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Ronnie Baker, thank you for your photos as well, used here in this report!!!

2009 KEURING REPORTS - FIRST TOUR.

Donida Farm – Auburn, WA

Host: Gwen Blake

Jury: J.Verkerk, Dr. D. Harrison, F.Fessenden.

Picture taking off from the Sahara Desert and then landing in the Amazon Rainforest. That is what it is like to fly from Fresno, California to Seattle, Washington. The 'Emerald City' it is called for good reason. The soft air, moisture laden evergreens and low-lying clouds quickly muffle the 21st century noise. The low nicker of a horse completes the blood-pressure reducing Rx.

Once past the environmental shock, the jury met with yet another great group of breeders and owners at what was to be the final location of the 2009 First Tour. Donida Farm is a lovely spot, with several outdoor dressage rings, two indoor rings and a race track (Emerald Downs is nearby and this area is thus a quality thoroughbred breeding region). Go to: www.bing.com, click on maps, type in Donida Farm, Auburn, Washington, the location designated #1 is it (use the maximizer bar on the side to zoom in towards it) then click on aerial/photographic view...there it is!

Gwen Blake and her helpers had everything ready for us. The big bonus was to have the KWPN-NA office staff (Shakota Wilson, Michelle Olsen and Ronnie Baker) on hand to manage the paper work. The jury leisurely wafted around with coffee and muffins, as though we were on a mini-vacation, for about 40 minutes that is, - then the action began.

Not just the flora, but the fauna in the form of KWPN-NA horses is different here too. Each locale we visit has a particular bloodline emphasis within their mare bases, and each locale tends to focus on specific stallions for them. In both the Portland and the Seattle areas we've seen a 'pocket' of Jazz-line horses, too, which includes, most recently, UB 40. This keuring showcased several of those, while others we've seen in prior keurings will wait for another year.

In the Pacific NW, we find a group of long-time breeders who have worked through optimum combinations for their needs. Gwen Blake, herself, is well known for her international Grand Prix accomplishments with Juvel, her famous Swedish Warmblood stallion as well as her Swedish Warmblood youngsters. In the past decade, Gwen has been importing and breeding very successfully KWPN and KWPN-NA horses. Contango has been her stallion of choice for at least one of her mares. (see below in reports)

Foals & Weanlings - Dressage

Six foals were presented with four parading around at the end with their orange first premium ribbons. The foals were placed as follows:

1. The Register A foal, **Echo WS** (UB 40 out of Kitty Up of thoroughbred stock) bred and owned by Carrie O'Brien of Willow Spring Farm. This liver chestnut filly was very modern with smooth lines, but 'wishes' were for more bone with a stronger cannon-to-knee construction (tied-in). In movement she showed leg activity but could have shown more uphill tendency and suppleness. (Note - check out the Registration Chart: www.kwpn-na.org/display/files/Registration_Chart_2009.pdf to see how UB 40 was paired with a xx.. (Register A foals out of Thoroughbred mares do not need to meet any additional requirements to be accepted into the studbook as adults.)



*Contessa, moving upwards into 1st place here AND in the Top Fives for 2-Year-Olds
(Carolyn Bunch Photography)*



*Keeping it all in the family, Beyonce sails around the ring, into 1st place, Best Adult Horse and Number One in the Top Fives for 3-7 year olds.
(Carolyn Bunch Photography)*



*Bel Air being readied for her linear scoring on the hard surface..
(Photo by Ronnie Baker)*

2. **Exclusive**, another Reg A (Sagnol DE by Sandro Hit out of Mendoln ster by Amethyst x Legaat) was bred and owned by Michelle Dixon of Northridge Farm. This bay filly was dinged on her conformation score due to being somewhat small, with light legs and tied-in under knees and hocks. However, everyone's jaws dropped when this Lilliputian began to move. Supple and upwards with great use of her shoulders, the bright-eyed filly pulled down an 8.2 for movement.

3. **Encore WS** (UB 40 out of Rubicon by Damiro x Taxateur) bred by Carrie O'Brien (see Echo above). Receiving the same conformation score (for different reasons) as his stable mate, the liver chestnut colt was .2 behind her in movement. Solidly built with slightly short legs but good bone, the colt moved with self carriage and good articulation in the trot, but his canter stride needed length. (BIG NOTE!! - Rubicon is also the dam of Zsunami by Rousseau that Carrie O'Brien bred – see DG Bar report.)

4. **Enya**, another Carrie O'Brien-bred filly, also by UB 40. (Dam Perlinda by Don Primaire x Le Mexico). Carrie can have her own keuring it appears! Very consistent in conformation score with the other two UB's this dark brown filly has an exquisite face, with remarks made again for more bone. She was an easy mover but needed more engagement and shoulder use.

Dressage Yearlings and Two-Year-Olds

In the yearling, two-year-old, and three-year-old classes – to quote Yogi Berra "It was déjà vu all over again". Gwen Blake used her ster mare Precious Day (Gribaldi out of Happy Day ster by Rossini) in back to back to back breedings with Contango to get not just first premiums, but first in their classes and impressive placings in the Top Fives. Talk about a NICK!

Dominique, the yearling, is a bay filly with a few wishes in her conformation. Rectangular and leggy in type, at this time she was somewhat 'overbuilt' (high-behind) with rather closed angles in her lower hind legs (sickle-hocked). She also has heavier muscling in her under-neck. Her movement was upward and expressive bringing her overall score up for a first premium and 4th place in Top Fives.

