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ZONIK PLUS IS MAKING HEADLINES

At the end of August, the dressage world witnessed a championship in Crozet, France, that will be remembered for a long time to come. A stallion stepped into the spotlight and turned the scene upside down: Zonik Plus. Riding him, Belgian Justin Verboomen won gold ahead of Mount St John Freestyle and Cathrine Laudrup-Dufour.

By Britta Züngel

Crozet became the stage for an extraordinary horse that brought the dressage world to a standstill for a moment, and a rider who made history. Never before had a Belgian won a medal at a dressage championship. At the foot of the Jura Mountains, Justin Verboomen achieved this twice with his Zonik/Hohenstein son Zonik Plus (breeder: Dressage Plus, Amadora/POR). With outstanding rides, they became double European champions in the Grand Prix Special and the freestyle, after just missing out on the podium in the team competition, finishing fourth. Close behind them were the proven Mount St John Freestyle by Fidermark/Donnerhall (breeder: Stephan Kurz, Zöbingen) and Cathrine Laudrup-Dufour, who were among the favorites for gold. And it was an exciting individual competition. At the start, the Danish-Hanoverian combination contributed significantly to the Danish quartet's bronze medal win with the highest score in the Grand Prix (80.832). In the Grand Prix Special, Zonik Plus (82.371) and Mount St John Freestyle (81.687) were the only horses to break the 80 percent mark. Their results were even closer in the freestyle, with the black stallion scoring 89.964 points and the bay mare 89.821. Wendy de Fontaine and Isabell Werth won the two bronze medals after the German team gold.

Zonik Plus and Justin Verboomen already made their mark in the Grand Prix Special. Every piaffe was picture-perfect, every passage powerful and balanced, the transitions smooth. Not a moment of tension disturbed the overall picture. The 37-year-old Belgian and his nine-year-old black stallion displayed harmony, submission and lightness in perfection. And that despite the fact that neither horse nor rider have much experience in the big arena. "I still can't believe what just happened. I felt so much pressure yesterday and today, including pressure I put on myself. That was difficult to cope with. Zonik Plus is still so young, and I feel that we still have so much to learn together. I'm speechless," said Justin Verboomen after his historic win of his first gold medal. Two days later, in the freestyle, it became even more impressive. Zonik Plus danced through the difficult movements. Even a small weakness in the introduction to the trot half-pass did not detract from the magnificent performance. This breathtaking performance earned him his second title. With his new personal

best, the modest Belgian could hardly believe what he had achieved: "Zonik Plus is my 'once in a lifetime horse'. This result is a surprise for me. I am so proud. I wanted everyone to feel the emotions. His strength is that he always wants to give his best. If I don't make any mistakes, he doesn't either. From competition to competition, I feel Zonik Plus becoming more mature." Zonik Plus has been with Justin Verboomen since he was two and a half years old. While searching for a Lusitano for Grand Prix sport, the Belgian discovered the black stallion rather by chance at Vasco Freire's Dressage Plus stud farm. Trained step by step for top-level dressage, Zonik Plus and Justin Verboomen made their international debut in 2022 at the WBFSH FEI Breeding World Championships for six-year-old dressage horses in Ermelo/NED. After a detour via the small final, they finished sixth in the final classification. The start in the seven-year-old class was firmly planned, but the Belgians decided to send only horses bred in Belgium to Ermelo. Two years later, Zonik Plus entered the international arena for the second time and won the Grand

Prix Special at the CDI3* at the Peelbergen Horse Center. This was followed by his World Cup debut in Mechelen/BEL, where he finished second in the freestyle after winning the Grand Prix. Even then, he caught the attention of experts with a score of 81.730 percent. After his sensational victories in Aachen, Zonik Plus and Justin Verboomen became the new stars in the dressage world. And all without having any horseshoes. The reason for this is surprisingly simple: "I want Zonik Plus to go out on the paddock. But because of his stallion temperament and his blood, he kept pulling his shoes off. So I decided to take them off."

Cathrine Laudrup-Dufour and her Fidermark/Donnerhall daughter Mount St John Freestyle won two silver medals with outstanding performances. The mare, born in 2009 and discovered at the Verden foal auction, showed her true class. In the Grand Prix, this pair was the only one to receive a score of over 80 percent. And in the Grand Prix Special, they were also on course for gold with their light and elastic performance, but a mistake in the one-



With outstanding performances, Mount St John Freestyle by Fidermark/Donnerhall and Cathrine Laudrup-Dufour became European Vice-Champions in Grand Prix Special and Freestyle. Photo: Lafrentz



Two horses with the suffix FRH in Crozet: In their third European Championship start, Quater Back Junior FRH by Quaterback/Bonheur (breeder: Gerd Janssen, Neuschoo) and Nicolas Wagner Ehlinger from Luxembourg qualified for a freestyle final for the first time (left). Among the top 30 were Frizzantino FRH by Finest/Quaterback (breeder: Hermann Ulbrich, Peine) and Spain's Borja Carrascosa. Photos: Caremans, Lafrentz

tempi changes shattered their dreams of the title. „She felt absolutely wonderful. She was so soft, so supple. With such strong competition, it's hard to win gold. I am super proud of Freestyle,” said Cathrine Laudrup Dufour, who has only had the mare in her stable for just under two years. After Charlotte Dujardin rode her to medals at the World Equestrian Games in Tryon, USA, she returned to

the stable of her owner Emma Blundell and was used for breeding via embryo transfer. Emma Blundell climbed into the saddle herself before sending her back into the big leagues with Cathrine Laudrup-Dufour in time for the Olympic Games in Paris. In the freestyle, the decision was then extremely close. Five of the seven judges saw the pair in first place. Six times, the dream score of 10 for

music and artistic impression appeared in the protocol, as did for choreography. “I was very happy with our performance, but a little disappointed that we just missed out on the gold medal. One thing is certain: Justin and I will be competing for medals many more times in the future,” said Cathrine Laudrup-Dufour with a smile. ✂

EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIPS PARA-DRESSAGE: GOLD FOR SULTAN AND LEMONY'S LOVERBOY



Sultan by Sarotti Mokka Sahne/Weltmeyer and Alexia Pittier became European Champions in Grade IV freestyle. Photo: FEI

The European Para-Dressage Championships took place in Ermelo, Netherlands, at the beginning of September. In the end, the Sarotti Mokka Sahne/Weltmeyer son Sultan (breeder: Albert Kampert, Halle) and Alexia Pittier became European champions in Grade IV. It was the first title for the 32-year-old Frenchwoman, who suffers from a progressive, genetically determined disease of the nervous system, and her chestnut horse born in 2015 from the dam line of Walddirndl. Last year, the pair competed at the Paralympics in Paris. Sultan has championship-winning relatives: his grandmother St.Pr.St. Wondergirl K is a half-sister to Isabell Werth's world champion and Olympic team champion Satchmo. Previously, the eight-year-old Escolar/Diamond Hit son Escari (breeder: Harald Thelker, Venne), registered in the Rhineland, had won bronze in Grade III with Italian rider Francesca Salvadè, who was born with a spinal bifida and has been riding internationally since 2013.

The quartet from Germany won the gold medal in the team competition. The team included Lemony's Loverboy by Lemony's Nicket/Fürst Piccolo (breeder: Volker Stoffers, Münster) and Melanie Wienand. The former Verden auction rider discovered her chestnut as a foal and trained him herself to a high level. The silver medalists from the Netherlands also had a Hanoverian in their team: the 20-year-old Happy Hero by Hohenstein/Weltmeyer (breeder: Jakob Fiegen, Waldfeucht), who was ridden by Loes Cevaal, who is partially paraplegic. ✂

ZONIK PLUS: A TRUE FAIRY TALE

May 5, 2016, was Ascension Day, and “Corpo de Deus” is also a public holiday in Portugal. On this day, Zonik Plus was born at Vasco Freire’s Dressage Plus stud farm, and a true fairy tale began, which nine years later thrilled the professional world with the win of two gold medals at the European Championships.

Vasco Freire discovered Zonik Plus’s dam, Heideblume, at the Medingen Klosterhof. The Hohenstein/Donnerhall daughter (breeder: Siegfried Kuhls, Gifhorn) was long-legged, elegant, and chic, and caught the Portuguese man’s attention from the very first moment. At that time, Vasco Freire’s nephew Boaventura Francisco Freire, just 16 years old, was training with Dolf-Dietram Keller. His nephew was also the reason why Vasco Freire started breeding dressage horses. “My uncle is very small, and the Portuguese population is not the largest either. And suddenly he had a nephew who was tall and wanted to ride dressage,” Boaventura Freire says with a laugh. “I was twelve years old when he bought his first warmblood. It was the stallion Rivero I by Rautenstein/Argentan II. My uncle saw that these horses were a completely different world from the Lusitanos he was breeding at the time. That sparked his interest.” Now 70 years old, he meticulously studied bloodlines and training. “My uncle has his own vision for everything he does!” Vasco Freire would have liked to have set up a facility in Germany at the time, but he soon gave up on this plan, not only because of his lack of language skills. So he bought many good broodmares and foals in Germany and brought them to Portugal. “He invested

a lot and spent three years researching and studying the German market, attending stallion shows and licensings. That’s how he developed his own concept,” says Boaventura Freire. “His ideal is a mix of warmblood and Lusitano to get the best out of both breeds.”

A keen eye

Vasco Freire has repeatedly demonstrated his keen eye for purchasing horses. In 2007, he bought Sai Baba Plus by Sir Donnerhall/De Niro (breeder: Robert Gaus, Hoitlingen) at the Elite Foal and Broodmare Auction in Verden, Germany. Ten years later, Sai Baba Plus competed with Boaventura Freire at the European Championships in Gothenburg, Sweden. “Sai Baba Plus was my heart horse. He was the most reliable ‘buddy’ there is,” says the dressage rider. Incidentally, the 37-year-old competed in his first championships for juniors and young riders with the Lusitano stallion Peralta Pinha. He later sired Heideblume’s first two foals, which were registered with the Portuguese sport horse breeding society A.P.C.R.S. (Associação Portuguesa de Criadores de Raças Selectas/Portuguese Society of Select Breed Breeders).

Heideblume’s first Hanoverian foal was already a big hit. Fidelio Plus by Fidertanz competed with Sebastião Lucas Lopes at the Junior European Championships in San Giovanni in Marignano, Italy, in 2019. The most recent success is that of Figo Plus by Fürst Romancier, born five years later: at the Para-Dressage European Championships in Ermelo, Netherlands, at the beginning of September this year, the stallion came tenth in Grade I with Ana Isabel Mota Veiga. Previously, Maria Be-

nedita Couto Gonçalves had ridden him to success in junior dressage competitions. Next up was Bingo Plus by Bretton Woods, born in 2013, who celebrated placings up to Inter I in Germany with Vivien Bugenhagen. These successful sons helped their dam Heideblume earn three stars in the Hanoverian Dressage Breeding Programm. When Zonik Plus was born, his sire Zonik was not given registration in Hanover, so the black colt was registered in the Rhineland. “My uncle is a great friend of the Hanoverian Society,” says Boaventura Freire. He accepted that Zonik Plus had to be registered in the Rhineland at the time. After several breeding sessions with Vasco Freire’s own Lusitano stallions, Zonik Plus II was born in March this year. He was born via embryo transfer, as his dam Heideblume is already 23 years old. He is the spitting image of his big brother.

“For my uncle, Zonik Plus is like his child. He has accompanied and supported Justin and Zonik Plus unreservedly,” says Boaventura Freire. Vasco Freire and Justin Verboomen have always stayed in touch. The breeder has followed the development of horse and rider step by step since that day seven years ago when the friendly Belgian came to his stud farm to buy a Lusitano. And when Zonik Plus competed in the FEI WBFSH World Breeding Championships of young dressage horses, the Portuguese man was of course there, just as he was at the European Championships. “Although neither of them speaks the other’s language, they understand each other through feelings and horse sense.” With his title win, Zonik Plus has catapulted himself to number one in the world rankings. “And my uncle from little Portugal is now number one in the world breeder rankings – that’s crazy, isn’t it?” says Boaventura Freire, still unable to quite believe it.

Britta Züngel





TO THE TITLE WITH CARAMIA AND FISCHERCHIPMUNK FRH

The German quartet sensationally and confidently became European team champions in eventing in Blenheim. The team included two Hanoverians: fischerChipmunk FRH and Michael Jung, as well as Caramia and Libussa Lübbecke, who were making their championship debut. In addition, fischerChipmunk FRH won individual silver.

By Britta Züngel

With outstanding performances and a commanding lead of 37 points, Germany became European team champions for the first time since 2019. The winning quartet included fischerChipmunk FRH with Michael Jung and Caramia with Libussa Lübbecke, Ireland's Black Ice with Jérôme Robiné, and the Holsteiner Carlitos Quiditch K with Malin Hansen-Hotopp. The Irish took silver, while bronze went to France. The favored

British team had a weekend that can confidently be described as "rough" in their home event. The water complex stopped the big goals, with only two of the four riders reaching the finish line. This cleared the way for black, red, and gold. Olympic champion fischerChipmunk FRH by Contendro/Heraldik xx (breeder: Dr. Hilmer Meyer-Kulenkampff, Behlmer) has long since become a legend. In Blenheim, he and Michael Jung once again de-

monstrated their class. With a dressage score of 18.3 points, the pair set a new Blenheim record in the arena and were among the hottest contenders for the title. In the cross-country course designed by Mark Philipps, covering 5,800 metres with 31 obstacles, no starter achieved the best time. fischerChipmunk FRH collected ten time penalties. "It was a tremendous feeling with him today. He galloped superbly and didn't touch a single jump.



He jumped with such accuracy, it's just a joy," praised Michael Jung. "I lost time in the middle section. Chipmunk is 17, so you have to let a horse like that catch his breath and you can't put too much pressure on him." Holsteiner London and Laura Collett, who had been in second place until then, finished with six penalty points and took the lead. With a confident clear round in the course, fischerChipmunk FRH and Michael Jung won silver. Third place went to the second remaining British team rider, Tom McEwan, with his Holsteiner JL Dublin.

