

*Jeroen Dubbeldam
and De Sjiem*



Horses Of The Dutch

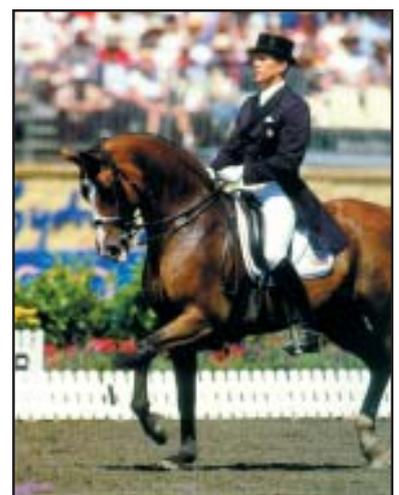
From Friesians to Dutch drafts, the Netherlands has produced a very successful horse with world wide influence within a short period of time.

When people think of Holland, the familiar images that spring to mind are usually picturesque windmills, cobalt blue Delft pottery, colourful tulip fields, and the legendary Hans Brinker; but we hardly ever imagine horses. After all, this country contains only 750,000 acres with much of that being former wetlands-not exactly prime horse breeding country. However, for centuries Holland has been one of the most influential countries for producing horses. The Dutch were responsible for developing the mighty Friesian, the horse that carried knights to the Crusades. They were also the horses of choice for the King's Household Cavalry in Britain during the reign of Charles II, and most importantly, the Friesian was the ancestor to the Shire and the Oldenburg. The Dutch also created three breeds of horses specifically to till their complicated soil-the Dutch Draft for the heavy marine clay in the provinces of Zeeland and North Brabant, the Groningen to work the salty clay soil of the north; and the Gelderlander for the sandy soil indigenous to the middle of the country. Later, in the 1950s, when tractors replaced draft horses, the resourceful Dutch used the Gelderlander and Groningen to develop a warmblood of their own to fill the world wide demand for sport horses.

The Gelderlander

The Gelderlander was bred in the province of Gelder and is somewhat of a variation on a theme of the Groningen. The differences between the two breeds can be found in the Gelderlander's finer, less drafty build and flashier action.

The Gelderlander's breeding, which began over 100 years ago, is a mixed bag of genes from all over the world including Cleveland Bays, roadsters, Arabians, Hungarian horses and half-bred horses from the United Kingdom, the Orlov Trotter from Russia and of course, the Dutchman's favourite, the German Oldenburg. Later, Friesian blood was introduced as well as Hackney, which may be responsible for its expressive movement. Today the Gelderlander is prized as a competitive driving horse, which is no surprise since coach work is what it was initially bred to do. But it is still used as a large riding horse, and a few are even seen in jumping competitions. Their conformation remains much the same today: plain but impressive, with a lofty action. However, even with its many uses, the Gelderlander remains a rare breed with only 300 mares and 10 stallions in existence. Breeders are working to keep bloodlines pure despite that the breed has been absorbed into the Dutch Warmblood studbook



Guenter Seidel and Foltaire

Famous Dutch

The Sydney Olympics gave Dutch Warmbloods a chance to really shine. In show jumping, the breed was best represented by Jeroen Dubbeldam and his partner De Sjiem, who made their home country of Holland proud by winning the individual gold. Markus Fuchs and his horse Tinka's Boy helped the Swiss team win the silver, and later at 2001 the couple was crowned world champions at Gotborg. American dressage rider Guenter Seidel and Foltaire helped their team win the bronze, and British dressage rider Emile Faude gave England their best score in years with Rascher Hopes.



