



KWPN
NORTH AMERICA

**HARNESS HORSE
NEWS**

Hello! Thank you for being part of the regular readership. It has been our goal during this strange, stressful time to continue serving our members with little to no inconvenience. We value your partnership and look forward to this upcoming season.

With thanks,
KWPN-NA Harness Committee

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Events Update

We regret to inform that due to the current COVID-19 outbreak, these events have been cancelled for 2020:

KEURINGS

DEVON HORSE SHOW

NEFHC SHOW

**NEFHC MIDNIGHT SUMMER
CLASSIC**

The Story of Grand Finale Farm

With William Duffy and Erin Shea

There's nothing quite like the atmosphere at the KWPN Stallion Show in Den Bosch when a newly crowned champion stallion is taking his victory lap. Watching 2020 champion stallion Macho (Indiana x Unieko) strut around the ring was a vision a lot of people will remember for a long time. For us, it was a moment that would hopefully change the future of our breeding program as well as influence the Dutch Harness Horse industry in North America.

I never would have expected to be where we are today when I think back to that day in 2007 when I saw my first photo of a Dutch Harness Horse in a calendar. It was a photo of the stallion Opgenoort, seeing a photo of such an impressive horse certainly piqued my interest. Not too much later, I found myself down in Christ Fisher's barn in Pennsylvania where I saw the chestnut Jonker son by the name of Tango. From that moment Dutch Harness Horses were the subject of my newfound obsession.

As an up and coming farrier, it had taken me a while, but finally in the winter of 2010 I had put together the money to head out to the Midwest with the goal of purchasing my first Dutch Harness Horse. I drove out from Massachusetts and made several stops at farms in Ohio and Indiana, meeting several people with whom we still have relationships today. After stopping by Windy Knoll Farm in Ohio and meeting Ron and Deb Egan, my travels took me to JD's Equine Center, and then to meet Enos Graber of Integrity Stables, Martin Schmucker at Produce Acres, David Beachy of Farbig Farm, and Ray Yoder at Yoder's Hackney Farm. I got to see some fantastic Dutch Harness horses, including Opegenoort, Ulandro, Uromast, Gelviro and Whiskei among others. The last day of the trip we found ourselves at the Heart of America Dutch Harness Horse Sale in Cloverdale, Indiana. It was here that we purchased a lovely 9 year old mare named Unora (Patijn x Koblenz), who was in foal to Opgenoort.

Unora foaled a beautiful bay colt on May 25, 2010. This colt would end up being the only full dutch stallion by Opgenoort in the world. Opgenoort himself had passed only months before the birth of the colt. We appropriately named the colt Finale, and he proved to be an exceptional horse as he grew up. He had a fantastic work ethic and a heart like no other. He was a horse that I had a true partnership with and to this day I am thankful for every moment I was able to work with him.

In February 2011, Erin and I ventured out to Indiana again to look at a weanling colt by Whiskei as a dressage prospect for Erin. We ended up coming home with 3 horses. The Whiskei colt, Foster RW, a Jonker filly named Fiona RW, and a the Keur mare Tidee by Jonker.

As Foster grew up, he showed great promise as a dressage horse. He had the heart, work ethic and sense of humor that we have come to admire and appreciate in the breed.



An exceptional horse, Finale

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The Story of Grand Finale Farm

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Erin is a Grand Prix dressage rider and had the aspiration of finishing Foster to the grand prix level, and he showed the talent for it. After having 2 sons, Jack and Sam, however, her focus changed and she offered Foster for sale, and he continues under a new rider.

Erin didn't end up horse-less for long. She went out to Indiana in October of 2018, after seeing some spectacular young horses at the KWPN-NA Keuring in Goshen Indiana. She bought both the weanling and two year old national champions, Neva (Hermanus x Reflex M) and Larado (Vaandrager x Patijn) from Martin Schmucker. Neva is now 2 and looking like a very exciting prospect. Larado has shown amazing talent in harness as well as under saddle as a dressage horse. Erin is aiming to get Larado licensed in harness this fall.