Foundation for gold

The foundation for the German team gold was laid on the first day of dressage by Caramia by Comte/Fabiano, and Libussa Lübbecke with an outstanding dressage performance, which, together with Malin Hansen-Hotopp, brought Germany to the top. "It's a great honor to be the first rider to go out on the course. I've often been the first rider on the team, so I drew on that experience a bit. I can now rely completely on Caramia, which makes it

really enjoyable," explained Libussa Lübbecke. The pair then took to the challenging course in the grounds of Blenheim Palace as "pathfinders." During the safe round, they had to choose the alternative once, which cost time but gave the team additional accuracy. "You had to fight hard from start to finish and hold everything together until you reached the finish line. But when you get into the flow, work through combination after combination and realize that you're getting closer and closer to the finish, then you can enjoy it a little bit, even though it's so intense," said Libussa Lübbecke. She thus made a reliable contribution to the German team's success, even though she did not finish in the top places in the individual ranking. It was the first senior championship for the 24-year-old sports soldier and her bay mare, born in 2010. Three years ago, the pair won team silver at the European Young Riders Championships. Libussa Lübbecke comes from a family that is "crazy about horses." Her mother, Annelie, is Caramia's breeder. For generations, the family of her grandmother, Ilsemarie Wrede, has been nurturing the successful Schluppera line. Many of the offspring were trai-

The Comte/Fabiano daughter Caramia and Libussa Lübbecke were part of the German gold medal team, as were fischerChipmunk FRH by Contendro/Heraldik xx and Michael Jung, who also became European vice-champions in the individual classification.

Photos: Lafrentz

ned by Annelie Lübbecke and her sisters and presented at competitions. The most successful sport horse to date, born at Gut Neuensteden in Freiburg, is the Forrest xx/Grande daughter Falada M, who competed with Karen Tebar at the 2006 World Equestrian Games in Aachen/GER. Her dam, St.Pr.St. Grafalda, is Caramia's great-granddam. Libussa's brother Fritz Ludwig introduced Caramia to competitions and was a member of the German team that became European Champions in eventing in Westerstede in 2019. "I've known Caramia since she was born; I practically grew up with her. When she was born, I was just nine years old. We grew up together, progressing from juniors to young riders and now to seniors. It's hard to describe a relationship like that," said Libussa Lübbecke in an interview. ☘

TWO SHOW JUMPING BUNDESCHAMPIONS

Two titles for Hanover and the Rhineland: At the Bundeschampionat of show jumping horses, Supergirl PvB with David Will won the seven-year-old class, while Arcassio with Jana Fink took the title in the five-year-old class. Thus continued the hanoverian successes from the previous year.

By Britta Züngel

Hanover's show jumpers made an impressive showing in Warendorf. As in the previous year, two Bundeschampions were celebrated. The best seven-year-old was Supergirl PvB with David Will. The title in the five-year-old class went to the Rhineland-registered stallion Arcassio, ridden by Jana Fink. Although there were no other podium places, there were numerous top placings in the finals. The Bundeschampions of six- and eight-year-olds came from Holstein. The number of starters rose slightly compared to last year. Forty-two eight-year-olds competed for the title, with Hanover represented by three starters and Rhineland by one. Among the 55 seven-year-olds were ten Hanoverians and two Rhinelander. The largest field of participants was the six-year-olds. Of the 129 horses, 26 came from Hanover and one from the Rhineland. 83 five-year-olds competed in the first qualification, including 19 Hanoverians and three Rhinelanders.

Seven-year-olds in winning mood

David Will continued his success story: After winning with Chaqueen last year, David Will also won this year's Bundeschampionat for seven-year-olds, this time in the saddle of Stolzenberg/Compliment's daughter Supergirl PvB (breeder:

Petra von Burchard, Nienhagen). The successful show jumper had only taken her over in mid-August. Two competition starts with the bay, previously ridden by Pia-Luise Baur, were enough to secure her ticket to Warendorf. And David Will was in a winning mood. With his DSP gelding King George, he won the first qualifier over 1.40 metres and came second with Supergirl PvB with almost the same time. The 37-year-old also led the lap of honor with King George in the second competition. With Supergirl PvB, he had one pole down and one time penalty point. In the final, the tide turned. The mare delivered two strong rounds and cantered easily to the black, red, and gold winner's sash with a lead of just under two seconds. She left the Westphalian United Touch S/Carrico son Unglaublich with Hendrik Dowe and Chacboy Blue BW (OS) by Chacoon Blue/Sandro Boy with Marco Kutscher behind her. Both have Hanoverian roots: Unglaublich goes back to the foundation mare Faja, while Chacboy Blue BW, like Gerd Wiltfang's Askan, Rodrigo Pessoa's championship horse Status, and Derby winner Professional Aircare, comes from the dam line of Sedalia.

The Qualito/Lordanos son Quinn HW (breeder: Hartmut Wilharm, Stadthagen) and Dieter Smitz

took a little more time. In their second championship appearance, they advanced to the final of the 35 best with consistent performances as the third-best pair of the 2018 crop and finished fifth without a single penalty point in the three tests. Breeder Hartmut Wilharm had purchased Quinn's dam La Caro at the 2014 winter auction as a show jumper for his daughter Anneke. Before she was put into breeding, she was successful up to 1.25 metres and received two stars in the Hanoverian Jumper Breeding program for this performance. Calea by Colman/Couleur Rubin, (breeder: Maik Cordes, Westerwalsede) and Bernd Rubarth also got off to a good start in the seven-year-old championship, finishing fifth in the first qualifier. After that, the pair, who had already placed twice at the Hanoverian Show Jumping Masters, lacked that little bit of luck and were unable to complete another round without penalty points. Nevertheless, the show jumper from Bötersen was awarded the BMLEH Animal Welfare Prize for his particularly horse-friendly behavior and respectful preparation.

Candidate for the title

David Will had another promising candidate for the title in the eight-year-olds with last year's Bundeschampionesse, Chaqueen by Chacoon Blue/Quicksilber (breeder: ZG Kruse, Walsrode). After a

In the seven-year-old class, the Stolzenberg/Compliment daughter Supergirl PvB flew to victory with David Will.

Photo: Lafrentz



commanding victory in the qualifier with a lead of over three seconds, he went all in during the jump-off in the final, turning on a proverbial dime and finding the fastest line. The grey mare kept up, became ambitious, and then had the great misfortune of knocking down the top rail on the very last jump. She had already demonstrated her outstanding quality in Wiesbaden's Schlosspark, where she finished sixth in a 1.50-metre class. Diabolo FRH by Don Diarado/Grey Top (breeder: Eduard Voss, Eydelstedt) also has 1.50-metre successes to his name this season. The 2023 Hanoverian Show Jumping Champion with Dieter Smitz in the saddle finished 13th in a strong field with four penalty points. The Holsteiner Keaton HV by Kannan/Contendro with Arne van Heel became Bundeschampion ahead of Charli B (DSP) by Celestial/Levinus with Manuel Prause and Lajacuma NRW by Lycon/Rockwell, which Hendrik Dowe guided through the course. The mare is a descendant of the damline of Nebenkunde, whose most successful representative is Helena Weinberg's Nations Cup horse Ferdinand.

Second title

Hanover and the Rhineland took the second title in the youngest age group. Arcassio by Alaba/Darco de Revel (breeder: Hengststation Ferienhof Stücker, Weeze) was the winner of the second qualifier and competed in the final of the 37 best five-year-olds, ten of which reached the second round. Along with Arcassio, another Rhinelander and ten Hanoverians made it to the final. Already performing very well and incredibly consistently in the first round, the practically constructed, medium-sized stallion, who is in the service of the Warendorf State Stud, completed the second round even more pleasingly and relaxed. As the third-to-last starters, Arcassio and Jana Fink left the course jubilantly after their brilliant performance (9.3) and secured a commanding victory with a three-tenths lead. Arcassio also received the newly awarded title of "Youngster of the Year." Jana Fink was honored with the BMLEH Animal Welfare Award. "I am incredibly proud," she said. "He always gives 100 percent on the course." For Arcassio's breeders Josef and Christiane Wilbers, this is their incredible 29th Bundeschampionat title.

The Westphalian Zados with Cirian Nallon in the saddle became vice-Bundeschampion. The Zinedream/Congress son goes back to the dam line of Neumünster, which also produced the Stakkato prize winner Light My Fire. Third place also went to Westphalia with the Cornet Obolensky/a'Lee Spring Power son Crismo and Desiree Kemper. Behind them, three Hanoverians took fourth and fifth place, which was awarded twice. With an impres-

The lap of honour for the Bundeschampion of five-year-olds: Arcassio by Alaba/Darco de Revel and Jana Fink. Photo: Fellner



sive record of six victories in show jumping competitions, the Calox/Cassini II son Calver (breeder: Staj Mustang, Lucina/CZE) traveled to Warendorf. Masterfully presented by Johannes Ehning, he qualified for the final with a clean slate. In the second round, he then showed one of the best rounds (9.0) and finished in an excellent fourth place. In November last year, the chestnut stallion had completed the 50-day test in Neustadt/Dosse as the best of his age group. At the 2007 Verden Foal Auction, the renowned Staj Mustang stud secured Calver's dam Cover Girl for its mare herd. Sire Calox by Cador/Lordanos (breeder: Dietrich Tomforde, Mulsum) was also at stud in Lucina, Czech Republic. He came from the 2015 Stallion Sales and is now competing internationally.

From the Verden auctions

Two Hanoverians tied for fifth place. Comme Prévu/Pasco son Comme Cavelle (breeder: Wolfgang Reich, Heidenheim) and Pia-Luise Baur improved from round to round and achieved exactly the same score of 17.6 in the final as Vio by Viscerado/Stolzenberg (breeder: Torben Wegener, Wunstorf). Last year, Sophie Hinners and Richard Vogel dominated the Bundeschampionat. This year, the two were competing at Spruce Meadows at the same time, so it was up to Pia-Luise Baur, who recently started riding for Richard Vogel and David Will, to present the talented young horse. The powerful jumper mastered his tasks with great overview and was the first starter in the decisive second round. He was much more consistent than in the first round and was rewarded with a score of 8.9.

The second fifth-placed horse, Vio, is a former Verden Auction horse and qualified for the final as the second-best. Her rider, Charlotte Höing, discovered the talented bay with the responsive foreleg at the online auction in January last year. Her path to the final was impressive: the pair was among

the top five in all three starts. Vio is thus following in the hoofprints of her sire Viscerado, who was fourth in the 2019 Bundeschampionat for six-year-old show jumpers. The former Warendorf sports soldier competed with three Verden auction horses. With Chapeau by Chacfly PS/Stakkato (breeder: Roland and Jonas-Joel Olthoff, Laholm/SWE), also born in 2020, from the 2022 Youngster Auction, she entered the final as the fourth-best after placing second (8.9) in the first and fourth (8.8) in the second qualification. At jump nine, a vertical jump, the powerful bay had a brief interruption, which also resulted in time faults, and the pair were unable to compete for the title. Third in the group was the seven-year-old Chacoon Blue/Escudo daughter Cera Blue B (breeder: Ignaz Berger,

Sulzbach-Rosenberg), who came from the November 2022 auction. She was already there two years ago, when Charlotte Höing received the special prize for the most successful horse management trainee at the Bundeschampionat. The mare has developed very well and has reached the 1.45-metre level. After placing fourth in the first qualifier, Cera Blue B had a pole down on the last day and finished 17th in the final standings. "I am extremely proud of my three horses!" says Charlotte Höing. The Brandenburg native found out about the Verden Auctions via the Hanoverian Society's website and Instagram. "Based on the videos, my mother and I then decide which horse might be a good fit." The two secured their next talent very early on, purchasing the Esmeraldo/Big



Charlotte Höing placed at the Bundeschampionat with three Verden auction horses. She came fifth in the five-year-old class with Vio by Viscerado/Stolzenberg. Photo: Lafrentz

RESULTS BUNDESCHAMPIONAT OF SHOW JUMPING HORSES

Five years of age

1. **Arcassio** (Rhld.) by Alaba/Darco de Revel
Breeder: Hengststation Ferienhof Stüker, Weeze
Rider: Jana Fink
2. **Zados** (Westf.) by Zinedream/Congress
Rider: Cirian Nallon
3. **Crismo** (Westf.)
by Cornet Obolensky/a' Lee Spring Power
Rider: Desiree Kemper

Hanoverian placings

4. **Calver** by Calox/Cassini II
Breeder: Staj Mustang, Lucina/CZE
Rider: Johannes Ehning
5. **Vio** (VA) by Viscerado/Stolzenberg
Breeder: Torben Wegener, Wunstorf Liethe
Rider: Charlotte Höing

5. **Comme Cavelle** by Comme Prévu/Pasco
Breeder: Wolfgang Reich, Heidenheim
Rider: Pia-Luise Baur

15. **A Sonnyboy** (Rhld.)
by Aganix du Seigneur/Stolzenberg
Breeder: Hubert Kelliger, Rosendahl
Rider: Stefan Engbers

16. **Comme Quality** (VA)
by Comme il faut NRW/Quality
Breeder: Tessa Pfeil, Elmlohe
Rider: Rene Sontag

23. **Con Balou Dree Boeken**
by Contendro II/Baloubet du Rouet
Breeder: Zuchthof Dree Böken KG, Priors
Rider: Jasmin Hille

24. **Clarino CL** by Checkter/Carinjo
Breeder: Anette u. Dr. Uwe Clar, Bad Bodenteich
Rider: Tobias Clar

Six years of age

1. **Mini Million** (Holst.)
by Million Dollar/Baloubet du Rouet
Rider: Pia-Luise Baur

2. **Uston von Barlo** (Westf.)
by United Touch S/Con Cento
Rider: Hendrik Dowe

3. **Oberon** (OS) by Ogano Sitte/Furioso II
Rider: James Connors Smyth

Hanoverian placings

5. **Vet+ Quick Lady** (VA) by Quickthago VDL/Catoki
Breeder: Alfred Bruch, Winsen
Rider: Sebastian Elias
8. **Klarassina** by Karajan/Stakkato
Breeder: Nicole Nehm, Bergen
Rider: Fabian Clar

ARCASSIO: "HE INSPIRES ME EVERY DAY!"

The Alaba/Darco de Revel-son Arcassio had barely landed after the last oxer when his rider Jana Fink was already cheering in his saddle. The judges rewarded the performance with the day's highest score of 9.3 and the title of Bundeschampion of five-year-old show jumping horses for the young Warendorf stud stallion. "The stallion was even more pleasing in the second round than in the first and was able to express his qualities even better," commented the judges. Jana Fink, who has only been riding Arcassio since the beginning of May, beamed: "I am incredibly proud of my horse. It just feels easy!" She already has nine victories in L and M show jumping competitions to his name. "He has improved from week to week and always wants to do everything right. It's incredible. He has a great character for a stallion and always gives 100 percent. We still have a long way to go, but I hope I can ride him for a long time to come!"

