

January - February 2021



KWPN
NORTH AMERICA

HARNESS HORSE NEWS

Hello! The KWPN-NA team wishes you a happy 2021! We hope the holidays were a time of rest for you. With anticipation of a great year ahead, this issue kicks it off with schedule details and rules for a harness horse show coming up in New Hampshire. We will all be grateful to be in person again! Consider participating in the KWPN-NA Stallion Service Auction coming up next month. Details are inside. Also in this issue is the conclusion of our two-part article on dressage breeding.

Thank you for your ongoing support and enjoy the newsletter!

With thanks,
KWPN-NA Harness Committee

Time to Vote!

Call Kelly in the office to learn who is nominated to date and to cast your vote. The categories are:

- MEMBER OF THE YEAR
- HORSE OF THE YEAR
- BREEDER OF THE YEAR

THOUGHTS ON USING THE Dutch Harness Horse in Dressage Breeding

BY SCOT TOLMAN

Part Two of Two

Hello, again. My first installment of this piece gave you folks a brief history of our breeding program, my developing interest in the Dutch Harness Horse for dressage breeding, a discussion of the movement mechanisms I look for in breeding dressage horses, and how that relates to the DHH. Bill Duffy originally asked me to write this article to discuss why we purchased Jaleet SSF and how I planned to use him in dressage breeding. But, before I get to the purchase of Jaleet, I need to back up just a little bit to explain what led me to be able to appreciate Jaleet to begin with: Eebert.

Eebert became an obsession for me. I loved that horse, so I started doing some research on his pedigree and on the pedigrees of other DHHs I really liked. Atleet (Patijn x Waterman x Farao) turned out to be the common denominator in almost all the pedigrees of the horses to which I was drawn.. Consequently, since I didn't yet have the cojones to breed one of my dressage mares to a DHH stallion, I decided to start looking for a DHH mare to cross with dressage stallions. It took me almost three years to find the one I wanted (and could afford. There was one top mare I wanted, in Holland, but she was 30,000 Euro...), but I found her, and, believe it or not, I found her in the USA. Emaldine OMHG keur (Atleet x Manno x Goya).

Pedigree-wise she's perfect for what I wanted--she's by Atleet, she's out of the same mare line as Eebert, and she has Goya in the fourth generation. Goya is an important horse in Laura Grave's top international Grand Prix horse, Verdades (Florett As x Goya x Renovo). Florett As was a nice horse, but he never produced anything of importance other than Verdades, so it's fair to assume that his natural abilities for upper level dressage are coming through the mare line. Movement-wise, Emaldine is also perfect for what I want. She has a strong and quick hind leg that fires under her body at the very first step, she lifts through her whole topline so the wither is the highest point, and she has a canter. On top of all this, she has a super brain. We bred her to Gaudi SSF in 2019 for our first dressage x DHH foal, and it would be difficult to be more pleased with the result. Piadine SSF is one of the best-moving foals we've bred. She has really good balance, a super trot mechanism, and a very uphill adjustable-looking canter.

Honestly, in fairness to Gaudi, I've seen three of his DHH cross foals, and I could describe all of them the same way: top balance and expression; excellent movement mechanism; really good dressage foals. I don't know if Gaudi is an anomaly in his ability to cross on DHH mares, or if my theory is on point. At any rate, on to Jaleet.

Dutch Harness Horse in Dressage Breeding

Continued from front cover



Jaleet and Gaudi

As almost everyone else probably has, I had seen the eight second clip that Wim posted of Jaleet in hand a couple years ago. I was blown away. Then, two years ago, Wim brought Jaleet and Gaudi to a seminar at KC Dunn's place, Timbach Farm, in Depauw, Indiana. It was my first chance to see him in person. What a horse. For one thing, Wim has done an incredible job training him, but, for another, he is one of the most expressive horses I've ever seen. He is such a happy, energetic athlete. His canter in harness convinced me on the spot that I would breed one of my dressage mares to him. Consequently, when I heard Jaleet might be for sale, I hesitated long enough to consult with my wife (we've been married almost 31 years--admittedly, it's taken me a while to completely "get" it, but I know enough now to discuss major purchases before making them...), and started negotiating. During the negotiations, Wim sent me a video of Jaleet's dam, Dorenda (Plain's Liberator x Manno). What a mare. Seeing her just made me all the more determined to own Jaleet. Thankfully, Jesse Zehr was willing to work with me, and we made the deal happen.