Larado (Vaandrager x Patijn)

she foaled Jovialidee GFF, a dark bay filly by Waldemar, who this spring is being bred to Hightanium. In 2016 we bred Tidee to Finale (Whom we affectionally called Frankie) and got a beautiful filly named Magnalidee GFF. "Maggie" is 3 this spring and is really becoming a favorite on the farm. In 2018 Tidee was bred to Hightanium to give us yet another filly, Omnidee GFF, and is being bred back to Waldemar this year for what we expect will be her last foal, as she is 20 years old this year. In her life, Tidee has had a total of 7 foals, and every single one has been a filly.

Shortly after breeding Tidee with Frankie in 2016, we very unexpectedly lost him to a severe colic. While a colt from that cross would have been wonderful, we are very lucky to have gotten a healthy filly, and she is a spectacular horse, and will be a great asset to our breeding program, as her bloodlines are rather unique.

With our entire breeding program originally being built around Frankie, we were at a loss with what to do after his passing. After having him from birth, it was really hard to think about the idea of 'replacing' him, which we knew wasn't going to be possible.

Fiona belonged to my father, and with him she got broke to drive, and had a foal by Waldemar before being sold as a broodmare to a breeder in Florida, where she had a foal this spring.

Tidee has been the foundation mare for our breeding program. In 2014

But these horses are way too much a part of who we are and our lifestyle, that we did eventually come around to thinking about getting another stallion. We had hoped to breed another one of our own, but Tidee has decided to only have fillies, so that option didn't work out. We looked around in the US for a couple years and bought some young ones that didn't quite pan out, so we were back to square one.

We started contacting some breeders and trainers in The Netherlands with the idea of buying a young stallion prospect and ended up being presented with the opportunity to buy Eebert. The idea was a little intimidating at first, with Eebert being such a well-known and highly accomplished horse, but after talking about it, it became an exciting opportunity that we didn't want to miss out on. After negotiations and vet work, everything was lining up, and days before finalizing the deal, we received word that Eebert had colicked, which ultimately led to his passing a couple weeks later. After losing Frankie so tragically and then becoming so close to owning one of the greatest horses of all time before losing him, too, we were really just devastated and defeated. But, once again, we came around to the realization that our goals as breeders and trainers included standing a stallion of our own.

It was in this same time period that we had finally booked our first trip to The Netherlands, to see the KWPN stallion show in Den Bosch. We watched the first round of selection live on KWPN.TV from home, at 2 am on our laptop, and saw quite a few quality horses. The judges, however, had their own views and only put 6 out of the 40+ stallions presented through to the second round, also resulting in the cancellation of the Oregon Trofee, which would all be held in Den Bosch. After a lot of pushback from the public, the KWPN ended up presenting again the stallions to a new jury and ended up with 9 additional stallions getting put through to Den Bosch and salvaging the Oregon Trofee. Now we were excited to go!

We didn't go over there to buy a stallion. We went over there to buy *the* stallion and if we didn't find that special horse we were okay with letting our search continue. Thanks to our friend and fellow KWPN breeder, Scot Tolman of Shooting Star Farm in NH, we were able to sit right on the rail for the harness horse portion of the stallion show. It was incredible to be so close to these horses, as videos do not do them justice. The quality of stallions presented was outstanding, but even among all those great stallions, when Macho came into the ring, we knew we had finally found the horse we had been searching for all these years. We were taken by his spectacular movement and conformation, but even beyond that his calm confidence and sheer enjoyment of being the center of attention. With the help of Wim Cazemier, we ended up buying him right then, ringside.

Macho is currently still in The Netherlands, and is in training with Robbie and Chantal Van Dijk, who both seem very excited about the promising future of this young stallion. He will be presented at the test center this fall, in hopes of becoming a KWPN Approved breeding stallion, before continuing his journey over to the States to stand at our Grand Finale Farm.