Arcassio is the youngest of a whole series of national champions that were born or trained at Christiane and Josef Wilbers' Stücker holiday farm in Weeze in the Lower Rhine region. The holiday farm has now become a modern and extremely successful stallion station. The name has remained in memory of Christiane Wilbers' parents, Gerda and Erich Stücker. To date, they have won 29 titles – from the first Bundeschampion among eventing horses to successful ponies to dressage and show jumping horses. "I am extremely happy about the victory and it is a very special experience. We didn't expect it, but we hoped for it. Arcassio was already special as a foal. He impresses not only with his scope, but above all with his character," says the breeder.



Bundeschampion Arcassio with breeder Josef Wilbers (left) and Warendorf's State Stud manager Dr Felix Austermann. Photo: Fellner

"Arcassio is a horse that I have continuously developed over three generations," says Josef Wilbers. It has been 20 years since he bought Arcassio's great-grandmother, the Holstein mare Undra, along with two other mares, from a breeder friend to whom he had previously sold a pony stallion. She comes from the Holstein line 4705, to which the stallions Carrico, Catoki, Chalan, and Levantos also trace back. Her first foal was St.Pr.St. FS California, who was successful in show jumping com-

petitions at four and five years of age with Georg Wilbers. Her sire was the Holstein Cassini Boy Junior, who was in service at the Stücker holiday farm at the time. "Cassini Boy Junior was a perfect stallion, became a premium stallion and was one of the most successful show jumping sires in the Rhineland," says Josef Wilbers. In 2017, one of his daughters, Cocominka EST (breeder: Sjaak Bindels, Siebengewald/NED), became Bundeschampioness. The victory remained in the family, as the bay mare was ridden by Katrin Eckermann, Josef Wilbers' niece.

Originally, Josef Wilbers would have liked to have FS California inseminated by one of his own stallions, but he was so impressed by the Belgian Darco/Quidam de Revel son Darco de Revel at the stallion performance test that he decided to use him. FS Darcos Diva was born in 2015. Seven years later, she impressed at the Herwart von der Decken show with outstanding free jumping and very good basic gaits and was crowned winning mare. "She really stood out back then. We had various offers, but made a conscious decision to use her for breeding." The right partner for FS Darcos Diva was quickly found: "Alaba covered her at our place, my brother-in-law Otmar Eckermann raised him," he says. The gray was licensed in Verden in 2014 and left Verden as a premium stallion. Three years later, he placed fourth at the Bundeschampionat and has since placed at 1.50 metres. With the Arpeggio/Cassini Boy Junior son, Cassini Boy Junior appears a second time in the pedigree of the newly crowned Bundeschampion. "That's breeding in generations!" says Josef Wilbers.

Britta Züngel

9. Comme mon père FRH (VA)
by Comme il faut/Quintender
Breeder: Heinz-Wilhelm Thaden, Stade
Rider: Jana Fink

17. Perrys (VA) by Perigueux/Graf Top
Breeder: Heinrich Wege, Steyerberg
Rider: Lucas Deryckere

19. Hülmer Heide by Heartbeat/Cartani
Breeder: Emmers, Bernd u. Judith, Goch
Rider: Judith Thoenes

22. Beastly Boy PJ (VA) by Balou du Rouet/Cassus
Breeder: Pferdezucht Dr. Jacobs GbR, Bierbergen
Rider: Pia-Luise Baur

Seven years of age

1. Supergirl PvB by Stolzenberg/Compliment
Breeder: Petra von Burchard, Nienhagen
Rider: David Will

2. Unglaublich (Westf.) by United Touch S/Carrico
Rider: Hendrik Dowe

3. Chacboy Blue BW (OS)
by Chacoon Blue/Sandro Boy
Rider: Marco Kutscher

Hanoverian placings

5. Quinn HW by Qualito/Lordanos
Breeder: Hartmut Wilharm, Stadthagen
Rider: Dieter Smitz

17. Cera Blue B (VA) by Chacoon Blue/Escudo
Breeder: Ignaz Berger, Sulzbach-Rosenberg
Rider: Charlotte Höing

18. Lola (VA) by Like Angel/Escudo
Breeder: Walter Robert, Breitenbach-Gehau
Rider: Pia-Luise Baur

22. Eldorino PS by Eldorado van de Zeshoek/Carniune
Breeder: Gestüt Lewitz, Mühlen
Rider: Max Haunhorst

Eight years of age

1. Keaton HV (Holst.)
by Kannan/Contendro
Rider: Arne van Heel

2. Charli B (DSP)
by Celestial/Levinus
Rider: Manuel Prause

3. Lajacuma NRW
by Lycon/Rockwell
Rider: Hendrik Dowe

Hanoverian placings:

5. Chaqueen by Chacoon Blue/Quicksilver
Breeder: ZG Kruse, Walsrode
Rider: David Will

13. Diabolo FRH
by Don Diarado/Grey Top
Breeder: Eduard Voss, Eydelstedt
Rider: Dieter Smitz

SUPERGIRL PVB: ATTITUDE MAKES ALL THE DIFFERENCE

The Stolzenberg/Compliment daughter Supergirl PVB from the Aricia line flew to victory with David Will in the Bundeschampionat for seven-year-old show jumpers. PVB stands for Petra von Burchard. The breeder was unable to witness this triumph, as she passed away four years ago. For many years, she was involved in horse breeding and equestrian competition in Hanover, both as the author of numerous articles for DER HANNOVERANER and as press officer for the Celle-Südheide horse breeding club. Supergirl PVB is the last filly by St.Pr.St. Cronprincess by Compliment/Glücks-pilz, who was the pride and joy of her breeder Petra von Burchard. Cronprincess' son Graf Compliment by Graf Top was successful up to 1.50 metres with French rider Adelaide Lautie and American rider Spencer Smith. Quaid-Moritz by Quaid, who is three years younger, won team and individual gold at the Balkan Championships in Istanbul, Turkey, last year with Romanian rider Constantin Cojocariu. This year, he competed with Horia Butuza at the European Junior Championships in Riesenbeck. In 1985, Petra von Burchard discovered Supergirl's fourth dam, foundation mare Divina Z by Domsplatz/Harnisch, at Leon Melchior's stud in Zangersheide. She brought excellent jumping genes to the Südheide. Her daughter Colombine by Calypso II was placed internationally up to 1.45 metres with Thomas Brandt. The Stolzenberg/Valentino son Starfighter also celebrated top results in difficult courses with Marc Bauhofer. His dam Valentina is a half-sister to the dam of Supergirl PVB. "Petra von Burchard lived for her horses," recalls Michael Edzards, who



David Will was delighted with the victory with Supergirl PVB. Photo: Lafrentz

continues the breeding program in her spirit with the Carridam/Valentino daughter Charlotte PVB.

Supergirl PVB began her career as a four-year-old in show jumping competitions, at that time with

Karsten Titsch in the saddle, who had taken her under his wing. "Right from the start, her name Supergirl was fitting," recalls the trainer, who was certain he had a real athlete under his saddle. "She had 120 percent attitude, you couldn't stop her from jumping!" The mare then spent a few months in the stable of her owner Christian Glanemann, who had bought her sight unseen from Karsten Titsch. His rider Stefanie Bolte presented her at several competitions before Supergirl PVB returned to Langlingen. With tenth place at the 2023 Hanoverian Show Jumping Masters, Supergirl PVB finally said goodbye to Karsten Titsch. Christopher Kläsener took over her reins for a year before Supergirl PVB moved to Richard Vogel and David Will's stable at the beginning of this year. After achieving her first S-level placing with Pia-Luise Baur, rider at the stable in Pfungstadt, David Will took the reins of the bay mare in mid-August – two weeks before the Bundeschampionat. "You have to give Supergirl PVB a lot of credit for winning with me, even though we weren't a well-established team yet. That shows her positive character and excellent attitude," says David Will with a smile, recalling Chaqueen (breeder: ZG Kruse, Walsrode), the daughter of Chacoon Blue/Quick-silber, with whom he achieved the same feat last year. "She is a really good horse, with scope and careful. Similar to Chaqueen, it is her attitude and her will to win that make the difference and ensure that she is in the lead in the end." Shortly after the success, a decision was made: Supergirl PVB will open the High Level Verden Auctions with head number one. Britta Züngel



Quinn HW by Qualito/Lordanos came fifth in the seven-year-olds with Dieter Smitz. Photo: Lafrentz

Star daughter Ebonita (breeder: Gerold Gögele, Bleckede) at this year's Elite Foal Auction.

On the podium for six-year-olds, who determined their winners after qualifying in show jumping tests in a 1.35-metre test against the clock, was the Holsteiner Mini Million by Million Dollar/Baloubet du Rouet with Pia-Luise Baur, followed by United Touch S/Con Cento-Uston by Barlo with Hendrik Dowe. The Westphalian comes from the dam line of Nesuli. His third dam Gigantin is the dam of the legendary stallion For Pleasure. Bronze went to Oberon (OS) by Ogano Sitte/Furioso II, ridden by James Connors Smyth. He belongs to the dam line of Nigretti, which made history with Nick Skelton's World Cup winner Dollar Girl. In an exciting jump-off, which seven of the 36 starters reached, Vet+ Quick Lady by Quickthago VDL/Catoki (breeder: Alfred Bruch, Winsen) and Sebastian Elias had two poles down and finished fifth, as they did last year. The bay mare from the dam line of Formica, which her owner Maximilian Wurster

had purchased at the Elite Auction in the autumn of 2023, finished third in the Hanoverian Show Jumping Championships in Elmlohe four weeks ago. With a slight delay, the Karajan/Stakkato daughter Klarassina (breeder: Nicole Nehm, Bergen) and Fabian Clar finished the first round with a time penalty, missing out on the jump-off and finishing eighth. The bay mare has already placed twice at the Hanoverian Show Jumping Masters, and last year she represented Hanover at the Global Studbook Trophy in Valkenswaard/NED. The same misfortune befell the Comme il faut/Quintender son Comme mon père FRH (breeder: Heinz-Wilhelm Thaden, Stade). The 2024 Vice-Bundes-champion had qualified for the final with two seventh places in the qualifiers. Jana Fink was in the saddle. With ninth place, the Warendorf State Stud achieved a second top placing for one of its young sires after Arcassio's title win. The athletic dark bay was raised at the Hunnesrück stallion breeding stud before being sold by the Celle State Stud at the Elite Auction in October 2023. ✂

BARCLEY MAKES HISTORY

Hanoverian cross-country horses have always been a safe bet for medals at the Bundeschampionat in recent years – and this year was no exception. The talented young horses from the Hanoverian Society won a complete set of medals on the final Sunday. Gold and silver were won in the five-year-old class, bronze in the six-year-old class.

In addition, the victories in the small finals also went to Hanoverians.

By Rolf Hillmann

The Hanoverian Society also provided the largest contingent of all eventing horses: of the more than 90 horses from all societies that wanted to qualify for the finals on Thursday, over a third were registered in Verden. The ratio was even more pronounced in the final competitions on Sunday, where 20 five-year-olds and 13 six-year-olds were eligible to compete. Of these 33 horses, 15 represented the Hanoverian colors.

Anna Lena Schaaf and her five-year-old bay gelding Barclay by Buster Moon/Cascadello (breeder: Gerd Neukäter, Voerde) made Bundeschampionat history. Ranked eighth in the final qualification, they moved up to first place as overnight leaders with top scores of 9.0 in both dressage and jumping. In the cross-country, the pair left no doubt that they wanted to wear the black, red, and gold sash at the award ceremony: the trio of judges, Dietmar Hogrefe, Hans Melzer, and Robert Sirch, attested that the bay was a “modern eventing horse” whose training was of the “highest standard.” In the sub-scores, he received 9.5 for rideability, 9.0 for jumping and overall impression, and 8.5 for the canter, which, as in dressage and jum-

ping, resulted in a 9.0 overall. This meant a final score (dressage simple score, jumping one and a half times, cross-country double) of no less than 40.5 points, which had not been seen at the Bundeschampionat in at least the past 15 years.

Absolutely on the right track

In second place among the five-year-olds was sports soldier and German team rider Jérôme Robiné with Die Elli (breeder: Matthias and Annette Bug, Petersberg), a genuine state stud product. His sire Diacontinus, represented in the final by five offspring across all age groups, has developed into a real supplier of sought-after eventing horses and produced a highly regarded championship type with an Escudo/Lauries Crusador xx mare. The pair also ranked second in the qualification, followed up with 8.6 and 8.8 in dressage and jumping, and had good prospects for the final. There, they impressed the judges, who saw a “very interesting horse” with a powerful and ground-covering canter. Her scope and technique in jumping, as well as her high rideability scores, led to a cross-country score of 8.6, which earned her 39 points in the final tally. Commentator Hans Melzer certified that the Vice-Bundeschampionesse was “absolutely on the right track” in her training. The dark bay, enormously dynamic, energetic, and robust mare is owned by her rider together with Dorothea von Zedtwitz. “Elli is a very special horse,” explained Jérôme Robiné after the award ceremony. When he tried her out, he immediately sensed that “she is something special.” Her jumping and dressage are “tremendous” and she has “all the potential” in cross-country, he enthused, calling her “one of the best horses I have ridden so far.” When asked about her relatively low thoroughbred percentage, the rider shrugged his shoulders: “I don’t care, the main thing is that

*Bundeschampion of five-year-old eventers:
Barclay by Buster Moon/Cascadello and Anna Lena
Schaaf. Photo: Equitaris*





Daroca De Rioja FRH by Diacontinus/Con Sherry and Libussa Lübbecke repeated their success from last year, winning bronze in the class of the six-year-olds. Photo: Lafrentz

she's good." The jury not only considered Die Elli to be "well presented," but also saw her as a "really interesting horse" with a bright future ahead of her.