For me, Jaleet has what it takes to niche on dressage mares the way Gaudi is niching on DHH mares. He is a modern, blood type; his canter is uphill, huge, and expressive; his natural inclination is to lift into his movement in general; and he has a fantastic work ethic--a very happy athlete. Pedigree wise, he's by Atleet, so his topline is exactly what I want. I wouldn't have gone looking for the Hackney influence on the bottom

side for dressage breeding, but having seen Dorenda, Jaleet's dam, I had no hesitation about the Plain's Liberator influence. When most Americans think "Hackney," they think of a fancy show pony, rather than the larger, more athletic version that has been an important outcross for the DHH. In this particular use of the Hackney blood, if people watch the video clip of Dorenda, I think they will agree with me that having Plain's Liberator in Jaleet's pedigree through his dam is a plus, not a negative. On top of his pedigree and phenotype, or, more likely, because of his pedigree and phenotype, he's produced 100% first premium foals so far. Granted, the ones presented are all out of DHH mares, but they are rectangular and modern in type and very good movers. I believe Jaleet can contribute to dressage breeding by bringing a more expressive front, a modern type, and a good character.

Unfortunately, the one mare we had in foal to Jaleet lost her pregnancy sometime after the 45-day check, so I don't have a Jaleet x dressage mare baby on the ground yet to prove my theory, but a client has already ordered a Jaleet x Bon Bravour x Santano baby for 2022, so we're going to find out soon enough! Additionally, a few dressage breeders have taken advantage of our early breeding special, and booked mares to him. I don't expect everyone to jump on the Scot Train and go for this ride until we see some of the babies on the ground, but I'm excited that some people recognize the possibilities I see and hop on board! •

Together We Are the Solution

INBREEDING AND KINSHIP IN HARNESS HORSES

Original Dutch text: KARIN KARLAS
English translation: LIESBETH VAN WOERDEN

In recent months, the Working Group on Inbreeding and Relation has shed light on the possibilities of getting the inbreeding and kinship problems under control within harness horse breeding. An important conclusion? That despite changes in strategy and policy, the choice of breeders will ultimately determine success.

The challenge for harness horse breeders is well known: we must stop the increase of the inbreeding and kinship percentage. The harness horses are a relatively small population. Where there were more than 1,500 foals per year registered in the glory days, now that's no more than about 500 to 600. Within this population a number of bloodlines and sires are frequently used. If we look at the last few years, about six stallions are listed on paper as supplier of about 50% of the foals born. The three most popular stallions are each responsible for about 10% of the foals per year. In addition, the frequently used stallions are often above average related to the population or, due to their frequent use, will become so.

All this has resulted in a continuing upward trend in inbreeding and relationship percentages. The governmental agency responsible for the recognition of studbooks (RVO) - has rang the alarm bells and asked the KWPN for an action plan: how does the registry intend to turn the tide? Previously mentioned dangers of inbreeding, like the health of the harness horse, remain, and get an extra dimension. The government is now asking us to take steps: if this does not happen, even the formal recognition of the harness breeding direction will be jeopardized.

BROAD BRAINSTORM

This subject of inbreeding is not new and much has already been done to raise awareness among breeders. Information via the online channels and in this magazine, as well as through policy changes such as the admission of registered B mares to the inspections under certain conditions. The "inbreeding tool", whereby a breeder can calculate for his own mare which stallion can help reduce the relationship percentage, has been online for some years now.



Together We Are the Solution

Continued from previous page

Since these steps have proved inadequate and the government has asked the KWPN to come up with a substantiated plan, the Inbreeding and Kinship Working Group was set up at the end of last year (see box). The Breeding Council is represented in this, but active breeders were also asked to participate in a number of brainstorming sessions. The objective was: develop plans that can support stabilization and initiation of a decrease in the increasing inbreeding in the harness horse population and elaborate these in a Plan of Action towards the RVO. And consequently also the formulation of clear changes in the (selection) policy.

ACHIEVE AND MAINTAIN PROFIT

Analyses has shown that if there are 30 foals per year added to the population, of which the relationship of one of the parents is 0%, the inbreeding increase can almost be stabilized. In reality, only a few parent animals are 0% related to the population, but it does indicate the influence of adding low-related horses to the active breeding population. The working group was aware that a multi-year policy is the only option, because the trend cannot be reversed in one year and the "gain" in inbreeding reduction can only be maintained through continuous application of the measures. It is also important to increase the number of (low-related) harness horses that produce offspring, because a larger population offers more opportunities to remain vital.

Improving the distribution of breeding sires was a point of attention. Encouraging breeders to make matches that help with the inbreeding problem and provide even more information to increase awareness are important links. But ultimately, breeders of course will make their own choice in breeding.

INCREASE THE NUMBER OF SIRES

The meeting in a larger committee has led to a number of plans. One of these plans has let the Breeding council propose to enable individual recognition of harness horse stallions. In the other breeding directions, this has been possible for some time already. The goal is to recognize stallions that have delivered extraordinary sports performances, or produce offspring that do so, after which their foals are registered in the foal book with the KWPN. Stallions to be individually recognized could be sought within the, for example, Hackney, Saddlebred or KWPN-NA registries. Those stallions are often stationed abroad. Individually recognizing them offers

opportunities to get such a stallion to the attention of Dutch breeders, without them having to perform a performance test which presents practical challenges. Of course, maintaining the current selection system for stallions is still the main goal and one must strive for as many stallions as possible taking the regular route. The Member council has recently approved this plan. A number of other plans is still under discussion.

