto Polish-bred horses), as well as mares and stallions holding foreign passports issued by a member studbook of the WBFSh. Geldings with foreign passports may compete in the qualifiers, but the Polish Championships for Young Horses are closed to them. Of course, a lot of stallions of either Polish or foreign breeding fight for a breeding license in Polish warmblood studbooks, which is the reason why recognized foreign judges are such an important element of the selection process.

In the Polish Championships for Young Horses, the Polish Horse Breeders Association and the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development pays financial rewards and bonuses to horse breeders and owners. In the case of young horses, the financial prizes are not as important as the marketing and prestige, as well as purchase offers.

Naturally, this year will be different given the safety requirements in place for Covid-19 that have forced the organizers to change their procedures. Therefore, this year's championships will not be open to the public, but will be broadcast online by Koni Publishing House, as usual, and possibly also via Clipmyhorse.tv.

I invite everyone to watch this year's championship online: www.swiatkoni.pl and in 2021 to visit Strzegom during this major September event. ■



Four-year-old champion Daria Kobiernik and Donna Neva S sp (MJT Nevados S sp - Donwelta S x Welstein [Hann]), bred by Stanisław Szurik, owned by Eliza Karpus



Four-year-old dressage champion Zofia Mordzelewska and Gregory Peck sp (Deniro [Hann] - Guidama sp x Cancoon [Holst]) bred by Krzysztof Byczkowski

The breeders behind the Irish Army horses: Part 2

BY NADIA REA / HSI

PHOTOGRAPHY: LAURENCE DUNNE

The Army Equitation school's primary mission is to promote the Irish horse, support Irish breeders, and to advertise the Irish-bred sport horse through participation in international events in both eventing and showjumping at the highest level. Since its establishment in 1926, army riders have competed at top international events from Nations Cups' to the Olympic Games, all while riding and promoting Irish Sport Horses.

Tempo Manor (ISH) formally known as Candy Man is by Sligo Candy Boy (ISH) out of Roxy Lux (ISH) by Lux Z (HANN). This 2012 gelding was bred by Noel Wright in Enniscrone, Co. Sligo. Noel has a mixed farm with suckler cows, beef cattle, and two broodmares. His 80 acres is located between Enniscrone and Easley in County Sligo. Noel's first love of horses came from spending time with his uncle who used to keep horses. Like many Irish breeders, Noel then decided to jump in and buy his first mare, Roxy Lux. This mare is by Lux Z (Hann) and out of a Don Juan de La Bouverie (sBs) mare.

When buying this mare Noel liked her pedigree, type, and temperament, saying; "I have such a soft spot for this mare. From day one she was my pet, so I then decided to breed her. Sligo Candy boy was a good fit and the Howley's are so easy to deal with. Tempo Manor was her first foal and he is such a nice type. Unfortunately, the following year our mare was hit by lightning. It was touch and go. The vet wanted to put her down. We loved her too much to allow that to happen. Six months of sleepless nights and willing her back to health eventually got her back on her feet.

"It was a tough time, but she came through with plenty

of TLC. For a life with animals you need to love them, and this means not giving up on them. Now because of this, money couldn't buy her. Two years ago, we decided to put her back in foal after her accident and our plan is to continue to breed with her. Last year we had a full brother to Tempo Manor who is also a lovely type. We hope he will go down the same road, with some luck we will sell him to someone who will give him every opportunity to compete to the top level. We were very lucky with Tempo Manor, we sold him as a three-year-old and he was then broken by Vincent Howley before going to Gabriel Tunney where he began his competition career. I have followed him to various shows and it's always a pleasure to watch him compete.

"I have also visited McKee Barracks where it was a real joy to see him and to know how well he is being cared for there by the grooms. Geoff [Curran] keeps in touch and is always happy to have a chat with us at the competitions. I am so happy that he has ended up in the army, he has every opportunity to go all the way to the top in the capable hands of Captain Geoff Curran and Captain Charlene Kehoe. When he does, we will plan a trip to see him compete at one of the bigger international shows."

Noel has now decided to expand his breeding plan and has purchased a second mare, Dapple Clover (ISH) by Castlely Boy (IDC2) out of Uzzi Clover (ISH) by Marcuzzi (HANN). This mare is now also in foal to Sligo Candy Boy (ISH), and Noel is excited to see the progeny and hopes for the same success.

Tempo Manor

Tempo Manor began his national showjumping career with Gabriel Tunney when he competed as a four-year-old in the RDS qualifiers. He then progressed through the Irish Sport Horse studbook series, where he had multiple clear rounds in the five- and six-year-old competitions at various legs of this league. Gabriel and Tempo Manor qualified for the RDS in both 2016 and 2017. According to Gabriel; "He was quite weak as a four- and five-year-old, but he was always very careful with quick reactions. I really think a lot of this



Captain Geoff Curran riding HHS Clinstown (OBOS Quality 004 - MHS Kilkenny Lady x Cavalier Royale)

horse, so I took my time producing him. I always felt that this horse had so much more to give. I can see him competing at the top level and I am delighted that he is with Captain Geoff Curran. A rider of this calibre is exactly what this horse needs to take him to 1m50 level.”