Julia Krajewski with Fox Tonic by Nathan de la Tour/Foxattac (breeder: Bernd Oldenburger, Brewitz) also made it close to the podium, finishing in fifth place ahead of Emma Brüssau on Khaleesi by Karajan/Cadeau (breeder: Jürgen Brüssau, Schriesheim) and Alena Dibowski with her MaMa's Vaiana by Vidar/El Bundy (breeder: Mareike Leers-Schreiber, Döhle) in ninth place. Also placed in the final were Jandrik Markus Tech with Equitech's Diacello by Diamant de Plaisir/Rabino (breeder: Monika and Carsten Tech, Espelkamp) and Ben Leuwer with Charissima RH by Cashmere/Carabas (breeder: Rudi Henn, Kesternich). Speaking of Julia Krajewski and Alina Dibowski: they also made championship history, as both brought three horses to the final: Alina Dibowski in the five-year-old crop, Julia Krajewski in the six-year-old crop – the Olympic champion even managed to place the Bundeschampion, the Vice-Bundeschampion and the fourth-placed horse in the older age group. Incidentally, a new face was responsible for the cross-country courses this year: Uwe Meyer, who is anything but a stranger to the scene. The chairperson of the Ammerland Riding Club is also show director in Westerstede, where international eventing competitions have been held for five years and where the European Pony Championships took place last year. Meyer's debut in Warendorf was widely acclaimed. He succeeded in designing courses that were appropriate for the age and occasion and also selective, but always presented horses and riders with fair, solvable tasks. On the final Sunday, there were very few missed jumps, no ugly scenes and, above all, no horses that were overwhelmed. The judges were able to select sufficiently from the wide range of scores. The pairs were not given any gifts, but they completed the courses healthy and unscathed: this is what modern cross-country course design should look like.



RESULTS BUNDESCHAMPIONAT EVENTING HORSES

Five years of age

1. **Barcle** ♂ by Buster Moon/Cascadello
Breeder: Gerd Neukäter, Voerde
Rider: Anna Lena Schaaf
2. **Die Elli** (VA) ♂ by Diacontinus/Escudo
Breeder: Matthias und Annette Bug, Petersberg
Rider: Jérôme Robiné
3. **Challenge** (Westf.) by Cascadello/Lando xx
Rider: Pia Leuwer

Hanoverian placings

5. **Fox Tonic**
by Nathan de la Tour AA/Foxattac
Breeder: Bernd Oldenburger, Brewitz
Rider: Julia Krajewski

7. **Khaleesi** by Karajan/Cadeau
Breeder: Jürgen Brüssau, Schriesheim
Rider: Emma Brüssau

9. **MaMa's Vaiana** by Vidar/El Bundy
Breeder: Mareike Leers-Schreiber, Döhle
Rider: Alina Dibowski

12. **Equitech's Diacello**
by Diamant de Plaisir/Rabino
Breeder: Monika und Carsten Tech, Espelkamp
Rider: Jandrik Markus Tech

13. **Charissima RH** (Rhld.)
by Cashmere/Carabas
Breeder: Rudi Henn, Kesternich
Rider: Ben Leuwer

Six years of age

1. **Ajana** (DSP) by Karajan/C-Trenton Z
Rider: Julia Krajewski
2. **Diaconthierra S** (OS) by Diacontinus/Heraldicus
Rider: Julia Krajewski
3. **Daroca De Rioja FRH** ♂
by Diacontinus/Con Sherry
Breeder: Georg Ludzuweit, Oberndorf
Rider: Libussa Lübbecke

Hanoverian placings

5. **Diadem** by Diacontinus/Grey Top
B.: Ludwig Brokering, Eydelstedt, Rider: Jan Matthias
9. **Starox** (VA) by Staron/Santander H
Breeder: ZG Müller und Thomsen, Bylderup-Bov/DEN
Rider: Wiebke Jaspers

In the small final for five-year-olds, a Hanoverian mare took home the gold ribbon: Goldmaria by Grey Top/Medicus xx (breeder: ZG Hahne, Intschede and Werder), ridden by Helena Struss, was the only horse to receive a score above 8. Especially rideability (8.5) led to victory on Friday.

Highest score of the day

In the six-year-olds, it was Germany's team rider Libussa Lübbecke who brought the Hanoverian colors to the podium – but that's not all. With her mare Daroca De Rioja FRH by Diacontinus/Con Sherry (breeder: Georg Ludzuweit, Oberndorf), she also achieved the day's highest score of 9.2 on the final Sunday, awarded by the trio of judges Edith Schless-Störtenbecker, Ernst Topp, and Thies Kaspereit. When this pair performed, even the layman could see what good cross-country riding should look like. Commentator Thies Kaspereit summed it up in simple but apt words: "It's nice to see how easy it is." The judges and spectators saw a "striking, attentive and always rideable horse." They received 9.5 for their canter and overall impression, and 9.0 for their jumping and rideability. The pair scored 37.65 points in the overall standings, which meant third place. "I am completely satisfied. I was very, very happy out there today. As always, the horse did a totally solid, relaxed job. Even without the scores, I would say that I have a dream horse and I wouldn't want to swap her for any other," said Libussa Lübbecke, full of praise for her mare after the award ceremony. Jury spokesman Thies Kaspereit also justified the high score with her attentive jumping, which was generous and had scope, "but she also remained rideable at all times; when the rider collected the



Hanoverian double victory in the class of five-year-olds: Behind Barclay, the Diacontinus/Escudo daughter Die Elli with Jérôme Robiné became Vice-Bundeschampionesse. Photo: Küspert

horse, it waited as you would expect." And for those who want to know what lies behind the extravagant name, here is the explanation: Daroca de Rioja is a village and municipality with exactly 66 inhabitants in the northeast of the Spanish autonomous region of La Rioja. Two other Hanoverians made it into the rankings for six-year-olds: the Hanoverian Vice Champion Diadem by Diacontinus/Grey Top (breeder: Ludwig Brokering, Eydels-

tedt) under the saddle of Jan Matthias and Starox by Staron/Santander H (breeder: ZG Möller and Thomsen, Bylderup-Bov/DEN), ridden by Wiebke Jaspers. In the small final on Friday, Good Vibes Only by Grey Top/Natiello xx (breeder: Christian-Wilhelm Ohse, Glentorf) secured victory with Nadine Marzahl. Second place went to Vlic Vlac by Van Gogh/Sharp Prod xx (breeder: Miriam Meier, Selent), presented by Beeke Jankowski. 🐾

BARCLEY: A GRATEFUL HORSE

With a record score of 40.5 points, Barclay by Buster Moon/Cascadello, took the lead among the five-year-old eventing horses and secured the title of Bundeschampion. Anna Lena Schaaf was in the saddle, celebrating another special breeding success for her grandmother's husband Gerd Neukäter.

Barclay made his first major appearance in 2023 at the Free Jumping Competition of the Hanoverian Jumper Breeding Program in Verden, where he took third place. His dam Carlotta, awarded two stars in the Jumper Breeding Program, collected placings up to 1.35 metres with Anna Lena Schaaf. She is now also successfully demonstrating her dual talent in dressage with Julia Berels, winning L* level tests. Barcleys siblings also impressed in competition. Hann.Pr.St./Vet+ United Dream by United Touch and Best Buddy by Blockbuster, third in the 2022 Hanoverian Cross-Country Horse Championships, were successfully presented by



Ilka Schaaf (left) and Gerd Neukäter with their Bundeschampions Barclay and Anna Lena Schaaf. Photo: Küspert

Anna Lena Schaaf in accordance with their age and found new owners at the Verden January and April Auction at the beginning of the year. Great-grandmother Georgie by Goldstern/Guelder Rose is the grandmother of the Fidertanz/Laurentianer, daughter Fairytale, with whom Anna Lena Schaaf became European Junior Individual and Team Champion in 2019. A year later, both were part of the German Young Riders team that won gold, and she herself took the lap of honor as European vice-champion. After her victory, Anna Lena Schaaf was thrilled with her champion: „Berti is an incredibly grateful horse in training. You teach him something and he implements it immediately." He is very tall and quite "long," but he learned very quickly to sort himself out. "He is incredibly well-behaved and always wants to do everything right." In the end, he always does exactly what you tell him to do – "and that makes my job very easy in dressage, jumping, and cross-country."

Rolf Hillmann



Benjamin Franklin by Bon Vivaldi NRW/Royal Blend, ridden by Janina Tietze, was narrowly defeated in the final and became Vice-Bundeschampion of four-year-old stallions.
Photo: Lafrentz

WINNING HEARTS AND SILVER MEDALS

*The exciting title battles among the riding horses are traditionally crowd pullers, with the stallion competitions in particular attracting everyone's attention.
Two silver and two bronze medals went to Hanover.*

By Antonia Heise

Audience favorite and king of rideability: Benjamin Franklin by Bon Vivaldi/Royal Blend (breeder: Wilhelm Kamps, Cuxhaven) thrilled the audience in the four-year-old stallion class. The Celle State Stud enjoyed the limelight and celebrated his trot with a magnificent uphill movement and plenty of ground cover, always in a good rhythm and already very collected. The trio of judges Peter Mannheims, Dr. Carsten Munk, and Peter Olsson were impressed and awarded him a 9.5. They gave

him an "excellent" for his canter. Always relaxed, jumping powerfully uphill with plenty of power, the bay stallion left nothing to be desired in his canter (10). In his walk, he presented himself clearly in rhythm and striding well through his body, although a little more ground cover would have been desirable (8.0). Guest rider Claire-Louise Averkorn was enthusiastic and spoke of a "very, very good riding feeling." His rider Janina Tietze presented him very harmoniously. Responding fi-

nely to the aids, he carried himself in a natural posture and received a 9.5 for rideability. He received a 9.0 for his conformation with a good topline and very correct limbs. With an overall score of 9.2, he became Vice-Bundeschampion and was only narrowly beaten by the Oldenburg stallion Esquire by Escolar/Fürst Heinrich, who became Bundeschampion with a score of 9.3. Benjamin Franklin's rider Janina Tietze was awarded the Animal Welfare Prize for her sensitive performance.

Benjamin Franklin was discovered at the Verden Stallion Sales by the Celle State Stud. His dam, Red Roberta, is listed with three stars in the Hanoverian Dressage Breeding Programm due to her hereditary performance, as Benjamin Franklin has prominent siblings. Fürst Willi by Fürst Romaner is now successful in Grand Prix competitions with Lena Haßmann. Hann.Pr.A. Belinda FRH by Bon Coeur placed in the final of the World Championships for Young Dressage Horses with Lena Haßmann and is successful up to Inter I. In 2025, she was reserve for the European Championships for Juniors in Le Mans/FRA with Clara Kohoutek. Shakeela FRH by Secret is also at home with the Kohoutek family. In 2023, she was Hanoverian Champion of five-year-old dressage horses and won team and individual gold at the European Championships for Children with Laura Kohoutek. And Bon Benito by Bon Courage, ridden by Lena Haßmann, entered the final of the Bundeschampionat for five-year-old dressage horses as the winner of the small final, alongside Benjamin Franklin. State stud master Dr. Axel Brockmann was visibly proud of his Vice-Bundeschampion Benjamin Franklin: "We are delighted that Benjamin Franklin has made such phenomenal progress. Hanoverian Champion with 9.1, Vice-Bundeschampion with 9.2, absolute crowd favorite – it couldn't be much better. It warms your heart."

The bronze medal went to Louis Löwenherz von Bellin (breeder: Dressurhall Sandbrink, Meinerßen). The glossy black, licensed Lord Europe/Don Index son impressed with his rider Leonie Richter with an elastic, powerful trot with a clear uphill tendency (9.0). In the canter, he showed active hindquarters with a clear uphill tendency and already good repetition (8.5). His walk was rhythmic, but could have been performed with more ground cover (7.5). He presented himself relaxed and with good self-carriage, although his neck could have been opened a little more at times. Guest rider Claire-Louise Averkorn clearly felt comfortable in his saddle (8.5). The modern stallion with beautifully modeled, long lines, large shoulders, and correct limbs received a 9.5 for his conformation, resulting in a final score of 8.6. In Verden, the stallion, who is stationed at the von Bellin stud, won the vice-champion title at the Hanoverian Championships. His full sister Hann.Pr.A. Louisa von Bellin was awarded the Id premium a year earlier at the Herwart von der Decken show.

The licensed Escolar/Florenco son Eaton of Westfalia CvM (breeder: Caroline von Möller, Bielefeld) placed fifth with a score of 7.9. With his rider Sabrina Geßmann, he showed good mechanics and impulsion in trot (8.0) and was powerful and collected in canter (8.0). His walk was convincing with good rhythm and ground coverage (8.5). In the qualifying test, the liver chestnut shone with a score of 9.0 for rideability, but in the final, his tongue was visible at times, which cost him points (7.5). His conformation was rated 7.5. His dam,

St.Pr.St. Fatheema, was herself successful in the arena and has been awarded two stars in the Hanoverian Dressage Breeding Programm. She competed in the 2010 Bundeschampionat with Ann-Christin Wienkamp, was part of the Verden Elite Auction collection two years later, and was placed up to M** level. Parallel to Eaton of Westfalia CvM, her son Silmarillion of Westfalia CvM by Secret competed in the final of the seven-year-old dressage horses and finished ninth with Sabrina Geßmann.

Animal Welfare Award for Greta Heemsoth

No Hanoverian made it onto the podium in the four-year-old mares and geldings class. Hann.Pr.A. Filouna by Filou/Scolari (breeder: Ingo Pape, Hemmoor) and Riviera by Revolution/Christ (breeder: Philipp Lindemann, Essen) shared seventh place. Hann.Pr.A. Filouna showed elasticity and energetic impulsion in the trot with Greta Heemsoth (8.0). The canter was already well balanced with a nice uphill tendency (8.0), and the walk was diligent and ground-covering (8.0). With test rider Claire-Louise Averkorn, she presented herself well, responding to the aids and showing suppleness. Judges Peter Mannheims, Dr. Carsten Munk, and Peter Olsson awarded her 8.0 for rideability. The big-framed, harmoniously constructed mare also received 8.0 for her conformation, resulting in a final score of 8.0. Her rider Greta Heemsoth received the Animal Welfare Award for her sensitive presentation. Hann.Pr.A. Filouna became Vice Champion at the Hanoverian Championships in Verden. At the same venue, her dam Hann.Pr.A. Serafina, who is listed with one star in the Hano-

verian Dressage Breeding Programm, was reserve champion at the Herwart von der Decken Show in 2015. Her daughter Hann.Pr.St. Fabergé by Franz-Ferdinand was also awarded Ib in 2020. Another daughter of Hann.Pr.St. Serafina, Hann.Pr.A. Venedig by V-Plus, registered in Westphalia, came fourth in this year's small final for five-year-old dressage horses.