REGISTER HARNESS HORSE CROSSES

Until now it was not possible to register crossings between riding horses and harness horses under the breeding direction of harness horses, they were automatically registered as riding horses. This makes it difficult to get a lower relationship percentage through experiments with other breeding directions, and eventually to breed back to the harness horse direction. It concerns about 50 to 60 foals per year, which are currently automatically registered in the dressage or jumping horse breeding direction. The Member council has approved the plans to give the breeder the choice in these cases in which breeding direction he wishes to register the foal. This choice was already possible in crossings with Gelders horses.

Intensifying information and making it easier for breeders to obtain information were also discussed. Examples of this are the article about the available lower related stallions in the March KWPN Magazine, and the publication of a list of breeding values and relationships of the approved stallions on the KWPN website. The relationship percentages of the mares and foals that will be offered for inspection will be published in the catalog from next season and there are some changes in the KWPN Database that will make access to that information easier. For example, we are working on an improved breeding advice program in the database.

ENCOURAGE BREEDING

A larger population contributes to a healthier population. It is therefore important that the harness horse breeding is certainly not reduced. The image of the harness horse, the harness sport and also the success of the harness horse in other disciplines of the equestrian sport are things that can contribute to this. Regarding the latter, there are many harness horses or horses with harness horse bloodlines in their pedigree active in international top sport. Perhaps the best-known example is Laura Graves' KWPN ambassador Verdades (Florett As x Goya). She won many prices with him, of which team bronze at



Laura Graves and Verdades (Florett As x Goya x Renovo)

the 2016 Games. There are in particular a lot of harness horses active and very successful in the driving sport. We can be proud of the fact that our harness horse breeding knows how to produce such top athletes, and we can radiate this pride more, also in publications through the channels of the KWPN.

The Breeding Council is also discussing the option of converting this pride into rewards within the predicate system: making it possible to award predicates based on sports performance in other disciplines. This can have a stimulating effect on breeding, just like the breeder premiums that were already awarded by the "Friends of the KWPN" to the breeders of the winner of the Oregon Trophy and the three stallions from the champion inspection at the Stallion Show in Den Bosch. There are also initiatives being developed to financially compensate breeders who make positive choices in the context of kinship reduction. In addition, several action points are planned in the near future. It is clear that one ultimate solution does not exist; tackling inbreeding and kinship in your own mares mainly comes down to customization. You as a breeder can contribute to the preservation of the harness horse. You have the key! •

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KWPN-NA HARNESS HORSE SHOWS UPDATE

We are excited to announce that we are on the way to having some shows going! Here is the schedule and class options for one of the shows. The NEFHC Classic Horse Show will be held June 18 - June 20, 2021 in Deerfield, NH. Scott Tolman will be our Judge.

KWPN-NA CLASS SCHEDULE

FRIDAY MORNING

Stallions and Geldings
Mares

SATURDAY MORNING

Open Fine Harness
In Hand Champions

**Pleasure Driving to be judged mostly on behavior. Attire for horses same as Fine Harness. Any vehicle allowed.*

FRIDAY EVENING

Open In Hand
Pair Driving

SATURDAY EVENING

Pleasure Driving*
Fine Harness Championship

PROPOSED CLASS RULES

UPDATED DECEMBER 2020

- No overcheck, side check allowed with no check bit
- Round Blinds - traditional Dutch Harness
- No martingale
- Even weight Shoe with even weight pads allowed
- Double shoes allowed
- Must have Liverpool bit
- Must be KWPN-NA registered
- Owner must be an active member with KWPN-NA



KWPN and ADHHA Approved
Oregon Trophy Winner
Multiple Fine Harness Wins
Homozygous Black or Bay

*Call for info and photos on his offspring
coming in March!*



Mark Your Calendar!



Get ready to bid... The 2021 KWPN-NA Stallion Service Auction is scheduled to run from Feb 13 - Feb 21, 2021. Watch our social media posts and website for highlighted stallions that are donated. Harness stallions entered in so far are: Delviro, Globetrotter, Graaf Kelly and Holland. Stallion owners, we are still accepting donations. We have some great incentives for our donors! Please get in touch soon if you'd like to participate.

COMING TO THE **USA**

ATLEET

KEUR

PATIJN X WATERMAN

2011 Oregon Trophy Winner

2017 KWPN Harness Horse of the Year

1 of only 3 Living Keur Stallions

**KWPN AND ADHHA
APPROVED**



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FOR THE **2021** BREEDING SEASON

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If you are interested in advertising in our newsletter, please contact Aaron Jay Fisher at 717-475-5917 (KWPN-NA Office).