Contessa, her 2-Year-Old chestnut full sister is also rectangular in type with some under-neck muscle. Her legs show hardness and clarity with a minor remark regarding her short haunch muscle. In her movement she was active with upward and forward engagement. Her conformation score was higher than her younger sister and with a 7.8 for movement she easily moved into the solid ranges for a first premium, first place - AND, yes, Number 1 in the Top Fives for 2-Year-Olds. But wait! ...that's not all!

3-7 Year Old Dressage Mares

And then there was the oldest sister (hmm - great moving fillies!) **Beyonce**. This dark bay mare was 3rd in Top Fives in her first keuring last year. Her conformation score was the best of the three sisters with notes on her rectangular type, lovely top-line, with a slightly short croup but long hip line, somewhat open-hind leg angles (straighter). There were a few remarks on legs and feet, but oh, my when she moved, she moved! Strong, expressive, supple and with balance her trot was super for an 8.5 and self-carriage earned an 8.0. The canter scored lower due to lack of clarity in the gait. Her overall 8.0 for movement gave her not only her star but keur-eligible and the Top Adult Horse for this location - AND, YES!...again high fives to Gwen because Beyonce was also Number 1 in the Top Fives for Dressage mares. It appears Precious Day will earn the 'preferent' in the near future.

Also in the 3-7 Year Old mare class, **Bel Air** (Flemmingh out of Phoenix by Incognito x Joost) bred and owned by Diane Stack of Stack Sporthorses earned a ster. This dark bay mare was squarer in type with a few notes on legs and feet, but her movement earned the orange ribbon for her. An easy mover, notes were for more power. However her walk was great and scored an 8.0.

In the 4-7 Year Old mare class was **Angelica** (Rousseau out of Ixia elite, prest by Belisar x Roemer) bred and owned by Dove Creek Farm. (Note, Ixia's dam was Charites a ster, pref, prest mare and dam of the elite, sport-dressage Olympic mare Nadine). The jury's notes were 'great legs and feet!' with good length of stride and balance in her gaits, which easily earned her a ster.



Zarry Nights cooling down after earning her first place in the Jumper class. She placed, 4th in Top Fives for Jumper Mares, and 3rd in the Top Fives for the ISF Cup.

(Photo by Ronnie Baker)



Vjerakelly - new elite mare after this IBOP performance.

(Photo by Ronnie Baker)



Zen Rosa - 1st place in the DG Bar Cup and 2nd in Top Fives DGBC for 5-Year-Olds

(Photo by Ronnie Baker)

The jumper mare class brought us another new ster mare, **Zarry Nights** (Consul out of Kaleidoscope by Rolls Royce x Hell Gate Canyon xx) bred by Amy Else-Slater and owned by Jacqueline Lyons. Heavier in body type with a shorter front leg, the dark bay mare was well muscled with a very nice top-line. A rhythmic walk earned her an 8.0 and in her jumping her technique and scope were solid 7.5's with her reflexes garnering an 8.0. This handsome mare finished first here as well as snagging several spots in the Top Fives - a tie for 4th place in the Jumper Mares, tied for 3rd in the ISF Cup as well as a tie for 3rd in the Jumping IBOP.

In the star mare evaluation for keur, **Zamora** (Sir Sinclair out of Liberty by Haarlem x Duc de Normandie) bred by PM v.d.Vliert and owned by Richard Chong of Dutch Equine Stables was given a nod to proceed to her IBOP as a keur-eligible mare.

IBOPs and DG Bar Cup

The black mare **Vjerakelly** ster prok (Inspekteur out of Kelly keur by Ferro x Purioso) bred by H.B.C Stal and owned by Diane Stack of Stack Sporthorses performed the IBOP test successfully to earn her keur status which, with the prok, moves her to elite. Her scores showed her strengths to be in her trot (suspension and foreleg technique) and rideability with 8's.

In the IBOP **Zamora** (mentioned above) showed her balance, activity, suspension and length of stride to earn consistent scores in her gaits and the icing was an 8.5 for her rideability leading her to a passing IBOP score and therefore a keur predicate.

The lovely chestnut mare, **Zen Rosa** elite (Farrington out of Oriental Rosa ster by Jazz x Purioso) bred by Anne Schmidt of Tam Farm and owned by Dan & Gina Ruediger of Sonnenberg Farm, was paired with Zamora for the DG Bar Cup portion. Zen Rosa was well-balanced and supple with good length of stride in all three gaits. Slightly more quickness and forwardness in her movement would have brought her scores higher. Nevertheless the 'silhouette' was what we all look for in our riding horses, and Zen Rosa won the class as well as finishing 2nd in the Top Fives for the DGBC 5-Year-Olds.

Upon conclusion, the jury enjoyed wine and appetizers with the participants before heading back up the road to SEA/TAC (Seattle/Tacoma International airport). The North American jury members bade farewell to our KWPN counterpart, Jacques Verkerk, as we all headed back to our homes for a few days rest (and running loads of laundry) before the second tour was to begin.

Conclusion of Tour One - KWPN-NA Keurings - 2009.

(Note: Many of these lovely horses are for sale. See page 22 in the keuring program, or go to page 22 in: <http://www.kwpm-na.org/display/files/program09.pdf>).