Riviera achieved the same overall score. The dark bay trotted energetically and rhythmically with good movement (8.0). Her canter was impressive with active hind legs, an uphill tendency, and good ground coverage in the extensions (8.5). Her walk was relaxed and rhythmic, but more elasticity would have been desirable (7.5). Always content with a good attitude, she responded well to the rider's aids (8.0). The modern-looking mare with good proportions also received a score of 8.0 for her conformation. The title went to the Oldenburg mare Weihe's Happiness OLD by Dynamic Dream/Sir Donnerhall with a score of 8.8. Silver went to New Balance OLD by Bon Vivaldi/Foundation, and bronze to the DSP gelding Lord Löwenherz von Bellin by Lord Europe/United.

In the final for three-year-old stallions, Beck's in Black by Beck's/Londonderry (breeder: Christian Thelker, Venne) entered the arena as one of the favorites, having won the qualifying test. The black stallion celebrated his trot with elasticity, plenty of impulsion, and very good shoulder freedom. The judges Wolfgang Egbers, Gerd Wolfgang Sickinger, and Catrin Wingender rewarded this with a score of 9.5. With a beautiful uphill tendency and powerful hind legs, the licensed stallion also impressed in the canter (9.0). His walk was calm and confi-



Beck's in Black by Beck's/Londonderry won the bronze medal in the class of three-year-old stallions with Africa Algarra Ruiz. Photo: Lafrentz

RESULTS BUNDESCHAMPIONAT RIDING HORSES



Four-year-old mares and gelding

1. Weihe's Happiness OLD

by Dynamic Dream/Sir Donnerhall
Rider: Alina Schneider

2. New Balance OLD by Bon Vivaldi NRW/Foundation

Rider: Tanja Fischer

3. Lord Löwenherz von Bellin (DSP)

by Lord Europe/United, Rider: Ellen Richter

Hanoverian placings

7. Hann.Pr.A. Filouna by Filou/Scolari

Breeder: Ingo Pape, Hemmoor
Rider: Greta Heemsoth

7. Riviera by Revolution/Christ

Breeder: Philipp Lindemann, Essen
Rider: Sina Aringer

Four-year-old stallions

1. Esquire (Old.) by Escolar/Fürst Heinrich

Rider: Eva Möller

2. Benjamin Franklin

by Bon Vivaldi NRW/Royal Blend
B.: Wilhelm Kamps, Cuxhaven, r.: Janina Tietze

3. Louis Löwenherz von Bellin

by Lord Europe/Don Index
Breeder: Dressurstall Sandbrink, Meinersen
Rider: Leonie Richter

Hanoverian placing

5. Eaton of Westfalia CvM

by Escolar/Florecio
Breeder: Ann Caroline von Möller, Bielefeld
Rider: Sabrina Geßmann

Three-year-old mares and geldings

1. Be my Sunshine (Westf.) by Benicio/For Dance

Rider: Christiane Ulmker

2. Salvina by by Santos/Finest

B.: Hartwig Bulle, Cuxhaven, r.: Leslie Rohrbacher

3. Fiene-Liene (Westf.) by Fineline/Quadrofino

Rider: Valentina Bronner

Three-year-old stallions

1. Soxx (Westf.) by Secret/Londontime

Rider: Veronika Steinhof

2. La Paix (Old.) by La Vie/Sir Donnerhall

Rider: Vanessa Crnadak

3. Beck's in black

by Beck's/Londonderry
Breeder: Christian Thelker, Ostercappeln
Rider: Africa Algarra Ruiz

Hanoverian placings

4. Salsero CF by Secret/Vivaldi

Breeder: Christine Feichtinger, Vaduz/LIE
Rider: Thomas Schulze

5. Be my Gold

by Bon Vivaldi NRW/Best of Gold
Breeder: Günter Wellmann, Brockum
Rider: Nele Lübbehäusen

6. Vliertalarm by Von Und Zu/Bordeaux

Breeder: Johannes Hesselink, Emlichheim
Rider: Mareike Mimbberg-Hess

dent in four-beat with good forehand from the shoulder (8.5). In the qualification, the stallion received a 9.0 for rideability with Africa Algarra Ruiz. In the final, however, the stallion appeared dissatisfied in the mouth. The judges had to take this into account in their assessment of rideability (7.5). The judges awarded a 9.0 for the conformation of the modern-looking stallion with a well-defined saddle area. With an overall score of 8.7, Beck's in Black won the bronze medal. Discovered

at the 2024 Stallion Sales, he is now at Damil Dressage in Fürstenau. His dam, St.Pr.St. La Vie, is also the dam of Glamourville by Glamourdale, who was also licensed at the Verden dressage stallion licensing. The Oldenburg stallion La Paix by La Vie/Sir Donnerhall became Vice-Bundeschampion of the three-year-old stallions with a score of 8.8. With a score of 9.0, the Westphalian Soxx by Secret/Londontime secured the title of Bundeschampion. His dam Liliefée was the 2012

winning mare at the Herwart von der Decken Show. Salsero CF by Secret/Vivaldi (breeder: Dr. Christine Feichtinger, Vaduz/LIE) followed in fourth place with a score of 8.3. With Thomas Schulze, he showed an elastic trot with good shoulder freedom and energy (8.0). His canter was beautiful uphill with energetic hind legs and already well balanced (8.5). His walk was relaxed (8.0). Harmonious, responsive to the aids and with a good attitude towards the rider, he received an 8.5 for rideability, as well as for his conformation with a good topline. His prominent half-brother is Bon Courage, a son of Bon Coeur. The premium stallion of 2018 was Vice-Bundeschampion of the three-year-old stallions six years ago, is now also ridden by Thomas Schulze, is victorious up to Inter I and has qualified for the final of the Nürnberger Burg-Pokal.

Be my Gold by Bon Vivaldi/Best of Gold (breeder: Günter Wellmann, Brockum) came in fifth. The licensed stallion impressed in trot with good impulsion (8.0) and an energetic canter with good hind leg action (8.0). His walk was rhythmic but not quite relaxed (7.5). The stallion received an 8.0 for rideability under his rider Nele Lübbehäusen. The judges awarded him an 8.5 for conformation. Vliertalarm by Von Und Zu/Bordeaux (breeder: Johannes Hesselink, Emlichheim) ranked sixth with a score of 7.8. The chestnut stallion showed elasticity and good mechanics in trot with Mareike Mimbberg-Hess, a noticeable uphill tendency and good movement in canter, and increasing suppleness in walk. He received 8.0 for all three basic gaits. He did not always show complete independence from the rider's hand, thus receiving 7.5 for rideability. The judges also awarded him a 7.5 for conformation.



Bronze in the class of four-year-old stallions: Louis Löwenherz von Bellin by Lord Europe/Don Index, masterfully presented by Leonie Richter. Photo: Lafrentz



The Santos/Finest daughter Salvina with Leslie Rohrbacher became Vice-Bundeschampionesse of the three-year-old mares and geldings. Photo: Fellner

Salvina's comeback

The brown mare Salvina by Santos/Finest (breeder: Hartwig Bulle, Cuxhaven) made a comeback in the final for three-year-old mares and geldings. Having narrowly missed out on a placing in the qualifying test with a score of 8.1, she improved in all variable scores in the final. The mare presented her trot with energetic hind legs, very elastic with good impulse and a good uphill tendency (8.5). In canter, she had a beautiful stride and good balance, jumping uphill (8.5). Her walk impressed the trio of judges Wolfgang Egbers, Gerd Wolfgang Sickinger, and Catrin Wingender with very good ground cover, striding loosely through her body. This was rewarded with a score of 9.5. Always responding well to the aids of her rider Leslie Rohrbacher, she showed a good attitude and presented herself in a relaxed manner (8.5). Her conformation was rated 7.5. This gave her an overall score of 8.5 on the scoreboard – meaning she was crowned 'Vice-Bundeschampioness'. Her grandmother Dubarry by Don Frederico also placed in the 2013 finals for five-year-old dressage horses. Salvina's rider Leslie Rohrbacher was visibly delighted: „Salvina is a super rideable, performance willing mare

with great basic gaits. Her walk in particular is very, very good. We really enjoy riding her and are very happy! The Westphalian Be my Sunshine by Benicio/For Dance became the Bundeschampioness of three-year-old mares and geldings with a score of 9.3. The bronze medal went to the DSP mare Fiene-Liene by Fineline/Quadrofino with a score of 8.4.

Prior to this year's Bundeschampionat, there had been discussion as to whether it was still appropriate for three-year-old riding horses to compete in the Bundeschampionat. The requirements for young horses had already been reduced in recent years, the test with an test rider is no longer carried out, and the task has also been simplified. The chairman of the German Equestrian Federation, Prof. Dr. Martin Richenhagen, made a positive statement during the event: "We saw great competition, happy horses, and beautiful images in the riding horse arena. The way we have conducted these tests now, even with a simplified task, makes it perfectly acceptable to have three-year-old riding horses compete at the Bundeschampionat." Dr. Henrike Lagershausen, chief veterinarian of the

German Equestrian Federation, also emphasized that it is not age alone that is decisive, but "how" and "under what conditions" a young horse is put to work. „I have a problem with categorical and sweeping statements that a three-year-old should never be ridden. It always depends on the individual physical condition and character of the horse, as well as the frequency and intensity of training. The young horses that qualify have already proven that they can cope well with basic stresses. At the event, meticulous attention is paid to the early detection of possible signs of stress, and equipment checks are carried out. Awareness of horse welfare has grown noticeably.

At the Hanoverian Championships, there were some promising riding horses on the podium that would certainly have had a good chance at the Bundeschampionat. However, their owners decided to prioritize the individual needs of their young horses and give them time to develop. This responsible approach shows that the idea of horse welfare is increasingly becoming a central focus. ✂



With the black, red, gold winner's sash for seven-year-old dressage horses: Sky by Sezuan/Sir Donnerhall and Ann-Kathrin Lachemann. Photo: Küspert

FLYING HIGH: SKY FLIES TO THE TITLE

With powerful dynamism, the liver chestnut Sky danced his way to the title in the seven-year-old dressage horses with Ann-Kathrin Lachemann. No less impressive was Galleria's Fancy Fergie, who was crowned Vice-Bundeschampionesse in the six-year-olds with Charlotte Tollhopf in the saddle.

By Juliana Küspert

With ten out of fifteen horses, the Hanoverian Society provided the largest contingent in the final of the seven-year-old dressage horses. And in the end, a very special horse stood at the top of the field: Sky. The strikingly marked liver chestnut already impressed at his licensing, which he left as a premium stallion and the top price. In the preliminary test, the Sezuan/Sir Donnerhall son (breeder: Gestüt Neff, Frankenberg) with Ann-Kathrin Lachemann had already shown that he had arrived in the advanced class. But what the pair put on display on the final day was simply outstanding. „What kind of trot is that? What kind of canter is that?“ Nicole Nockemann began her

judges' commentary. "So much dynamism, so much activity with a natural basic trot and so much harmony – that is truly excellent. The canter showed itself like a metronome, upward, set for the pirouettes, great series of changes – the scale of training up to the collection was fully exploited."

The entire performance was characterized by harmony and ease. The scores in the "quality" category were more than very good, except for the walk. The trot was always beautifully self-carrying with plenty of ground cover and activity in the hindquarters, with a lot of cadence in the return.

The high degree of willingness to collect was particularly evident in the canter exercises. This was also reflected in the assessment of suppleness and overall impression: a horse with clear prospects for the big competition. Together with the technical score of 77.272 percent, the final score was 83.436 percent, securing the title of Bundeschampion.

Three percentage points behind were the Westphalian mare Fides by Fürstenball/Sir Donnerhall and Claire-Louise Averkorn. The winner of the preliminary test, the Westphalian gelding Stromberg by Secret/Sunday from the dam line of Ilythia, rid-

den by Carina Scholz, took the bronze medal. This year, the BMLEH Animal Welfare Prize, a special honorary award for particularly horse-friendly riding from the Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (BMLEH), was also presented. This honor went to Silmarillion of Westfalia CvM and Sabrina Geßmann, who took ninth place. The jury was impressed by how the Secret/Florenco offspring (breeder: Caroline von Möller, Bielefeld) was worked: "Overall, the horse presented itself in a very relaxed, contented, and natural basic movement. The rider repeatedly supported the natural flow and got the horse to respond to the aids. The rein-out-of-the-hand chewing was promoted very evenly and actively in the training level."

The impressive Oldenburg chestnut stallion Viva Vitalis by Vitalis/Fürst Romancier won gold with Lukas Fischer in the six-year-old dressage horses class. His dam Gesina is a full sister to the private stallions For Romance I and II. The representative of the Hanoverian Obandina line scored 8.96 despite a deduction for riding errors. With the day's highest score of 9.0 for her walk, Galleria's Fancy Fergie became Vice-Bundeschampioness. The dark bay For Romance daughter (breeder: Hof Brüning, Ochtmannien) is descended on her dam's side from the Holstein Catoo. Last year, the mare and her rider Charlotte Tollhopf placed in the final of the World Championships for Young Dressage

Horses. In addition to her excellent walk, the mare also scored well in the trot. In the canter, two tense changes of leg detracted from her score. "The mare showed a great deal of consistency, elegance, and naturalness, and the ride was characterized by a great deal of harmony, especially in the trot and walk. The overall impression was particularly impressive due to the elegance of this very promising horse," was the judge's comment.

Galleria's Fancy Fergie comes from the Holstein line 42B, which has produced numerous successful S-level show jumpers. Her dam Fascination's place is in the dressage arena, as she already demonstrated at her mare performance test in Elms-horn. There she received the maximum score of 10 for rideability, and her trot and canter were also rated very good and better. Galleria's Fancy Fergie herself won her class as a two-year-old at the show in Bruchhausen-Vilsen. At the time, Breeding Manager Ulrich Hahne already described her as "a clearly uphill-built and beautifully shaped mare with generous movements in trot and canter."

The bronze medal went to the Westphalian private stallion Be my Dancer by Benicio/Vivaldi and Friederike Kampmeyer. With six Hanoverians and Rhinelanders in the final, the medal haul could have been greater. Designer by Da Costa/Don Frederico (breeder: Bernd Hinck, Deinstedt) and Melanie

Klein took the thankless fourth place. The runner-up in the second class of the qualification, Hanoverian Champion Jupiter BC by Jovian/Fürst Romancier (breeder: Gestüt Greim, Bärnau), had a few uncertainties in the final with Leonie Richter, which prevented him from finishing in the medals.