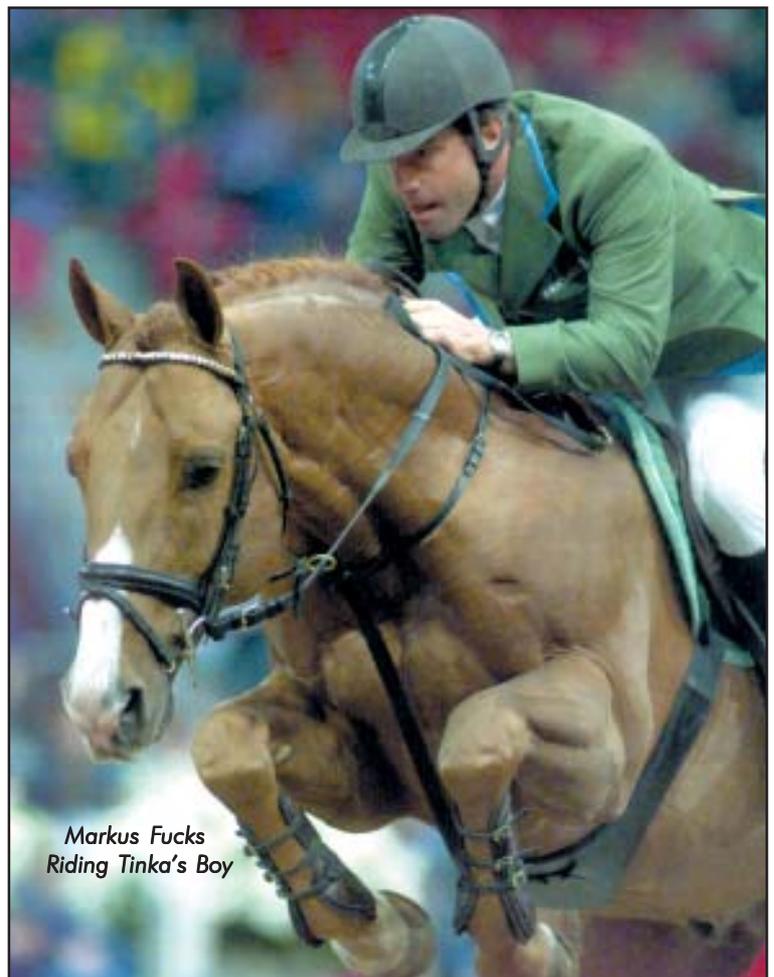
The Gelderlander isn't just a capable carriage horse. As mentioned earlier, this horse was one of the foundation breeds for the Dutch Warmblood, and Ian Millar's Big Ben, one of the greatest showjumpers in the world, was half Gelderlander. Big Ben was considered such a huge part of Canada's competition history that in 1996, he was the very first animal athlete to ever be inducted into their Sports Hall of Fame.

The Dutch Warmblood

From farm fields to dressage arenas, the trusty farm horses of Holland eventually helped develop the Dutch Warmblood. As modern-day farms became mechanised and horses were no longer needed to work the land, the innovative Dutch used the two lighter farm horses -the Gelderlander and the Groningen- to help establish a new breed. Equestrian sports were on the rise and the Dutch chose to keep up with this new way of breeding and developed a sport horse of their own, the Dutch Warmblood. The two horses were perfect choices to use in building a sport horse: the Groningen provided the impressively strong hindquarters needed for jumping and collection, and the Gelderlander contributed a beautiful action highly desired for athletic endeavours. The Dutch managed to breed a very successful horse within a short period of time.

Voltaire; Born in 1979, although bred in Hanover, Voltaire stands in the Netherlands (Haaksbergen). The son of Furioso II has Gotthard, one of the greatest jumping horse producers of all time, as his maternal grandfather. Unlike his father (a son of Furioso xx, who also figures in Jalisco B's pedigree) Voltaire was active in the sport - and highly successful. That he has the ability to pass his sporting talent on is witnessed in his offspring. His main propaganda earned through daughter Finesse (out of a mare by Gag xx). Nearly always there or thereabouts in the major Grands Prix, Finesse carried her long time owner Emile Hendrix to team silver and bronze medals at the European Championships in 1997 and 1999. Voltaire's has a whole bunch of successful descendants including Vink Especiale, Concorde, Altair, Play It Again, El Campeons Quality Time and Kahlua. Voltaire has appeared in the Top Ten Sires Ranking since its inception.

Tinka' Boy; Four positions in the top five at the jumping World Cup Final in Gotenburg were filled by stallions. Three of them are Dutch horses but none of them graded stallions- the winner Tinka's Boy, Handel II and John E.M. The chestnut stallion Tinka's Boy is a sport horse type. He appeared in his full finery, with the muscular body of an athlete at peak fitness. His bloodlines are much the same as many other successful KWPN horses as he is descended from a variety of good European sport horses. The Holsteiner Amor, Tinka's Boy's grandsire on his sire's side, was imported to the Netherlands in the 1960s and has made great contributions to the breeding of Dutch horses. On the side of his dam, Esprit, Tinka's Boy is related to Anglo-Norman Zeus, born in 1972. He was loaned to Holland for a time, where he was known as Nurzeus. Then he was sent back to Oldenburg, where he continued his busy and successful breeding career. Last year, 892 of Zeus's offspring were entered as competition horses in the German Breed Yearbook. The 13-year-old Zandor Z is the most successful of his offspring currently active on the circuit. Tinka's Boy's sire Zuidpool (born 1972), who is based in Holland, does not have such numerous and successful progeny. Tinka's Boy was taken to the United Kingdom as a young horse. He belonged to Nick Skelton, was ridden by Alison Bradley. Thanks to a tip-off from Willi Melliger, Tinka's Boy ended up with his present rider, with whom he has made the big time on the international circuit. Tinka's Boy won World Silver Medals for Switzerland in the individual and team competitions, followed by the Grand Prix in Monterey, which has one of the biggest purses in the world. Team Silver Medallist at the Sydney Olympics. The victory at the World Cup is the first major individual title which this combination has won.



“Current Olympic and World Titles are stamped by the KWPN”