Breeder Spotlight

First in an occasional series on successful Great American/USDF Breeders Championship Series competitors

By Kristi Wysocki

The USDF pioneered efforts to recognize sport-horse breeders when in 1998 it launched the USDF Breeders Championship Series. These competitions, now sponsored by Great American Insurance Group, comprise qualifying classes for sport horses in hand that culminate in nine USDFBC Series Finals. (See "The USDFBC Series" opposite for more information.)

The USDF Sport Horse Committee is always seeking ways to promote American sport-horse breeders and US-bred sport horses. To that end, this month we bring you the first in an ongoing series of profiles of breeders who have been standouts in the USDFBC Series competitions. We hope you enjoy getting to know these breeders and learning about their businesses and their commitment to sport-horse excellence.

STANDOUT: *The 2010 Hanoverian filly Rosa Parks, bred and owned by Kristine Pinto and handled by Dietrich Felgendreher, at Dressage at Devon 2013*

STACYLYNNEPHOTO.COM

Meet the Breeders

Elizabeth and Dietrich Felgendreher
Holly Oak Farm, Midway, KY
(hollyoakfarmky.com)

How did you get started in sport-horse breeding?

Elizabeth Felgendreher: It was a matter of family history and opportunity. Dieter's grandfather was a Trakehner breeder in East Prussia before World War II. The childhood stories of life on that farm with the horses fascinated him. Although he grew up in the city of Berlin and later Hamburg, Dieter's interest was always with agriculture and horses. As a young man living in the Niedersachsen area, he apprenticed at two farms where Hanoverians were bred, gaining knowledge and appreciation of the breed. My family owned farm property in central Kentucky, where Thoroughbred breeding was at its best. It was a natural progression of interests and opportunity to venture into sport-horse breeding here at Holly Oak Farm.

How and why did you decide to focus on the breed(s) that are part of your program?

Already in the 1980s, Dieter became known for his handling skills at breed competitions and stallion approvals. He led and presented horses of various registries for the most prominent breeders and owners of that time. It was clear to him that no one breed or bloodline had the monopoly on quality, and that a good horse is a good horse.

Many years ago, when presenting a young stallion at the American Hanoverian Society approvals, the Hanoverian Verband breeding director Dr. Wilkens announced Dieter as "the man of all breeds" as he entered the triangle. This was amusingly accurate. Through the years we selected and imported stallions of Holsteiner, Trakehner, Danish, and Oldenburg registries, which we often paired with carefully chosen Thoroughbred mares available to us here in Kentucky, as well as our warmblood mares. The outcome was generally good, and we collected our fair share of championship titles at Dressage at Devon (PA) and other shows.

Name one or two standout products of your program and their accomplishments.

From the early breeding ventures, our imported Holsteiner stallion Rico 19 (Ritter – Ladykiller XX, Cottage Son XX) produced an American Holsteiner Horse Association-registered mare, Simply Charlotte, out of a Persian Sea XX dam. Clearly we trusted that the Thoroughbred influence would be good. In 1990, as a three-year-old, she won the

Podcast Alert

Check out our podcast about sport horse breeders at usdf.podbean.com.

Devon titles of Filly Champion, Young Horse Champion, and Best American-Bred. Today we have a two-year-old grandson of this mare, sired by the Oldenburg Verband stallion Floriscount.

More recently we enjoyed the success of our Oldenburg NA gelding Carreras (Contucci – Fuerst, Accipiter XX), who placed very well in the 2005 Markel/USEF National Young Horse Championships as a five-year-old and later advanced to Intermediate I, achieving numerous wins and commendable scores at this level prior to an untimely death. Carreras was a second-generation product of our breeding efforts. His dam was sired by our imported Oldenburg Verband stallion Fuerst (Furioso II – Magister, Edelbert) and out of a Kentucky-bred Thoroughbred dam.

Where do you see your breeding program in the next five years?
In the 1980s and 1990s, we bred for five to seven foals a year. Downsizing, we now are happy to raise one or two each year. Our most recent thrill was with the 2010 Hanoverian filly Rosa Parks (Rousseau – Regazzoni, Lanthan) (pictured), who is owned and bred by our client Kristine Pinto. At Dressage at Devon 2013, Rosa Parks won the Three-Year-Old Prospect championship based on her winning scores under saddle and in hand. She also won the Great American/USDF East Coast Breeders Series Finals filly championship with the highest score in the entire country, and was reserve-champion filly and young horse at Devon. We purchased Rosa Parks' dam in 2011 as an upper-level dressage horse but intend to breed her in 2014, hoping for a full sibling to the wonderful Rosa. Like everyone, we want our foals to have quality, but we also want to ride and compete with them as mature horses.

The Great American/USDFBC Series offers the opportunity for horses to be recognized as they progress toward the ultimate goal of becoming the next generation of great riding and breeding animals. The owners and breeders receive their well-deserved accolades through this process and, we hope, are likewise motivated to pursue involvement in the USEF National Young Horse Program, which continues the platform of recognition for the American breeder. In 2013 we were doubly involved in the USDFBC Series Finals. Dieter, a USEF dressage sport-horse breeding (DSHB) "R" judge, officiated in September at the North Central Finals in Batavia, OH, and days later was in the winner's circle at the East Coast Finals with Rosa Parks at Devon. This was participation at its best, and we will continue aiming in this direction, doing what we love. ▲

Kristi Wysocki, a USEF "S" dressage judge and an "R" DSHB judge, chairs the USDF Sport Horse Committee. She is an FEI-level competitor and instructor who owns and operates Somewhere Farm in Elbert, CO, with her husband.

The USDFBC Series

The Great American Insurance Group/USDF Breeders Championship Series program is designed to promote American breeders and showcase quality sport horses. The series consists of three qualifying events in each of nine designated geographical areas, where exhibitors compete for the titles of champion and reserve-champion filly, colt/gelding, mare, and stallion. These horses are then invited to compete in the final event of that series. At each series final, the Great American Insurance Group/USDF Breeders Championship Series Grand Champion and Reserve Grand Champion Current-Year Foal, Filly, Colt/Gelding, Mare, and Stallion are determined.

For more information about the USDFBC Series, visit usdf.org and select Competitions / Championships / Breeders Series.

FREE SHIPPING BOTH WAYS
(Yeah, we took care of that, too.)
SMARTPAK
SmartPak.com | 1-800-431-3916
FREE catalog!
SmartPak.com/Catalog