Comdt. Sharon Crean and Captain Charlene Kehoe first set eyes on Tempo Manor at Cavan Indoor Championships in 2018. Sharon recalls; “The horse first caught the eye of myself and Captain Kehoe at Cavan October Grand Prix Show, during a 1m20 class in which we had been competing. He struck us as a really nice, quality, blood type in the ring. For a six-year-old, his rideability was remarkable and it was clearly evident that he had been carefully produced by his owner/rider, Gabriel Tunney.”

HHS Clinstown (ISH)

This 2011 gelding is by OBOS Quality 004 (Oldbg) out of MHS Kilkenny Lady (ISH) by Cavalier Royale (Holst). This gelding was bred by the late Ita Brennan from Mill House Stud in Gowran, Co. Kilkenny. HHS Clinstown began his national jumping career in Hughes Horse Stud when Marion Hughes rode him in his first RDS qualifier where he qualified to compete in the prestigious RDS four-year-old class. He changed hands between Marion, Mikey Pender and Jack O’Donohue for the remainder of 2015 and 2016 while building up successful results for each of the HHS riders in the Irish Sport Horse Studbook Series and various national classes.

In 2017 Captain David Power picked up the reins and began competing in the six-year-old Irish Sport Horse Studbook series before going to Captain Geoff Curran in June 2017. Geoff continued to produce him through 2017 and 2018, picking up clear rounds and ribbons through the age and national classes. In April 2018 HHS Clinstown made his first appearance on the international stage when he competed in Moorsele CSIYH1* finishing second and third, and winning the young horse class in Vittel CSIYH1*. In 2019 Clinstown finished his season coming second during the Cavan international CSII* 1m40 class.

All these MHS Horses were bred by the late Ita Brennan and her family. Her sons John (Tramore), Tim (Gowran), Tom (Gowran), and Michael (Naas) are all passionate breeders and active figures in Ireland’s equestrian community. Their breeding operation was originally situated in their home farm in Gowran Co. Kilkenny and has now expanded between their private dwellings.

Mill House Stud is a mixed farm of cattle, sheep, and horses with the main attraction being the calibre of mares and young stock available. This farm is located just minutes from the main Dublin to Waterford route. Both the Brennan and the Hughes families began with these famous bloodlines back in the 1930s when their grand-uncle Dick Tobin had his prize mare under trap for transportation. Little did he know that this mare’s descendants would produce Olympic performers such as Special Envoy (ISH), Diamond

Exchange (ISH), and Imperial Cavalier (ISH). HHS Clinstown comes from this line.

MHS Kilkenny Lady (ISH) had four other progeny, one of which was sold to Cooley Farm. MHS Cooley Flash (ISH) is a 2010 gelding by Lancelot (KWPN) who is now eventing in the United Kingdom and competing successfully with English rider Imogen Gloag in CCI1* and 2* competitions. MHS Kilkenny Lady comes from the famous Kells Line, which has proven extremely successful for both the Brennan and Hughes families.

In 2019, Cuffesgrange Cavadora (ISH) by Z Wellie 72 (KWPN) out of Cuffesgrange Cavaldam (ISH) by Luidam (KWPN) won the seven-year-old Lanaken Young Horse Championships with 17-year old Seamus Hughes Kennedy on board, while Mikey Pender came second on MHS Cardenta (ISH) by Cardento (Holst) out of Willow Point (ISH) by Diamond Serpent (ISH). Cuffesgrange Cavaldam (ISH) is a 2005 pony that has been on winning Irish teams and has partnered many international victories with both Seamus Hughes Kennedy and Max Watchman. These successful horses are all descendants from this blood line.

Speaking to Ita’s son Tom he explained; “This is one of our most valued lines here in Ireland. We as a family have been very fortunate to be intertwined breeding and producing these horses with our cousins the Hughes. Marion, Clare, and Seamie and the team in HHS have done a fantastic job producing some of these horses and achieving the results that they are so capable of. There are so many successful horses connected to this line that it is difficult to narrow it down to a few.

“Ballypatrick Mystique was third in 2010 in the seven-year-old world breeding championships. She has now gone on to compete successfully with Giorgia Fallia in Italy. MHS Prime Time (ISH) by Quidam Junior (KWPN) out of Cavalier Kells Lady (ISH) by Cavalier Royale (Holst) came first in the RDS seven/eight-year-old class in 2013, while MHS Going Global finished second. We decided to breed MHS Prime Time and I kept one of her progeny for myself. MHS Jersey Girl (ISH) is by Cardento (Holst). This mare was mainly produced by my son Jack while studying for his leaving cert, and last year she won the Reaching New Heights premier series at Cork Summer Show, then came second the following week in Maryville. She is now based in Florida with Darragh Kenny, and Kevin Mealiff takes up the ride on her this week.

