

the Knabstrupper

By Marna Smith

The Knabstrupper, one of the oldest breeds in the world dating back to 1671 in Denmark with the Tiger horse stud, has a rich fairy-tale like history associated with Danish royalty who carried kings to coronation and had an important contribution to agriculture.



FIGARO AFHALLUNDBAEK

Photo Tracy Robertson





FIGARO AF HALUNDBAEK

KNN graded and lifetime approved main book purebred Knabstrupper stallion.



HALIFAX MIDDELSOM

KNN graded Knabstrupper stallion by Harlequin Middelsom. Champion 3rd Level Knabstrupper foreningen for Danmark-Open (National).



HOLMEGARDS BASTIAN

KNN premium graded Knabstrupper stallion currently competing at elementary R level and winner of his 2008 KNN performance test.



HUGIN

the legendary Knabstrupper stallion, now at the age of 28 years, with classical rider Brent Branderup (Academic Art of Riding).



LUCAS NORMARK (stallion)

multiple international dressage winner with two silver medals at the 2013 European dressage championships at Herning in Denmark with his rider Anne Dunham.



PEGASUS VOM NIEHAUS

(stallion) competing in para-dressage with Sydney Callier and Laura Goldman and in dressage with Amber Ward.



PENDRAGON OF INDEPENDENCE (stallion)

and his rider Claire Knowles multiple dressage winner in the UK currently competing at advanced medium with scores in the high 70 mark.



RUGHAVENS JACKPOT

(stallion) another successful young dressage stallion competing in Para-dressage classes with rider Rachel Maddocks being placed 3rd in their very first National Championship.



SARTORS SHOWTIME

young modern type Knabstrupper stallion competing in dressage by Victoria Max-Theurer (the gifted Olympic dressage rider).



SARTORS SIMPLY THE BEST

young modern type KNN Knabstrupper stallion competing in dressage by Mette Stelmach



ZANKO (stallion)

competed successfully in international para-dressage. He won multiple competitions with his rider, Ann Cathrin Lubbe from Norway, including two gold medals at the 2004 Athens Paralympics at the age of 10 years.

This breed was on the verge of extinction in 1800's due to several unforeseen reasons that included a fire at the main stud, the influence of the grey gene and the Schleswig war that caused death tolls to soar.

Spotted horses have been in existence since prehistoric times, but a breed within a species is defined as having a distinctive appearance and typically having been developed by deliberate selection under the guidance of a governing body. For instance comparing the Knabstrupper and the Appaloosa, they both carry the same qualitative traits (colour), but different quantitative traits (build).

Today the Knabstrupper breed is a versatile breed with accomplishments in various equine disciplines world-wide, but mostly known for their dressage ability.

They are a noble breed and their high achievements in the para-dressage circuit are a true testament of their loyal character: The



FISKERGAARDEN'S STELLA
multiple winning Knabstrupper mare currently competing in Denmark



CASPER
the age of 19 years. Competed successfully in dressage (PSG level), jumping (1.2m classes) and has done more than 750km during endurance riding. Ridden here by Robert Ørsted during an endurance competition in Jylland September 2013.

SARTORS AMADEUS

young purebred main book KNN Knabstrupper colt in training with Sandy Biggs to be presented at the first KNN licensing in South Africa scheduled for 2016. Photo Tracy Robertson.



Knabstrupper is to date the highest achiever in FEI Para-dressage per capita participating. However, character is not the only trait that makes this breed exceptional and more than able as a modern athlete.

The quality in their "type" is the result of years of selection for performance with the first performance assessments that started as early as 1971 by the Knabstrupper foreningen for Danmark. The latter being the Knabstrupper Motherbook Registry in Denmark, also known as the KNN. This governing body also functions abroad to assist countries outside of Denmark in preserving the quality of the Knabstrupper through performance assessments and registration. Selective breeding has led to a consistent type with minimal genetic variability.

However, type can be categorized into baroque and sport type.

The performance testing is done annually with more than four highly educated equine specialists evaluating each presented individual (foals/gelding/mares/stallions) at a central location in each country on their conformation, movement (loose as well as ridden test), jumping ability (free as well as under saddle) and a full veterinary examination keeping type into consideration.

Approved individuals will receive a KNN number while stallions that have passed their ridden performance test will receive a breeding license that entitles them to stand at stud and produce offspring eligible for registration.

The Knabstrupper breed is considered by some European countries as a warmblood and approved licensed warmbloods, including SAWHS, may be eligible to take part in registered Knabstrupper KNN main book breeding.

CAMILLE RKNN

Best in KNN Show 3rd of August 2014. Camille RKNN 2449 born 2007, sire De Noir DVE 812, dam Karina KNN 1851, damsire Don Ibrahim KNN 92, owner and breeder Tommy Hangaard. Graded with 9 points and did a historic performance test with 929,64 points (out of 1000) - that is the record score ever.



Merete Norring 2014

The latter enables breeders to expand their breeding population without importing all animals and increases the genetic pool since KNN approved registered Knabstrupper are scarce with only 1718 KNN registered individuals and 90 of them being approved stallions to date.

Currently we have one KNN licensed lifetime approved stallion in South Africa-Figaro af Hallundbaek- described in Denmark as one of the most influential stallions in the Knabstrupper breed and sire to more than 30% of currently licensed competition stallions standing all over the globe. Also standing in SA- three KNN females and four KNN colts with two of them being prepared for the 2016 South African KNN licensing.

The Knabstrupper in South-Africa will be monitored by Knabstrupper South Africa that is hosted by the SA Federation of Horse Breed Societies, but horses will be dual registered in SA and Denmark under the KNN mother organisation.



STORLUNDSZACANO

Best KNN Stallion 3rd August 2014. Storlunds Zacano KNN 244 born 2010, sire Blue Hors Zack DVE 943, dam Gelsådalens Starlight KNN 2126, damsire Jazz DVH 726, breeder Lizzie Ipsen, owner Ena Sparre. Graded with 9 points.