In the five-year-old class, none of the six Hanoverians in the final took home a medal. As was the case at this year's World Championships for Young Dressage Horses, the best Hanoverian in the rankings was the stallion So Special (breeder: Pia Sophie Wahlers, Visselhövede). The Secret/Bon Coeur son performed much better with Jessica Lynn Thomas in the newly named ClipMyHorse.TV Arena than he had previously in Verden and was able to show his full potential. With a final score of 8.7, he was 0.02 points behind the third-placed pair. His trot showed significant extensions, but also successful collections, his walk was clear and striding through his body, and his canter was always uphill and with good willingness to collect. Breeder Pia Sophie Wahlers beamed throughout the entire test at the edge of the arena: "So Special really lives up to his name!" Two years ago, the licensed liver chestnut was vice-champion in Verden and Warendorf, and last year he was Hanoverian champion. His granddam Dance and Fly by Donnerhall/Rubinstein already has four S*-placed offspring and, with Hann.Pr.A. Somersby by Sandro Hit, produced

SKY: THE CHARMER

"I've only known Sky since February, and I think it's incredible how much trust he has placed in me. It's anything but a given that he does all this for me!" said Ann-Kathrin Lachemann, visibly moved after the award ceremony. "It leaves me speechless!" For the Sezuan/Sir Donnerhall son Sky (breeder: Gestüt Neff, Frankenberg), the title in the seven-year-old dressage horses was not his first success in Warendorf. Last year, he took seventh place in the six-year-old final with Hannah Laser. A few weeks earlier, he had won bronze at the Hanoverian Championships.

The charismatic horse from Gut Schönweide thrilled the audience with his performance in the final, and the cheering seemed never-ending. Sky turned towards the stands several times and clearly enjoyed being celebrated. Sky made his first spectacular appearance at his licensing in Verden. Although the Niedersachsenhalle was not as full as in previous years due to the pandemic, the chic liver chestnut was no less celebrated. He left the walking ring as a premium stallion. "An impressive powerhouse with an outstanding canter," commented Breeding Manager Ulrich Hahne. And Heike Kemmer added at the final ceremony: "The canter had real highlights: collected, uphill and relaxed. His powerful trot is paired with a high de-



„Happy, happy, happy!“ – breeder Sandra Neff with Bundeschampion Sky and Ann-Kathrin Lachemann.

Photo: Küsspert

gree of elasticity." Sky then left the subsequent auction as the top price winner, heading for Schleswig-Holstein.

A year later, the stallion passed his 50-day test in Schlieckau with dream scores. The report card was full of eights and nines. Three 9.0s for character, character, and willingness to perform, 8.5 for trot, 9.0 for canter, and test rider Philip Hess awarded 9.75 for rideability. His talent is no coincidence: with triple world champion Sezuan as his sire, he was born with many gifts. His dam line also boasts numerous successful S-level dressage horses, including Flashback by Franziskus, a private stallion who placed in Grand Prix competitions with Kathrin Burger. His third dam, Weinperle, is not only the granddam of the newly crowned Bundeschampion, but also of the Herwart von der Decken Show winning mare Hann.Pr.St. Vanity Fair FRH by Vivaldi, who placed third in the six-year-old dressage horses in Warendorf four years ago with Stefanie Viehoff-Wolf.

Sky, with his striking markings, was bred by Sandra Neff. "Sky was already my favorite as a foal. He was something special in terms of character and charisma. We are very happy, especially because he is our premium stallion Sky," says the breeder from Frankenberg, beaming. "He is truly unique. Once you've seen Sky, you'll never forget him, right?"
Juliana Küsspert

the reserve champion of the 2023 Herwart von der Decken Show. Dance and Fly's half-brother is none other than Duke of Britain FRH, who celebrated numerous great successes with Frederic Wandres. So Special was literally born with the suitability for the big arena.

The Oldenburg Lodovico by Lord Europe/Don Frederic with Lena Haßmann became the Bundeschampion of five-year-old dressage horses. The privately owned stallion comes from the Hanoverian Silberranke line. Close behind was the Westphalian Veni Vedi Vici by Vitalis/Daily Deal with Jana Marie Thamm, followed closely by Fiete by Fashion in Black/Rock Forever with Kira Laura Soddemann, also a Westphalian. Overall, it would have been nice to see the Hanoverians, who were further ahead in the preliminary test, also achieve top rankings in the final. However, the close decision in the medal race – places 1 to 4 were only 0.1 points apart – clearly shows how close the quality of the five-year-old dressage horses was this year. The dressage horses were unable to repeat last year's medal haul, but the quality of the Hanoverians and Rhinelander was once again remarkably high. That little bit of luck was simply missing this year. ✂



Galleria's Fancy Fergie by For Romance/Catoo, ridden by Charlotte Tollhopf, became Vice-Bundeschampion of six-year-old dressage horses. Photo: Lafrentz

RESULTS BUNDESCHAMPIONAT DRESSAGE HORSES



Five years of age

1. Lodovico (Old.) by Lord Europe/Don Frederic
Rider: Lena Haßmann

2. Veni Vedi Vici (Westf.) by Vitalis/Daily Deal
Rider: Jana Marie Thamm

3. Fiete (Westf.) by Fashion in Black/Rock Forever
Rider: Kira Laura Soddemann

Hanoverian placings

4. So Special by Secret/Bon Coeur
Breeder: Pia Sophie Wahlers, Visselhövede
Rider: Jessica Lynn Thomas

12. For Royalty by For Romance/Franziskus
Breeder: Berthold Schoemaker, Emlichheim
Rider: Leonie Richter

13. D'Egalité Gold by Dancier Gold/Totilas
Breeder: Christine Schmitz, Neustadt
Rider: Borja Carrascosa

14. Bon Benito by Bon Courage/Royal Blend
Breeder: Wilfried Putz, Wiesentheid
Rider: Lena Haßmann

15. Sinato by Secret/For Romance
Breeder: Christine Feichtinger, Vaduz/LIE
Rider: Thomas Schulze

Six years of age

1. Viva Vitalis (Old.) by Vitalis/Fürst Romancier
Rider: Lukas Fischer

2. Galleria's Fancy Fergie ✂ by For Romance/Catoo
Breeder: Hof Brüning, Ochtmannien
Rider: Charlotte Tollhopf

3. Be my Dancer (Westf.) by Benicio/Vivaldi
Rider: Friederike Kampmeyer

Hanoverian placings

4. Designer by Da Costa/Don Frederico
Breeder: Bernd Hinck, Deinstedt
Rider: Melanie Klein

8. Livorno (VA) by Livaldon/Dancier
Breeder: Torsten Meier, Wagenfeld
Rider: Dr. Annabel Frenzen

10. Jupiter BC by Jovian/Fürst Romancier
Breeder: Gestüt Greim, Bärnau
Rider: Leonie Richter

15. Gut Wettlkam's Erste Sahne (Rhld.)
by Escamillo/Sir Donnerhall
Breeder: Hanne Schleupen, Kempen
Rider: Johanna Wadenspanner

15. Hann.Pr.A. Feliciana
by Follow Him's Schönweide/Benicio
Breeder: Bernhard Sieverding, Twistringen
Rider: Adrian Muñoz Jurado

Seven years of age

1. Sky (VA) ✂ by Sezuan/Sir Donnerhall
Breeder: Gestüt Neff, Frankenberg
Rider: Ann-Kathrin Lachemann

2. Fides (Westf.) by Fürstenball/Sir Donnerhall
Rider: Claire-Louise Averkorn

3. Stromberg (Westf.) by Secret/Sunday
Rider: Carina Scholz

Hanoverian placings

6. Emmy Lou by Escalar/Fürst Heinrich
Breeder: Friedhelm Tito, Bad Meinberg
Rider: Kira Laura Soddemann

7. Royal Black Diamond by Rotspon/Laurentio
Breeder: Ralf Zierke, Braunschweig
Rider: Jessica Lynn Thomas

9. Silmarillion of Westfalia CvM by Secret/Florenco
Breeder: Caroline von Möller, Bielefeld
Rider: Sabrina Geßmann

10. Hann.Pr.A. In my Heart V
by Instertanz V/Herzensdieb
Breeder: Gestüt Letter Berg, Coesfeld-Lette
Rider: Stephanie Leuenberger-Voss

11. Hann.Pr.St. Foundation's Lady Lucia
by Foundation/Lauries Crusador xx
Breeder: ZG Schmitz-May, Hetzerath
Rider: Sabrina Geßmann

12. Hann.Pr.St. Happy Days di Fonteabeti
by Valverde/Wup
Breeder: Societa Agricola Allevamento Fonteabeti, Italien
Rider: Stefanie Wittmann

13. Hann.Pr.A. Dheelis by Dancier/Sir Donnerhall
Breeder: Janne Schäfer, Bissendorf
Rider: Annika Korte

14. Flint by Fürsten-Look/Benetton Dream
Breeder: Johannes Sabel, Gersten
Rider: Nadine Husenbeth

15. For Glory HW (VA) by Fürstbischof/Alabaster
Breeder: ZG Lüdemann und Seebold-Lüdemann, Riekenbostel
Rider: Leonie Sahm



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Very Special by Viscount/Nobre xx and Brandon Schäfer-Gehrau celebrated a start-to-finish victory at the CCI3* in Arville. Photo: Lafrentz/Archiv

CHAMPIONSHIPS IN THE SPOTLIGHT

In recent weeks, the European Championships in dressage, show jumping, and eventing have been the focus. But numerous victories have also been reported from other showgrounds round the world.

By Britta Züngel

EVENTING



CARAMIA

At the Nations Cup in Arville/BEL, the German team celebrated their victory. Caramia by Comte/Fabriano/Lauries Crusador xx (dam line of Schlupera, breeder: Annelie Lübbecke, Wingst) and Libussa Lübbecke, who finished sixth in the four-star competition, made a significant contribution to this success.

QUANTAS (DAM LINE OF VA)

As part of the European Championships in Blenheim/GBR, a four-star competition was held for eight- and nine-year-olds. Quantas R by Qualito/Grey Top/Zeus (dam line of Sabalenda, breeder:

Werner Rückgauer, Krautheim) and Samantha Lissington from New Zealand took the lead in the dressage arena and held on to it until the end without incurring a single further penalty point.

VERY SPECIAL

Very Special by Viscount/Nobre xx/Fabriano (breeder: Ulrike Edel-Heidhues, Bad Harzburg) and Brandon Schäfer-Gehrau achieved a commanding start-to-finish victory at the CCI3*-S Arville/BEL.

DRESSAGE



HANN.PR.ST. BARCELONA

With two victories in the junior team and individual competitions, the Bon Coeur/San Remo/Hohen-

stein daughter Hann.Pr.St. Barcelona (dam line of Lorstede, breeder: Heinrich von Allwörden, Drochtersen) and Danai Giannopoulou from Greece secured the title at the Balkan Championships in Tsaratsovo/BUL.

THE BOSS (RHLD.)

The Boss by Boston/Louis le Bon/Lancer II (breeder: ZG Pleines, Uedem) enjoyed a highly successful trip to the Neustadt/Dosse State Stud. The dark bay, ridden by Dominique Filion, secured victories in the Grand Prix and the Special.

BELLENA

With their victory in the Grand Prix Freestyle at CDI2* Devon/USA, the Belissimo M/Welser/Dia-dem daughter Bellena (breeder: Hans Richelsha-

gen, Bellen) and Benjamin Ebeling got off to a perfect start to the still young World Cup season in Pennsylvania. They had already won the gold ribbon in the Grand Prix.

FURST FOUNDATION (VA)

The best in the Inter I at the CDI1* Devon/USA were Furst Foundation by Foundation/De Niro/Fürst Heinrich (breeder: Axel Baumgartner, Wulkau) and Canadian rider Brittany Fraser-Beaulieu.

HIGH FIVE FRH

At the Covalliero Dressage Days in Hagen/GER, the Hohenstein/De Niro/World Cup III son High Five (dam line of Sidoza, breeder: Dirk Ahlmann, Reher) and Anabel Balkenhol celebrated a double victory in the Grand Prix and Special.

LA VIE

At the end of August, the Rosenhof Görlitz/GER was the venue for the "Görlitz Summer Weeks". In the Small Tour, La Vie by Livaldon/Scolari/Wolkenstein II (dam line of Pia, breeder: Heinz Gerdes, Hude) dominated with Therese Nilshagen/SWE and celebrated victories in Prix St. George and Inter I.

VAINQUEUR

The privately owned stallion Vainqueur by Vivaldi/Rubioso N/Absinth (dam line of Meta, breeder: Marten Hillmann, Bassum) won the Grand Prix of the CDI3* Görlitz/GER with Dorothee Schneider.

SHOW JUMPING



BELLA PS

Bella PS by Messenger/Contendros/Conterno Grande (breeder: Lewitz Stud, Mühlen) won the Grand Prix of the CSI2* Bedizzole/ITA with Antonia Andersson/SWE.

CASSIUS CLAY

In August, Tony Stormanns took over the reins of the Comme il faut/Albatros/Contendro son Cassius Clay (dam line of Pille, breeder: Rudolf Drünert, Ahrensböck), and in September the 17-year-old celebrated his first international victory. At the CSI5* Greenwich/USA, the pair led the lap of honor in the two-phase jumping competition.

CHACCBALL

At the Azelhof in Lier/BEL, the Chacco-Blue/Baloubet du Rouet/Drosselklang II son Chaccball (dam line of Dichterschloss, breeder: Gestüt Lewitz, Mühlen) and Caroline Rehoff Pedersen entered the winners' list of a 1.45-metre show jumping competition on the last weekend of August.

CHEERS TO LIFE LA

On the first weekend of September, Cheers to Life LA by Checkter/El Bundy/Chasseur (dam line of Colona, breeder: Lotta Aalto, Bargstedt) left Germany for the first time. The newly crowned Hano-

verian champion returned with a victory. She won the second qualifier of the Youngster Tour with Josch Löhden at the CSIYH1* Kronenberg/NED.

HANN.PR.A. CHICOLINA

Only two pairs remained penalty-free in the U25 Grand Prix of Avenches/SUI and made it to the jump-off. When it came down to it, Hann.Pr.A. Chicolina by Canstakko/Chasseur/Argentan (dam line of Klaseta, breeder: Frank Johannsen, Buxtehude) and Kim Vukadin from Croatia came out on top and won the competition.