“MHS Central Park (ISH) is also from this line. Last year my son Jack and this gelding won the 1m35 young rider class in the RDS while also having collected numerous placings in 1m30 and 1m35 classes nationally. Other current successful horses from this line are HHS Burnchurch (ISH), HHS Fast Forward, and MHS Washington who is now competing at 1m60 Global Champions Tour events. We are blessed that there are too many to mention and we intend to try keep it that way.”



Tempo Manor (ISH) / ex Candy Man (Sligo Candy Boy (ISH) - Roxy Lux (ISH) x Lux Z) ridden by Captain Geoff Curran

MHS Gabhran (ISH)

MHS Gabhran (ISH) is a nine-year-old gelding by Cardento (Holst) out of French Ballerina (ISH) by Diamant de Semilly (SF). He was bred by Ita's son Michael Brennan. MHS Gabhran started his career in 2015 with Ethan Ahearn before progressing on to be competed by Lizzie Aldridge until the end of 2016. In July 2017 Captain Geoff Curran and MHS Gabhran made their debut at Tattersalls Ward Union show. Geoff continued to produce him through various national and international classes. In 2017 and 2018 this combination had wins in Drammen and Carmona CSYH1* classes. In 2019 the combination were in the ribbons again in 1m35 Grand Prix classes in Barnadown and Cavan.

Michael Brennan said; "Mum started the breeding line with a 1981 mare called Grange Queen (ISH), a mare by King of Diamonds (ID) out of a Thoroughbred mare. Mum always loved an injection of blood into the mares. This mare's progeny were very nice and proving to be athletic so in 1992 mum took three embryos from this mare all by Cavalier Royale (Holst) which was proving to be one of the best crosses for this line. Out of these embryos there were two geldings and one filly. The geldings went on to compete up to 1m60 level, but I really liked the filly as a yearling, so mum gifted the yearling to me to start my own breeding line. I called this mare Naomi Cambell (ISH) because she was a good mover and a bit headstrong, so I thought the name suited. She had 14 progeny. Most of these offspring were very successful, MHS Walk the Line (ISH) competed successfully in the UK with Anneliese Aitken, while Rolo Tomasi (ISH) came fourth in the Hickstead Derby in 2013 with David Simpson.

"Bob Dolton (ISH) went on to compete internationally with Cameron Hanley. But I decided to keep a filly out of her. I had been following Diamant de Semilly (SF) and his success in 2002/2003, so I decided to put her in foal to him

in 2003. I had the first covering and foal by him in Ireland. Needless to say, I decided to keep this mare to continue the line. MHS Gabhran's dam, French Ballerina (ISH) was the result of this covering. She has been a fantastic mare for me. My brother Tim and I decided to go into partnership and take embryos from her. One of these embryos is MHS Attraction (ISH), a mare by Numero Uno (KWPN). She was produced as a four- and five-year-old by David Moran from Carlow before being sold to Richard Bourmes where Jenny Rankin began to ride her. Both Jenny and Davie had great results through the Irish Sport Horse Studbook series and other national classes before she went abroad to compete with Jenny.

Jenny won young horse classes in Oliva and the five-year-old qualifier in Lanaken. She was then sold and in January 2018 began competing with Spanish rider Sergio Alvarez Moya. They are now competing successfully at 1m60 level and we

look forward to following her journey.

We have three full siblings to MHS Attraction due this year, and a full brother to MHS Attraction born the other day. Now we're awaiting two more. We also have a two-year-old by Luidam (KWPN), a three-year-old by Vigo d'Arsouilles (BWP), and a four-year-old by Quidam Junior I (KWPN) out of this dam. The four-year-old mare is currently being produced by Vincent Byrne in Kilkenny, so we look forward to seeing what lies ahead for her.'

The Irish Army perspective

Commanding Officer Lieutenant Colonel Thomas Freyne said; "HHS Clinstown, MHS Gabhran, and Tempo Manor are three very exciting young horses. They are great examples of the quality young stock now being bred in Ireland. Clinstown has a super temperament which makes him very rideable. He is developing into a competitive horse and has the potential to win a lot of classes.

Gabhran is an athletic horse with lots of scope, he's very careful and has the potential to jump to the highest level. This season will see him mature a lot and hopefully when we get back jumping, he can continue his progression.