Once Macho is back home, we look forward to continuing our collaboration in promoting these wonderful horses with Rocky Ridge Stables of Narvon PA, and their stallions Delviro HBC and Globetrotter. You can see the stallions in action at various competitions throughout the northeast, at the KWPN-NA Harness Horse Keurings, as well as at annual demonstrations at the Equine Affaire in Springfield, MA, and the Land Rover Kentucky Three Day Event in Lexington, KY.



Annual General Meeting

The 2020 KWPN-NA Annual General Meeting was held in sunny Hanford, California in the first week of March. The meeting began with presentations and educational seminars on several different topics relevant to the breeding of Dutch horses in North America. Topics included History of the Hunter Market, equine reproduction, Gelders horses of North America and individual breeder presentations of some long standing KWPN-NA breeders. Dutch judges Henk Dirksen and Ralph van Venrooij also gave the annual review of the KWPN stallion show and members were invited to ask questions in the open membership forum. An update was also given on the organization from the Board of Directors, committees and office personnel.

Each afternoon, members ventured to the beautiful DG Bar Ranch where they listened to the judges provide further education on linear scoring and what they look for at an inspection. A lovely line up of DG Bar bred and/or trained Dutch horses were presented for demonstration both in hand and under saddle. On the second day, a demonstration was also given in free movement for dressage, jumper and Gelders horses. Members also had the opportunity to view two KWPNNA Licensed stallions and their offspring. DG Bar was gracious enough to host a dinner at their facility and provided wonderful entertainment in the evening with more dressage horse demonstrations as well as a vaulting demonstration.

Following two informative and entertaining days, the meeting concluded with our annual awards banquet where keuring awards and breeder awards were given as well as conducting our very successful silent auction. We hope to see everyone next year for another great meeting!



Test Center Results

The final exam of the two harness horse stallions took place in Ermelo and both Lexington and Leffe Blond were entered with beautiful grades. A successful conclusion to a performance test under special circumstances.

Due to the corona crisis, no audiences could be admitted to the assessments throughout the investigation. It took a lot of effort and adaptability from the stallion approval committee, the training leader and the caretakers to complete the research successfully and these were also exceptional circumstances for the owners of the stallions. Fortunately, all this resulted in the registration of two new KWPN harness horse stallions, both of which convinced with their quality and were entered with beautiful numbers.

Leffe Blond is the first son of Dylano to be approved and his use of the front leg, for which he got a 9.5, was particularly noticeable. Use of the hind leg gave an 8, the other parts an 8.5. On behalf of the stallion approval committee, consisting of Henk Lassche, Johan Holties and assisted by inspector Viggon van Beest, the chairman Henk Rootveld explained: "Leffe Blond is a stallion who has always done what you asked of him during the entire investigation. He presents himself strung with great strides, his enormous generous use of the front leg is always noticeable." Leffe Blond, bred by Marcel Ritsma from Wijnjewoude, was auctioned as a foal during the National Harness Horse Foal Auction, where he came into the hands of Jan Vink/Stoeterij Black Horses.

Lexington is also the first son of his father to be approved, in this case that is Fantijn. The stallion bred by Tom Mekelenkamp from Pannerden got a 9 for his front, and 8,5 for his action of the front leg and willingness to walk. Henk Rootveld tells about the stallion of the Pos family from Ankeveen: "Lexington is a chic stallion, who has calmed down during the research and has always shown a lot of effort. He started to use this commitment for the better as the research approached. He made a lot of progress during the investigation."

Because of the measures of the RIVM, the breeders and owners could not be honored, of course that will be overtaken in an appropriate way at a later time. That is why the images of the entire final presentation are placed on KWPN.TV. Later, you will find the videos per stallion on KWPN.tv and in the stallion database, including the figures and a brief explanation.



Lexington



Leffe Blond

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