CHUCK BERRY

Chuck Berry by Chacco-Blue/Watzmann/Arsenik (dam line of Steinreiche, breeder: Wiebke Borchers, Groß Lessen) and Olivia Chowdry/USA won the opening jumping competition of the Medium Tour at CSI2* Kronenberg/NED.

CONNOISSEUR PWR

The second successful Hanoverian at the end of August in Lier/BEL was Connoisseur PWR by Cornet Obolensky/Stakkato/Escudo (dam line of Einfuhr, breeder: Pernilla Svensson, Broby/SWE). He won the ranking show jumping on Saturday with Thomas Ryan.

CRACK BALOU

At the Morocco Royal Tour in Tetouan/MAR, Crack Balou by Cornet's Balou/Chacco-Blue/Carthago, (dam line of Lunda, breeder: Gestüt Lewitz, Mühlen) won the main jumping competition (1.50 metres) on Saturday with Emanuele Gaudiano.

DIACONTHAGA

In Lombardy, Diaconthaga (breeder: Horseconcept GmbH, Halver) and Jona Jolie Schwamborn are in top form. In mid-September, they won both two-phase special show jumping competitions for six-year-olds at the CSIYH1* Bedizzole/ITA. The following week, they added another victory to their list of achievements in the first qualifier at the same venue.

DAME NOIR

In week two of the Chiemsee Horse Festival, Dame Noir by Diamant de Semilly/Quidam de Revel/Lord Caletto (breeder: Matthias Kornes, Ettringen) and Lisa Oppermann celebrated a victory in a competition on faults and time in the Large Tour for amateurs.



Among the winners in Ising am Chiemsee were Dame Noir by Diamant de Semilly/Quidam de Revel and Lisa Oppermann. Photo: Lafrentz/Archive

DEPARINO

One of the best eight-year-olds at the CSIYH1* Opglabbeek/BEL at the end of September was the Diamant de Plaisir/Quintender/Spartan son Deparino (dam line of Wespe, breeder: Volker Bremermann, Oytten). He won a jump-off for victory with Irish rider Daniel Fitzgerald from Ireland.

DIACETTE

Diacette by Diacontinus/Quinta Real/Sandro Hit (breeder: Dr. Hartmut Bruns, Aurich) returned from the CSI2* New York/USA with a victory. The ten-year-old mare is ridden by Irishman Daniel Kerins.

DUBLIN (VA)

Dublin by Cascadello/Balou du Rouet/Ramiro (breeder: H. G. van Wijlick, Velden/NED) and Michael Duffy took victory in a 1.40 metre Top Series class at the CSI3* Brussels/BEL.

GIN TONIC

At the CSI2* North Salem/USA, Gin Tonic by Graf Top/Satisfaction/Steinklee (dam line of Feldart, breeder: Heinz Over, Haren) and Campbell Kahn celebrated victory in a two-phase jumping competition.

LET'S GO FZ (VA)

It was a close call in the Grand Prix at CSI2* San Remo/ITA. In an exciting jump-off, Let's Go FZ by Lord Fauntleroy/Stakkato/Escudo (dam line of Schneiderin, breeder: Manfred Schäfer, Köchingen) and Giacomo Casadei/ITA were three hundredths of a second faster than the competition and took home the gold ribbon.

MYJORKA

Stella Wassermann rode her Mylord Carthago/Quidams Rubin/Raphael daughter Myjorka (dam line of Nachbarin I, breeder: Georg Kok, Bunderhee) to two victories at the CSI2* Bridgehampton/USA. Fourteen days later, the 20-year-old US rider triumphed in Williamsburg/USA, winning the Grand Prix.

REAL STEEL L

The final of the Silver Tour at the CSI2* St. Margarethen/AUT was won by Real Steel L by Regilio/Lordanos/Acord II (dam line of Kanonenfutter, breeder: Karl Lehing, Wagenfeld) and Roberto Turchetto/ITA.

WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS: BRONZE WITH BENTLEY



With Bentley by Buckingham/Florestan (left horse), Stan van Eijk won two bronze medals at the Driving World Championship for pairs. Photo: FEI

Beekbergen/NED was the venue for the driving World Championships for pairs. Cheered on by Dutch fans, Stan van Eijk drove to the bronze medal. In the marathon and the obstacle driving test, he had harnessed Bentley by Buckingham/Florestan (breeder: Christine Rethemeyer, Lengerich). With this top result, the 36-year-old was the strongest driver in the Oranje team, which also won bronze in the team competition. The Dutchman acquired Bentley, born in 2016, at the age of six. When one of his experienced driving horses was sidelined due to injury, Bentley took his place in the pair just one year later and competed at the World Championships in Le Pin au Haras/FRA. Finishing fourth, Stan van Eijk narrowly missed out on a medal at the time. In the following two years, he became Dutch champion with Bentley. "Bentley is a very sweet horse, eager to learn, and we are very happy with him!" says Claudia van Eijk. 🐾

STERNMARKE (VA)

The Friday jumping competition at the CSI3* Lexington/USA was won by Sternmarke by Stakkato/Escudo/Werther (dam line of Schneiderin, breeder: Manfred Schäfer, Köchingen) and the American Wilton Porter.

Königsau, breeder: Marie-Claire Seidel, Schöningen) and Ramzy Al Duhami won ahead of Crack Balou and Emanuele Gaudiano. Seven days later, the two were part of the Saudi Arabian team that won the Nations Cup in Rabat/MAR.

VALENTINA

At the Chiemsee Horse Festival, Valentina by Vagabond de la Pomme/Contendro/Monte Bellini (dam line of Flaute, breeder: Toni Kornes, Ettringen), and Maximilian Schmid celebrated victory in the jumping competition with winning round.

VENTAGO

Saudi Arabia won the Nations Cup (1.55 metres) in Rabat/MAR. The two Van Helsing offspring Untouchable and Ventago by Van Helsing/Scendix/Dorian (dam line of Arma, breeder: Stefan Trentelmann, Rastede), ridden by Abdulrahman Alrajhi, were among the winners.

UNTOUCHABLE

The qualification (1.50 metres) for the Grand Prix of the World Cup Horse Show in Tetouan/MAR celebrated a Hanoverian double victory: Untouchable by Van Helsing/Lady's King/Silvio (dam line of

VERMONT

Schönbrunn Palace provided the picturesque backdrop for the 1.40-metre victory of Vermont by Valentino/Fly High/Sandro Song (dam line of Fliese, Breeder: Heinrich Ronne, Altenmelle) and Hugo Kogelnig at the CSIU25-A in Vienna, Austria. 🐾

EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIPS STRZEGOM: START-FINISH VICTORY



Crystall-Annabell and Hannah Busch became European Champions of Young Riders. Photo: FEI

Crystall-Annabell by Canterbury/Perceive Arrogance xx (breeder: Susanne Rundshagen, Panten) and Hannah Busch celebrated an impressive start-to-finish victory at the European Championships for Young Eventing Riders in Strzegom, Poland. The pair took the lead after the dressage in the CC13*-L, could even afford a time penalty in the cross-country, and even the fallen pole in the final jumping did not jeopardize their triumph. "I still can't believe it," said the rider from Schwalmstadt in Hesse, who had already won double gold in the junior competition at the same venue last year. "My horse is just amazing!"

There was also cause for celebration in the junior competition: Pia Sophie Schreiber secured the silver medal as an individual starter. In the saddle of Cliemann by Carridam/Perigieux (breeder: Ulrike von Stietenron, Emmerthal), the German vice-champion worked her way up from ninth place after the dressage with a flawless cross-country round and a faultless jumping round to secure a place on the podium. Her fast clear round in the course ultimately secured her the vice-title ahead of the third-placed riders, who were tied on points. ✂

USA: U.S. FESTIVAL OF CHAMPIONS

The best dressage horses and riders in the USA were determined in mid-August at the U.S. Festival of Champions in Lamplight. The superior winner of the six-year-olds, Deambulo PWD by Don Martillo/Fahrenheit (breeder: Guido Niethammer, Weil der Stadt), is still at the beginning of his career. He was part of the foal collection at the May 2019 auction. The promising chestnut, who had already won the championship for five-year-olds last year, was presented by Petra Warlimont. The vice-champion of the seven-year-olds, Saskatoon OMF by San Amour/Don Frederico (breeder: Lindsey Roberts, Mursley/GBR), was born in Great Britain and was

presented by Christopher Hickey. Third place went to Velantis N by Vitalis/Floriscourt (breeder: Christiane Nölting/USA) with Christian Hartung. His dam Fleur D'Amour found her way to the USA via the Elite Auction.

Among the young Grand Prix horses, Living Diamond by Livaldon/Fürst Rousseau (breeder: Dirk Seewald, Hemslingen) took second place with Kelly Layne in the saddle. The black horse was part of the 2019 Elite Auction collection in Verden and has already been successful in Young Rider competitions with Jamaican rider Eva Levy. The champions

among the juniors in the dressage arena were the For Romance/Wolkentanz son Finnur (breeder: Zuchthof Wessel, Großefehn) with Claire Tucker. Third place among the young riders went to the Dimaggio/Jazz Time son Dimagico (breeder: Manfred Dörries, Flatow), who once left the Stallion Sales in Verden as a premium stallion. Sophia Forsyth rode the eleven-year-old. There was a double victory in para-dressage. The champions were the 25-year-old Divino by De Niro/Westbury (breeder: Hermann Stehr, Bad Bevensen) and Sienna Busking ahead of Carrera GH by Contucci/Maronjo (breeder: Jeanne Krug/USA), who was presented by Victoria Yu. ✂

VIENNA CHARM

At the Equestrian Center Austria, Dr. Susanna Kleindienst from Vienna and her daughters are dedicated to breeding and training Hanoverian horses. She has already sent numerous successful dressage, show jumping, and eventing horses into competition. Her horses spend their early years in the idyllic Südheide region.

By Britta Züngel

At the traditional Wiechmannshof in Ahrsen, where Hanoverians and Trakehners have been bred and raised for three decades, Dr. Susanna Kleindienst talks about her path to Hanoverian breeding. For many years, some of her own horses have been raised in the Südheide. And the charming Viennese touch is not to be missed. The Austrian is a dressage judge up to Grand Prix level, training consultant for the Austrian Equestrian Federation, and a successful Hanoverian breeder.

Her journey began early, among the carousels and chestnut trees of Vienna's Prater park. Her grandfather also had a business there, and his Liliputbahn is still as much a part of the Prater today as the Ferris wheel. She still lives in her parents' house, while her daughter Anna Kleindienst-Jilly lives with her family at the Equestrian Center Austria, which Dr. Susanna Kleindienst has built up over the past few years just outside Vienna. She took riding lessons on school horses when she was eight years old and loved it. Her parents paid for the riding lessons, but her father made it clear: "Only stable boys have their own horses." The girl was not discouraged and worked hard to own her own horse shortly before graduating from high school. It was Kosak, a Gidran, a Hungarian Anglo-Arabian. "A 'bad' horse," she recalls with a smile. He threw his owner off so often that they even ended up in the hospital. As a result, the price was within a budget that my parents were comfortable with. Kosak later

competed in M-level show jumping, then S-level dressage. "I also rode eventing," says the 71-year-old with a laugh. "He was a good horse, but very 'quirky'."

After studying law and business administration, Dr. Susanna Kleindienst actually wanted to go into business. "But then I enjoyed working in court so much that I stayed," she says. During her studies, she financed her horses by giving riding lessons and training horses. When asked about her greatest equestrian successes, it's not the ribbons she won up to Grand Prix level: "My greatest success was getting through an L-level show jumping competition without falling off," she says. She also started early as a judge at competitions and eventually rose to become a Grand Prix dressage judge. "I've always enjoyed riding." For the Austrian, the focus has always been on the contact with the horse: taking responsibility, growing together, trying new things.

"I got into breeding in a rather bizarre way," recalls Dr. Susanna Kleindienst. A friend could no longer afford to breed her show jumper mare and gave her the foal. Dame D'Or by Trommler/Honvagy-Frido became Dr. Susanna Kleindienst's first broodmare. She herself presented the mare up to advanced (S) level dressage before a broken hoof bone ended her sporting career. In 2004, the filly Dona Divina was born. Her sire was Walk Along (breeder: Heinrich Welp, Wetztrup), a son of Weltmeyer/Airport, who was stationed in Vienna with Prof. Christine Aurich at the time.

Her contact with Hanoverian breeder Jochen Künneke from Soltau, whom she had known for many years through their joint judging activities, opened up new avenues. With his extensive know-how and good recommendations, he contributed greatly to the success of the breeding program. Dissatisfied with the breeding opportunities in Austria, Dr. Susanna Kleindienst found conditions near Walsrode at the Wiechmannshof that met her standards for horse husbandry and animal welfare. Thus, the Austrian warmblood mare Dona Divina not only became one of the first horses to move to the Wiechmannshof in 2004, but also Dr. Susanna Kleindienst's first broodmare registered in Hanover. "We only breed in Germany – we have stuck with this system for the past 20 years," she says. To this day, her horses only return to Austria as riding hor-

Dr. Susanna Kleindienst from Vienna with her daughter Anna Kleindienst-Jilly and grandchildren Mavie and Caspar. Photo: Züngel





St.Pr.St. Vally K by Valentino/Freiherr was Vice-Bundeshampionesse of the five-year-old eventing horses with Nadine Marzahl and was successful up to CCI4. This year, her first foal by Diacontinus was born. Photo: Lafrentz*

ses after being reared by Claudia Mohlfeld and the Künneke family.

The first step had been taken, the passion awakened. While searching for another mare, Dr. Susanna Kleindienst found two suitable foals at breeder Günter Nottorf's farm in Harber. She couldn't make up her mind and bought both of them without further ado. Three years later, the Embassy/Federweißer daughter St.Pr.St. Emma represented the Lüneburg Regional Society at the Herwart von der Decken show as the class winner at the mare show in Luhmühlen and passed her mare performance test with flying colors. St.Pr.St. Luise by Londonderry/Prince Thatch xx also proved to be extremely valuable for breeding, with five of her seven fillies being awarded the State or Hanoverian Premium. Her Duke Ellington daughter Hann.Pr.St. Duchess Ellington also competed at the Herwart von der Decken-Show in 2014, and Hann.Pr.A. Bambina by Bon Courage was the winning mare at last year's mare show in Austria. Emma's daughter Hann.Pr. St. Vienna Calling K by Vitalis also achieved this in 2021 and 2022.