Tempo Manor is a very balanced horse, very intelligent, with a lot of natural ability. He is now in his second season in the Equitation School. Ridden now by Capt. Geoff Curran, he is showing the ability to develop into a very competitive international performer. These youngsters have been bred for high performance and thanks to their sound conformation, athleticism, and temperament, they are developing into highly competent showjumpers that have the quality required to succeed in the modern sport of show jumping." ■

Kunowo Stud hosts Polish Hanoverian Days

BY AGATA GROSICKA

PHOTOGRAPHY: ALEKSANDRA WALAS

This year's edition of Hannoverian Days organized by Kunowo Stud, located just outside Poznan in the western part of Poland, took place on July 11, 2020. Out of a dozen or so mares, three were awarded with the Hannoverian Praemie. The first of them, also announced as the best dressage mare, was four-year-old Dancing Queen (Diamond Hit - St.Pr.St. Fujairah SF x Florencio I), bred and owned by Agnieszka Gronowska and presented by Konrad Holodiuk.

The other state premium mare was a chestnut five-year-old jumper by Stolzenberg, out of Cayenne (Comte x Escudo I), bred by Sławomir Olesinski. The third was a four-year-old showjumper by Cornet Obolensky, out of St.Pr.St. Quinta (Quintender x Cento), bred and owned by Roman Roszkiewicz.

The best showjumping mare, scoring two nines in the free jumping, was beautiful and quite magnificent, by Diatendro, our of Centuria S (Chacco-Blue) bred by Johannes Sabel and Magdalena Jozwiak.

A dozen foals were also presented during the awarding of premiums, where the winning showjumping foal was a colt by Numero Uno out of dam St.Pr.St.Carmen (Cento x Calido), bred and owned by Marta Roszkiewicz-Heizer. A filly by Diamant de Semilly out of dam St.Pr.St.Quinta (Quintender x Cento), and a colt by Stakkato Gold out of dam St.Pr.St.Calua (Cornet Obolensky x Quintender), bred and owned by Roman Roszkiewicz, were also gold medal awarded.

The dressage foals winner was a colt by Finest out of dam Edi van Volker (Edward x Lauries Crusador xx), and a colt by Finest Edward out of dam Delicia (Dancier x Wolkenstein II). Both foals were bred and are owned by Joanna Siuda-Lewandowska and Mirosław Cichy.

The horses were scrutinised by a very experienced



Five-year-old Stolzenberg mare bred by Sławomir Olesinski – Hannoverian state premium mare award

representation of Hannoverian Association judges, including Hans Henning von der Decken, chairman of the Verband, Stefan Blanken, the test rider, and Erdwing Holste. They were also happy to provide a commentary on the results.

◆ In general how would you value the event and the presented horses?

HHD: Most of them they were jumping horses, two or three dressage horses – all of top, top level and good ground quality, so we awarded three Hanoverian premiums today, two for jumping and one for dressage.

◆ What did you think of their breeding value?

The jumping horses are really modern, with good bloodlines, on both the mother and father's side, going back to the second and third generation, including international stallions such as Chacco-Blue, Calido.

Stefan Blanken, the Hanoverian Verband test rider with 20 years of experience preparing many young stallions for licensing, picked his favourite horse for the day: "All horses were different, and the mare by Diamond Hit was nice, but overall I liked the Stolzenberg mare. She is a very good sport



Marta Roszkiewicz with Heizer and her colt by Numero Uno



*Colt by **Finest Edward** out of dam **Delicia (Dancier x Wolkenstein II)**, bred and owned by **Joanna Siuda-Lewandowska** and **Miroslaw Cichy***

horse, has a very good mind. She is willing to learn – I could feel that in five minutes. I can't give you a guarantee but in the short time I had a good feeling about her.

Erdwing Holste, who has been registering Hanoverian horses in Poland for 15 years now, definitely knows the difference. "I registered the first foals here in Kunowo about 15 years ago. When they started breeding here, they had very good German bloodlines, and they have now developed breeding – two years ago having a Hanoverian premium stallion, so now they're on top. They've also developed with the mares they breed and select, so they're now top, and I'm really happy that Polish breeders have followed this route. Now we make the registration tour with 45 to 50 foals that we are to register in Poland this year.

Piotr Kuczynski, who represents the Hanoverian Association in Poland, also shared his opinion on the season 2020. "For three years I have represented the Hanoverian Association in Poland. This is the second edition of the Championships here in Kunowo – last year the event did not take place due to the outbreak of EVA."

◆ **What is your overall opinion about this season?**

PK: A great number of mares registered for the field test and were quite diverse because of their origins. A few of them were by Cornet Obolensky, whom we all know is very popular now in Poland. And we also know that breeding with mares by Cornet Obolensky is top right now, but there are not so many outstanding offspring. Even here we had a couple of mares by Cornet Obolensky, yet the best showjumping mare turned out to be a four-year-old by Diatendro.

With over 60 members now in Poland we are getting bigger – eight new members last year and six new members this year already and it's hopefully going to change by the end of the season.

