

Breed of the Month: Trakehner

Selectivity helps to maintain this breed's standard of excellence



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OLYMPIC HISTORY: The Trakehner stallion Peron and Michelle Gibson on their way to team bronze at the 1996 Atlanta Olympics

THE TRAKEHNER IS A HORSE SUITED for all Olympic disciplines. It is distinguished by its high intelligence, willingness to work, and exemplary floating trot. It has been bred for these purposes since 1732, when King Friedrich Wilhelm I of Prussia established a stud farm in Trakehnen, East Prussia. Ever since, all breeding stock has been culled severely by selective breeding, and only the top of each year's crop are permitted to continue the breed. This practice is continued by the American Trakehner Association (ATA) through annual mare and stallion inspections at various locations throughout the US and Canada.

Trakehners excel not only in dressage but also as eventers and jumpers. Since 1920, Trakehner horses representing various countries have participated in every Olympic Games except for 1932 in Los Angeles. In the 1936 Olympics in Berlin, Germany, the gold and silver medalists in dressage were Trakehners, as was the third member of the gold-medal-winning German dressage team. At the same time,

two horses on the winning German Olympic eventing team were Trakehners.

Trakehners you might know: The late stallion Peron *Pg* won a team bronze medal at the Atlanta Olympics in 1996 with rider Michelle Gibson. Notable USDF All-Breeds winners are the stallions Leonidas *Pg*, Windwalzer, Martini *Pg*E, Hailo *Pg*E, and Oskar II. The Trakehner geldings Hannabal (also a Pan Am Games medalist), Unforgettable, and Kandinsky all were USDF Horse of the Year qualifiers at Grand Prix.

The organization: The American Trakehner Association was established in 1974. It is a daughter organization of the Trakehner Verband in Germany. The German organization was established in 1947 as a continuation of the East Prussian Stud Book Society, which existed in East Prussia before World War II.

The mission of the ATA is to promote and preserve in the Western Hemisphere the warmblood horse of Trakehner origin;

to maintain a public registry of Trakehner horses; to mark or brand approved stallions, mares, and foals with the Association's corporate seal; to disseminate information to breeders, owners, and friends pertaining to the breeding and raising of Trakehner horses; and to promote the performance of the Trakehner horse in dressage, eventing, hunters, jumping, and driving.

All-Breeds awards offered: The ATA awards all USDF All-Breeds categories.

How to participate: Horses must be ATA-registered. Appendix-registered horses are not eligible for dressage sport-horse-breeding All-Breeds awards. The owner of record in the ATA files must be the same as the owner recorded with USDF. Trakehner horses with foreign (including Canadian) registration papers are ineligible unless they are also registered with the ATA.

Organization contact info: *American Trakehner Association*: americantrakehner.com.

FOR THE BREEDS, BY THE BREEDS

Each month, "All-Breeds Connection" spotlights a USDF All-Breeds awards program participating organization and the breed it represents. Information and photographs that appear in this column are furnished by the breed registries.

The All-Breeds program is designed to recognize the accomplishments of specific breeds in dressage. All participating organizations offer "open" year-end awards from Training Level through Grand Prix, and some offer awards in additional categories, such as adult amateur, junior/young rider, and dressage sport-horse breeding. Registry representatives are usually on hand to help bestow awards at the banquet held during each year's USDF convention.

All-Breeds award eligibility requirements include memberships and horse registrations with both USDF and the participating organization. For details and a list of current participating organizations, visit usdf.org. For more information about All-Breeds awards program participation, contact Megan DeHart at (859) 271-7893 or at mdehart@usdf.org.