"Dame D'Or was certainly the least high-quality of my first mares, but she was very willing to perform and very sweet," sums up Dr. Susanna Kleindienst. Today, she breeds almost exclusively with premium mares and mares that are successful in competition. With one exception: the Anglo-Arabian mare Peppermint de Buissy AA by Ryon d'Anzex AA/Arlequin AA. "We were very lucky to get her," says Dr. Susanna Kleindienst. "Her dam Nidji AA was French champion in show jumping, her sire competed in Grand Prix – you don't normally get that."

She found the mare in Luxembourg and was only able to buy her because she had not been in foal for two years. Veterinarian Alexander Künneke managed to get her pregnant, and in 2012, Hann.Pr.A. Sarah Bernhardt by Stolzenberg was born. She also won her class in Luhmühlen and was awarded the 1b prize in the half-breed mare class at the elite show in Beedenbostel. The bay mare embarked on a career in competition and has been successful up to CCI3* level with Clemens Croy. In 2022, she came third with the team at the European Championships for rural eventing riders, last year she won the bronze medal at the Austrian Championships and this year she was the most successful horse at the Federal State Team Championships. Next was Cloud K, who has already competed for Italy at CCI04* with Giovanni Ugolotti. His sire, Coconut Cream by Cassini II/Genever (breeder: Ulrich Heuer, Bienenbüttel), was purchased by Dr. Susanna Kleindienst four years earlier at the Stallion Sales in Verden. Championship honors went to Hann.Pr.St. Dia Divina FRH by Diacontinus, born in 2016, who became Hanoverian Champion of five-year-old eventing horses with Nadine Marzahl and finished fifth at the Bundeschampionat and tenth at the World Championships in Le Lion d'Angers/FRA. The bay mare has since developed into a first-class show jumper under Patricio Munte. From the very beginning, Dr. Susanna Kleindienst has also specifically bred eventing horses. "Riding is versatile," says the breeder. "And I also want to see truly versatile riding." One of the most successful is Vally K by Valentino/Freiherr, who was also trained by Nadine Marzahl, was Vice-Bundeschampioness at the Bundeschampionat at the age of five, and was successful up to CCI4*.

Ten years ago, Dr. Susanna Kleindienst began implementing her ideas at her own equestrian center, the Equestrian Center Austria in Gerasdorf. The location is ideal, close to the city and accessible by public transport. Step by step, a modern equestrian center was created with two indoor arenas, a horse walker, a gallop track, and a lunging arena. The number of boarded horses declined, while the number of her own horses increased. Both daughters are closely involved. Both ride and have competed in the European Championships for Juniors and Young Riders. Julia (39) has four horses in training in addition to her work in her property management company, and her two children are also already in the saddle. Anna has always been the more ambitious rider. At the age of 15, she spent six months at the Rothenberger family's Erlenhof stud farm in Bad Homburg, from where she went straight to the European Championships in Rome. „Since then, I've limited myself to admiring her and no longer teaching her. It's absurd when the children ride better than their parents," says Dr. Susanna Kleindienst with great pride and a mischievous smile. Anna Kleindienst went on to study in Paris and St. Gallen. The 35-year-old speaks several languages and, after graduating, worked in marketing for a large cosmetics company. "That was an exciting time," she recalls. Before she decided to join the Equestrian Center, she acquired the necessary know-how at Mohlfelds. "Back then, we worked at Claudia Mohlfeld's stable – in the middle of winter, when it felt like -10°C. It was bitterly cold, but it was worth it!" This was not a matter of course.

Many years ago, Anna Kleindienst-Jilly had asked her mother to give away all the breeding horses and buy a Grand Prix horse instead. "You have to be incredibly patient to breed horses. At the time, I just wanted to ride and had little experience with young horses," she recalls. Her attitude has changed since horses of all ages have populated the stalls. The foundation was laid by four young horses: St.Pr.St. Luise's daughters Hann.Pr.St. Duchess Ellington by Duke Ellington and St.Pr.St. Ballerina by Benetton Dream/Londonderry, Elenor by Estobar NRW/Maurice, and St.Pr.St. Bonnie M by Belissimo M/Lauries Crusador (breeder: Claudia Mohlfeld, Ahrsen). Duchess Ellington not only competed at the Herwart von der Decken show as a three-year-old, but also made it to Grand Prix level.

„Originally, we only bred for our own use. We knew that we would never be able to buy the horses we wanted. So we bred them ourselves. Now it's nice to see that we might have good horses for our own children someday, should they want to ride. Of course, we also sell horses—but it's important to us that they only go to good homes. We take our time with training. And whether a horse competes in Grand Prix at nine or twelve – that's up to the horse itself. Health is incredibly important to us," says Anna Kleindienst-Jilly. "We are lucky to have such good contacts in Germany. It's great to have this exchange." Today, she runs the facility



Anna Kleindienst-Jilly won bronze at the Austrian Championships with Done for Fun by Dancier/Londonderry. From the Holstein mare Lidola, Dr. Susanna Kleindienst bred Sohn der Erde K, a son of Salz der Erde/Contender, who was sixth in the 2021 FEI WBFSH Jumping Breeding World Championships for six-year-olds with Alexa Stais. Photos: Privat, Lafrentz

together with her husband. Sebastian Jilly runs a nursery there and also takes care of the catering. Four years ago, their son Caspar was born, followed by their daughter Mavie last year. In addition, Anna Kleindienst-Jilly took over the management of the family's Prater businesses with around 80 employees a few years ago, becoming the third generation to do so. There is little time left for family life, but when the season starts, competitions are planned as family outings. One of the most successful competition horses in Gerasdorf is currently the home-bred Hann.Pr.A. Queen of Hearts by Quantensprung/Maurice, winning mare of the Austrian show at the time and ranked at the top in Inter I. With Done for Fun, a son of Dancier/Londonderry bred by Alexander and Gesina Künneke, Anna Kleindienst-Jilly came third in the Austrian Championships and celebrated numerous top placings, including World Cup freestyle competitions. "Dieter" is still Anna Kleindienst's favorite horse and has been enjoying his retirement at the Wiechmannshof for two months now.

Horses must be treated fairly

"It is important to me that horses are trained according to their abilities. There is no one-size-fits-all approach," emphasizes Dr. Susanna Kleindienst. At the Equestrian Center, dressage horses also regularly go for a hack or onto the gallop track. Thirteen hills line one long side to promote strength and balance. Free jumping is also part of the program. "Horses must be treated fairly. Riders must like their horses." The standards are high. Rider Deborah Schallenberg, trained by Hans-Heinrich

Meyer zu Strohen, has been ensuring that young horses are broken in gently for a decade.

"The horses are becoming lighter and even more active in their mechanics," says Dr. Susanna Kleindienst. A solid set of limbs and good character are important to her. "We need practically constructed horses again. Not everyone can handle a potential Olympic horse." If a stallion is used for her own mares whose conformation the breeder is not entirely convinced of, but whose riding qualities her daughter Anna is enthusiastic about, Dr. Susanna Kleindienst can still rely on the quality of her own mares. "It's a risk worth taking," she says, with little conviction in her voice. But as her daughter is also becoming more and more interested in breeding, they discuss the pros and cons of each stallion together. "I try to breed rideable horses that we want to ride ourselves," says Dr. Susanna Kleindienst. Horses from her breeding program are regularly put up for sale. "But it's so difficult. I try to at least cover my costs. But I don't have to sell horses at any price, I make my living from something else," says the former judge, who is now a sought-after expert as a mediator.

Dr. Susanna Kleindienst's first mare was registered in Austria, and she is still a member of the Society today. "I'm in Hanover and that's where I'm staying for now," she says. For her, the Society's strict selection process is crucial. "If I couldn't see the stallions myself, I could rest assured that an approved stallion had no structural defects." But she sees changes here too, with fashionable stallions with exterior weaknesses being admitted. "That's

not always an advantage." Specialization is also difficult: "Even for the horse's head, it's important to do different things. How can a show jumper perform well on the course if it hasn't been trained in dressage? And vice versa for dressage horses: it's a shame if they only see the confining dressage arena and the paddock. I want horses that enjoy their lives and riders who enjoy their horses." Until a few years ago, Dr. Susanna Kleindienst was a regular guest at stallion inspections in Lower Saxony and the Netherlands. Now, the stallions' performances in competition are more important to her. And something else has changed: "We used to use a lot of young stallions, but now we use sires that compete in competition," she says.

Hanoverian Day at the Equestrian Center Austria has long been an integral part of the Austrian breeding calendar. "I am always proud when our mares present themselves beautifully under the rider. That shows that the training is right." Mare performance tests and shows are met with great interest, as they are a showcase and an opportunity for direct comparison. Dr. Susanna Kleindienst has presented the winning mare several times. "I just want to spend a lot of quality time with my horses." One of the most beautiful moments for her is when the young horses come to Vienna and stand contentedly in the paddock. There is a sense of peace at the facility that visitors also notice. "And yes, we can learn a lot from horses: patience, humility, mindfulness, empathy. They reflect us, honestly and directly. I am happy about every breeding success. But I am most happy when my horses are doing well." ✂

SHOW JUMPING: FEI WBFHS JUMPING WORLD BREEDING CHAMPIONSHIPS



Did not make a single jumping fault: Chapeau by Chacfly PS/Stakkato and Charlotte Höing. Photo: Lafrentz

There was nothing to be gained for German horse breeding at the FEI WBFHS Jumping World Championships for young horses at Zangersheide in Lanaken, Belgium. Compared to the large number of starters from the Netherlands, Belgium, and France, the number of German participants was very modest.

completed the podium with the bronze medal. Only three Hanoverians competed, of which the former Verden auction horse Chapeau by Chacfly PS/Stakkato (breeder: Roland and Jonas-Joel Olt-hoff, Loholm/SWE) and Charlotte Höing were the only ones to secure a ticket to the final. Even when it mattered, Chapeau did not make a single jum-

ping fault. However, one refusal cost him additional time penalties.

Forty-nine of 226 five-year-olds reached the final with two clear rounds in the qualifiers. The KWPN gelding HHS Private Ryan by El Barone Z/High Shutterfly with Michael Pender became World Champion, ahead of the Zangersheide mare Olympic van't Roosakker VK Z by Minute Man/For Pleasure with Doron Kuipers. An Irish pair, the ISH mare Tysons Lady Lux by Tyson/Lux Z and Jason Foley,

The six-year-olds were won by the KWPN mare Ortane by Balou du Rouet/Quinar Z with Max van de Poll. BP Othello (ISH) by Ganesh Hero Z/Tygo with Niamh McEvoy and Touch of Joy Dwerse Hagen by Nixon van't Meulenhof with Thibaut Spits followed in second and third place. Nine penalty points were recorded for the only Hanoverian, Hann.Pr.A. Show me Love by Stolzenberg/Quaid (breeder: Monika Hacke, Meinersen), and Tobias Clar. Seven Hanoverians and one Rhinelander competed in the first qualification with a total of 253 starters.

The smallest starting field with 195 horses was that of the seven-year-olds, including four Hanoverians. Only one horse bred in Germany made it to the final. Gold went to Augustus Z by Aganix du Seigneur/Vigo d'Arsouilles with Eoin Brennan. Speedy van Klapscheut (BWP) by Chaiton FZ/Peppermill with Niels van Rossem became vice world champions. ICI et la Courcelle (SF) by Cocktail de Talma/Kashmir van't Schuttershof with Thibault Tevenon finished in third place. ✂

FRANCE: TRIPLE VICTORY IN THE FIVE-YEAR-OLD CLASS

The French Championships for young horses, organized by the Société Hippique Française (SHF), took place in Fontainebleau in mid-September for ponies and horses. Both the "Cycle Classique" and "Cycle Libre" classes were advertised. Participation is based on the rider's amateur or professional license, but some riders can also compete in both categories. Three Hanoverians bred in France dominated the podium in the five-year-old dressage horses category. The Fürst Toto/Ampere daughter Fürstin Toto L (breeder: Jean Claude Fer-

rand, Contest/FRA) secured the gold medal with Charlotte Chalignac in the saddle, having already led the 2020 crop the previous year. Silver went to another Fürst Toto daughter, Fantasy des Paluds (MV De Niro, breeder: Pablo Bouillot, Maussanedes-Alpilles/FRA), presented by French young rider Mathilde Juglaret.

Bronze went to Zarathoustra by Zenon/Lord Sinclair (breeder: Heinz Croonenbroek, Ehrendingen/SUI) with his owner Christine Moulis Lebecq.

Breeder Pablo Bouillot also had reason to celebrate a second time in the six-year-old category: Finest Pearl by Franklin, a half-sister to Fantasy des Paluds, took silver. Both mares have a successful half-brother: Sultan des Paluds FRH by Soliman de Hus became Vice World Champion of seven-year-old dressage horses in 2017 with Kirsten Brouwer and later became twice Vice European Champion of Juniors with Britain's Annabella Pidgley. ✂

DGFZ: ADOLF-KÖPPE-NADEL AWARDED TO DR. LUDWIG CHRISTMANN

At its annual conference in Rostock, the German Society for Animal Breeding (DGFZ), which is celebrating its 120th anniversary this year, awarded the Adolf Köppe Pin to Dr. Ludwig Christmann, a representative of horse breeding. The prestigious award was presented by DGFZ chairperson Hans-Willi Warder and laudator Prof. Harald Sieme. Dr. Ludwig Christmann, born in Pirmasens in the Palatinate in 1956, joined the Hanoverian Society in 1984 after studying animal breeding in Göttingen and Giessen. Initially working as stud book manager and then as deputy breeding manager until 2006, he headed the "International Breeding" department until the beginning of 2022. His work

focused not only on supporting Hanoverian breeding abroad, but also on seminars and the development of new projects for the Hanoverian Society. A particular concern of Dr. Ludwig Christmann's was and still is the transfer of knowledge between research and practice. Until 2021, he was a member of the German Equestrian Federation's expert committee on breeding value estimation. Dr. Ludwig Christmann also maintained his connection to science through his involvement in the German Equestrian Federation's Science Committee and his participation in the board of the Society for the Promotion of Science around Horses (GWP), of which he has been chairman for several years. In



Rostock, Prof. Harald Sieme gave the laudatory speech for Dr. Ludwig Christmann and described the new recipient of the Adolf Köppe Pin as a man who, through his expertise, passion, and commitment to horse breeding, has made an impact beyond the borders of Germany. fn-press