◆ **How do the lines maintain their originality these days, when you can mix whatever breed you choose for your mare. What's considered Hanoverian now?**

PK: It is difficult to judge the breeding of a horse by the lines. A foal by For Pleasure can be registered in almost any studbook a breeder chooses. What really matters is what Associations offer their members apart from registering. Two years ago a stallion bred by Ms. Roszkiewicz was licensed in Verden and sold on spot at the Verden Auction.

And this year the most expensive foal at the Hanoverian Foals Online Auction – Netflix (Carthago x Kannan) was sold to Poland for €26 000.

We were afraid that due to Covid-19 the situation would get worse. Yet eventually everybody is happy because of higher sales and higher prices than before the coronavirus outbreak. The value of sold foals is 30% up compared to last year.

The online auctions might actually become a permanent solution. Not everybody is ready to travel around the world to bid for foal because, when we look around, a foal is still just a big unknown. Now, due to the global pandemic situation, people are forced to search for a horse online through all kind of social media. And when the online auction is well served, it really works and buyers are convinced to take part. So, there is an idea to keep the online auctions after the pandemic's over.

In case of the most expensive horses reaching prices of €200,000 to €300,000, a buyer really wants to see it for himself. When it comes to a foal you buy a sport prospect which costs circa €15,000. You're not buying a ready-made 'product' but the hope of owning a great horse in the future. The whole world is heading in that direction which is great. In general the sales through Verband are very strong, with 16,000 registered mares. It's very strong marketplace, which you can see at the auctions organized in Verden. ■



*Diamond Hit mare ridden by Hanoverian Verband test rider **Stefan Blanken***

Around the provinces with CWHBA: Saskatchewan

BY DIANNE MILLION

PHOTOGRAPHY: EMILY SPEARS

Saskatchewan is considered one of the three prairie provinces in Canada. Grassland covers the southern plains subsequently, over the years there have been many jokes about Saskatchewan being flat, "you can see your dog run away for three days". As you move north you will encounter parkland with rolling hills, evergreen and deciduous forests, rivers, lakes for fishing, camping, boating, cabin living.

Moving even further north you will reach the rugged rock of the Canadian Shield plateau. To the south Saskatchewan borders the United States.

Regina, the provincial capital, has the training centre for the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and was for many years the breeding centre for their famous black horses. It is also home to the Royal Saskatchewan Museum, with exhibits on natural history and the people of Canada's First Nations.

Saskatchewan's population (2019) of 1.174 million is concentrated in the southern half and includes the largest proportion of indigenous people of any of the provinces. Saskatchewan has two universities located in Saskatoon and Regina. Saskatoon is the location for one of Canada's largest and best veterinary colleges; the Western College of Veterinary Medicine. It is the site of significant equine research and its out-clinic provides tremendous benefit to Warmblood breeders locally and regionally.

Interspersed across the province, on the plains, river valleys and parkland you will find our Warmblood horse

breeders. The famous hard prairie grass and open spaces for rearing, produces horses with solid bone and good minds. Over the last 20 years the caliber of the horses being produced has improved tremendously, due to the dedication of our breeders continually striving to improve the quality of mares and stallions.

Some of the 'pioneers' in the industry have changed their direction and are now coaching, teaching, judging, and mentoring young people and new breeders. To encourage interest in Warmblood horses the chapter hosts a yearly showcase where breeders and riders can participate in classes geared toward breed improvement through performance classes, mare inspections, stallion licensing, and foal classes. These gatherings are a opportunity to meet new people, share ideas, and enjoy fabulous food.

All things considered Saskatchewan, with its excellent rearing conditions and an active community of breeders, is an excellent place to raise Warmblood horses. The future looks bright. ■



The equine gut microbiome: Establishing a healthy foal gut

BY MEREDITH BONNELL MS

The gut microbiome has become a popular topic of interest in recent years as scientists are beginning to understand the vast impact it can have on overall health and development in both humans and animals. A microbiome is defined as the collection of genomes of the microorganisms that reside in a specific environment [1].

In regards to the gut microbiome, it is comprised of the genetic material of the microbes that inhabit an organism's gastrointestinal system. In the horse, this microbiome includes bacteria, yeast, fungi, and protozoa where the most functionally important microorganism is thought to be bacteria. Researchers have studied how this microbial community can affect not only the digestive tract, but also the immune response, endocrine system, behavior, and even cognitive function.

The horse is a nonruminant herbivore, so its symbiotic relationship with the microbial population present in its stomach, small intestine, and large intestine is imperative for survival. Horses do not have all of the digestive enzymes needed to process fibrous plants, so they use bacteria located in their gastrointestinal tract to do so. The homeostasis of the gut microbiome is also very important in order to prevent the overabundance of pathogenic bacteria and to protect the horse from gastrointestinal disease, which is a major issue in the horse industry.

Major functions of the horse's gut microbiome

The horse has adapted to a fiber-rich diet with approximately 35-60% of their diet being composed of cell wall carbohydrates [2]. The hindgut is the major compartment responsible for processing this type of carbohydrate because it is home to the bacteria that are able to break down and absorb the nutrients from fibrous plants using their own microbial enzymes.

Bacteria in the horse's digestive system are able to hydrolyze plant fibers into soluble sugars and these sugars are then converted into short chain fatty acids by the process of fermentation. Short chain fatty acids, such as propionate, butyrate and acetate, can be readily utilized by the horse and provide them with approximately 60-70% of their energy [3, 4]. Therefore, it is apparent that they rely heavily on their gut microbiome to meet their dietary needs.

It is known that certain bacterial species have specific roles in the gut. Some are known for their function in digesting a certain type of feedstuff while others are proven to proliferate during particular states and their functions are

not yet fully understood. For example, proteolytic bacteria are responsible for protein digestion and cellulolytic bacteria are the major fiber-digesters. It can be difficult to assign individual bacteria to specific functions manually, so bioinformatics programs like PICRUSt can be convenient for researchers to determine the function of their microbial community when transcriptomic data is not available [5]. Although, there are still some limitations in predicting a bacterium's function using extracted DNA rather than RNA. When determining function, it is usually better to sequence extracted RNA in order to achieve a better picture of what the sampled bacteria are actually doing in the digestive tract.

Management effects on the microbiome

Management practices have been proven to greatly affect the horse's gut microbiome. There have been studies addressing how factors such as weaning method in the foal, diet, exercise and general management influence the horse's gut microbiota [6-10]. Management is a very important aspect of horse ownership and includes regulating the horse's diet, exercise, social interaction and housing. It can be a major causal factor of many different diseases and behavioral abnormalities in the horse such as laminitis and stereotypic behaviors.

With the increased use of supplemental feeds in the domestic horse, overfeeding of carbohydrates, specifically starch and sugar, is becoming more common. Concentrate feeds can be helpful for horse owners when trying to achieve a balanced diet for their horse. However, when these feeds are administered inappropriately, there can be an increased risk for physiological issues such as laminitis and colic. Laminitis, a major persisting issue in the horse industry, can be triggered by overfeeding, high intake of soluble carbohydrates, and severe concussion trauma to the laminae due to overworking.

Domesticated horses and ponies are thought to be more prone to major health issues than feral horses because of the way in which they are managed [11]. Factors such as grazing access, exercise, social interaction and diet have been proven to be contributing factors to a horse's health. Mainly due to

the higher starch content commonly found in the domestic horse's diet, there is a higher prevalence of diseases like starch-induced laminitis and gastric ulcers [11]. Horses are adapted to be continuous grazers, which can be difficult to achieve in the domestic setting. Since diet and the microbiome are so interconnected, the gut microbial community and functionality may also be contributing factors to the higher prevalence of gastrointestinal-related disease in domesticated horses.

Gut dysbiosis and its connections with disease

There are many different gastrointestinal disorders common in the horse that have been associated with gut dysbiosis, including starch-induced laminitis, colitis, diarrhea and gastric ulcers [12-16]. These abnormalities have been proven to be correlated with differences in microbial diversity and abundances when compared to healthy horses.

Laminitis occurs when there is weakened adhesion between the distal phalanx and lamellae of the inner hoof wall. This inflammatory lesion can eventually cause complete detachment and rotation of the coffin bone as well as extreme pain for the horse. An excess of starch, which is commonly found in commercial concentrate feeds, is thought to be a contributing factor to dietary laminitis by way of the fermented components released by bacteria into the bloodstream during lactic acidosis. The specific processes involved are still unknown; however, gut bacteria and diet are known to have a large role in the onset of this disease [17, 18]. Bacteria in the hindgut are responsible for breaking down undigested sugar and starch. When there is a sudden increase in dietary starch, it can cause an excess of lactic acid bacteria in the hindgut. This can lead to lactate accumulation, gut acidity and the release of bacterial toxins into the bloodstream, which can trigger systemic inflammation.

Foal diarrhea is another gut microbiome-related disease that can cause worry and financial loss to horse owners. Gut dysbiosis is a common occurrence in the foal's life and it has been found that diarrhea affects up to 60% of foals in their first six months [19]. This type of diarrhea, also referred to as foal heat diarrhea, is a transient, non-infectious type. It is usually mild and does not require any veterinary treatment such as fluid administration or antibiotic treatment, however, in rare cases, the foal's immune system can be compromised and their mild diarrhea can turn into a more life-threatening infection.

In a recent study using Standardbred and Shetland-type pony foals; it was found that there was not a significant difference between diarrheic and non-diarrheic foals when analyzing their hindgut communities as a whole [20]. However, there were differences found in specific taxa and these small differences could help explain the events occurring during foal diarrhea. The findings pertaining to the depleted taxa in diarrheic foals could also provide more information on appropriate probiotic supplementation for immunologically compromised foals that may not have the

ability to efficiently recover without intervention. Interestingly, two of the taxa found to be enriched in diarrheic foals were also discovered to have an increased abundance in human children with Irritable Bowel Syndrome when compared to healthy children [21-24].

There is still a lack of studies on the microbiome during cases of laminitis and foal diarrhea using next generation sequencing. The definitive cause of these diseases have still not yet been determined, so more studies characterizing the bacterial community present during these states may be helpful. Transcriptomic data can also allow for a deeper understanding of the events occurring in the gut when disease onset occurs.

Tools used to analyze the microbiome

Many equine studies on the gut microbiome have used culture-based procedures to characterize the bacteria present. It is known, however, that a significant number of organisms present in the gut are unculturable using standard culture methods. Culture techniques can be helpful when trying to identify specific bacteria that cause disease or when trying to briefly analyze the microbiome as a whole. There are still many challenges in using cultures to analyze the microbiome because it can provide researchers with an inaccurate depiction of the microbial community. Therefore, the emergence of next generation sequencing techniques has been helpful in achieving a deeper understanding of the gut microbiome in horses as well as other animals.

The 16S rRNA gene sequencing is based on non-enriched PCR products and allows for a more reliable analysis of the microbiome. The 16S rRNA gene sequences are used to study bacteria because of its presence in virtually all bacteria, its function has been preserved over time and its size of 1,500 base pairs makes it large enough for informatics and analytics purposes [25]. This type of next generation sequencing is very helpful in characterizing a microbial community in both its diversity and member abundance. In most cases, 16S rRNA gene sequencing is able to provide genus level identification and, in some cases, species level identification [25].

The 16S rRNA gene sequencing is slowly becoming more popular in horse microbiome studies. There are, however, still many researchers using culture-based methods for microbiome work. The use of next generation sequencing is imperative to provide horse owners with more definitive answers on the causes of equine gastrointestinal disease, which is a significant issue in the horse industry.

It is apparent that the horse's gut microbiome plays a very important role in the development and health of the horse. In the future, there will hopefully be a better understanding of the gut microbiome's role in disease and in any other abnormalities that can negatively affect the horse. Future research will provide horse owners with a better understanding of the gut microbiome's impact on their horse and with better ways to manage them.

Establishing a foal's healthy gut microbiome

The mare-foal bond is a special connection that's normally associated with the behavioral interactions between a mare and her foal. What's not usually thought of is the bond formed between their immune systems and microbiomes. A healthy gut microbiome goes hand in hand with a strong immune system. Foals have innate immunity at birth, but several adaptive immune responses can take up to a year to develop to those of an adult horse. The correct development of a foal's immune system is very important in protecting them from microbial pathogens and, in turn, gastrointestinal disease.

Horses have epitheliochorial placentation, which prevents the transfer of immunoglobulins from the mare to the fetus in utero. Therefore, a foal's ingestion of colostrum is imperative before the foal is no longer able to absorb the immunoglobulins, maternal immune cells, and cytokines from their dam and before the colostrum transitions to milk [19]. Colostrum is also very nutrient rich and decreases in nutrients throughout the first 24 hours following birth, which is another reason why timely ingestion of it is so important.

Mares not only share their immunity with their foal, but are also thought to affect their foal's gut microbiome. A foal's development of this microbial community in their gastrointestinal tract has been shown to be important in keeping them healthy. The proliferation of the wrong kinds of bacteria can cause serious illness and even death in foals.

A few recent studies have looked into how the foal's gut is colonized by bacteria before and after birth. A group of researchers sampled amniotic fluid, mare feces and colostrum in order to compare it to foal meconium [20]. They found that foal meconium shared bacterial species with amniotic fluid, mare feces and colostrum. The group suggested that this may be due to two different processes that have been shown in humans. Their theory was that the mare's dendritic cells took bacteria from their gut and transferred it to their amniotic fluid or to their mammary glands during late pregnancy via their bloodstream [3*, 4*]. In humans, this process has been hypothesized to help the neonate adapt outside of their mother by starting their gut bacterial colonization in the womb. This colonization is also known to jumpstart the development of important immune system tissue in the gut.

The transfer of bacteria from the mare's gut to her mammary glands would explain the similarities in bacteria between colostrum, foal meconium and mare feces while the similarities in bacteria between amniotic fluid, mare feces and foal meconium could be due to bacteria being transported to the amnion. However, more research needs to be conducted in order to determine the actual processes taking place since humans and horses have huge differences in their types of placentation and transfer of immunity from mom to baby. If these theories are proven to be true, then this may indicate that the health of a mare's gut microbiome affects her foal a lot more than previously thought.

Even before birth, the colonization of a foal's gut is an important step in their development. New knowledge about the effect of a mare's microbiome on their foal in utero may give rise to new ways in which we can support a healthy foal. Since mares aren't able to transfer antibodies to their foal in utero, it's very interesting that it might be possible for their immune system to transfer bacteria to them. This could be a process that has adapted in the horse to stimulate the development of important immune system tissues in the foal before birth and to better prepare them for life outside of the womb.

Meredith Bonnell is a graduate of the University of Delaware with a B.S. in Pre-Veterinary Medicine and Animal Biosciences as well as a M.S. in Animal Science. Her Master's thesis research was focused on the effects of domesticity on the development of the equine gut microbiome. She joined the SBS-MD team in March of 2017 and her main responsibilities include assisting with semen collection, processing and distribution.

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IMPORTANT DATES 2020

- September 16 - 20 FEI/WBFSH World Breeding Championships for Young Show Jumping Horses in Lanaken, Belgium
- October 15 - 18 FEI/WBFSH World Breeding Championships for Young Eventing Horses in Le Lion d'Angers, France
- October 11 - 15 October WBFSH General Assembly and Seminars in Dresden, Germany
- December 9 - 13 FEI/WBFSH World Breeding Championships for Young Dressage Horses in Verden, Germany.



Lanaken Arena, Belgium

■ **FEI WBFSH DRESSAGE WORLD BREEDING CHAMPIONSHIP 2020 TO BE HELD IN DECEMBER**

■ **Do World Young Horse CHAMPIONSHIP CONTESTANTS BECOME GRAND PRIX HORSES?**

WORLD BREEDING FEDERATION FOR SPORT HORSES

**VILHELMSBORG ALLÉ 1
8320 MAARSLET
DENMARK**

**TEL: +45 (0)87 475400
FAX: +45 (0)87 475410**

WWW.WBFSH.ORG



WBFSH GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2020 TO BE HELD AS A WEB-CONFERENCE

It is with regret that the board of the WBFSH announces that the WBFSH Annual Meetings 2020 will not take place as planned. With the impact of Covid-19 and the resulting continued uncertainties, the board feels it is better to use an online format for the WBFSH General Assembly this year. The decision has been made to allow for planning to proceed, since a change of plan in case of a short-term cancellation would significantly complicate matters.

The WBFSH General Assembly 2020 will take place by web-conference, as originally planned, on Tuesday, October 13, 2020 (time TBC). More information will follow in the coming weeks, since provisions need to be made for the general assembly itself, and for a potential vote, which still needs to be anonymous and democratic, as well as taking the usual weighting of studbook votes into account.

The remaining program of the annual meeting will be deferred to 2021. The WBFSH gives thanks the host of the 2020 Annual Meetings, the DSP Studbooks, for their understanding and support. They have graciously accepted hosting the 2021 WBFSH Annual Meetings.

We look forward to seeing our studbook representatives again in person in Dresden (Germany) next year, for valuable and fun days of networking, as well as the informative seminars and workshops that are usually held during the event.



WBFSH President Jan Pedersen and General Manager Nadine Brandtner

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. WE WILL INCLUDE DATES FOR ONLINE AUCTIONS WHEN THEY ARE NOTIFIED TO US AND CONFIRMED

2020

AUGUST

3-10 Online (NED)

KWPN Foal Auction
Tel: +49 (0)35 207 89631
www.kwpn.auction

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

7/8 Verden Online (GER)

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

15 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

24-31 Online (NED)

KWPN Foal Auction
Tel: +49 (0)35 207 89631
www.kwpn.auction

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

7-14 Online (NED)

KWPN Online Auction
Tel: +49 (0)35 207 89631
www.kwpn.auction

11-16 Verden Online (GER)

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

16-20 Lanaken (BEL)

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

21-28 Online (NED)

KWPN Online Auction
Tel: +49 (0)35 207 89631
www.kwpn.auction

23-27 Flyinge (SWE)

Swedish Warmblood Equestrian Weeks – Dressage
Tel: +46 (0)46 646 50
info@swb.org
www.swb.org

OCTOBER

30/9-4/10 Flyinge (SWE)

Swedish Warmblood Equestrian Weeks – Jumping
Tel: +46 (0)46 646 50
info@swb.org
www.swb.org

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

2-6 Flyinge (SWE)

Swedish Warmblood Breeders Trophy in Jumping and Elite Foal Auction
Tel: +46 (0)46 646 50
info@swb.org
www.swb.org

5 Flyinge (SWE)

Swedish Warmblood Elite Auction
Tel: +46 (0)46 646 50
info@swb.org
www.swb.org

5-12 Online (NED)

KWPN Online Auction
Tel: +49 (0)35 207 89631
www.kwpn.auction

9/10 Verden (GER)

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

15-18 Neumünster (GER)

Trakehner Verband stallion licensing
Tel: +49 (0)4321 90270
Fax: +49 (0)4321 902719
info@trakehner-verband.de
www.trakehner-verband.de

16/17 Mönchengladbach (GER)