

Ina in Osnabruecker Land; International Riders Festival Horses & Dreams Hof Kasselmann

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FEI World Challenge 2004 with Bettina Schockemoehle



www.osnabruecker-land.de

If you come to enjoy the Osnabruecker Land you will find in the south-west in the parish of Hagen by the Teutoburger Forest a wonderful delight: the Kasselmann Estate! Each year something exceptionally pleasant and colourful takes place here: "The International Riders' Festival Horses & Dreams". The Festival is the implementation of the Olympic idea. This year some four hundred riders from forty five nations accompanied by more than thirty four thousand visitors came together to celebrate and compete in show jumping and dressage from 1st-4th July 2004. During the Festival, riders along with their families and guests can enjoy equestrian sport next to a large life-style exhibition. In nicely decorated white tents one finds everything from horse and rider equipment up to furniture, fine jewellery and food specialities.

The Kasselmann Estate officially dates back to 1322 and has become the success story of 'Ullrich Kasselmann', who turned it into a dressage centre with international reputation. The international horse expert and equally distinguished business man, lives here together with his wife 'Bianca', a successful rider who won numerous dressage competitions up to Grand Prix Special, and son 'Francois' who is an ambitious junior horse jumping rider. Throughout the year some one hundred and eighty fine horses stand on the estate and receive training and education on the highest level for the international dressage sport; the price for a horse from the Kasselmann Stable usually starts from about as much as twenty five thousand Euro.

The story of Kasselmann is also the story of a long lasting (now 25 years) partnership and friendship with Germany's world-class rider and outstanding horse business man 'Paul

Schockemoehle'. Ullrich Kasselmann and Paul Schockemoehle established in 1980 'Performance Sales International'* (*PSI), which started in the USA in New Port/Rhode Island as an auction for some sixty hand-picked quality horses from Germany for dressage and jumping. The auction was moved two years later to Germany to the parish of 'Ankum' in the north of the Osnabruecker Land in the midway between the Kasselmann Estate in Hagen and the Estate of Schockemoehle, which lies in the neighbouring region of 'Vechta', in 'Muehlen'. Over the years the auction in Ankum grew in fame and is considered today one of the world's most outstanding auctions for horses renowned for its fantastic prices. In December 2003 the mare 'Poetin' was sold for the world record price of 2.5 million Euro.

Kasselmann is also the story behind the legendary 'Deister'. Ullrich Kasselmann bought Deister at the auction in Verden in Germany, when he considered the price was right. Later Deister and Schockemoehle made the exceptional couple that became

European Champions in 1981, 1983 and 1985.

Moreover Kasselmann is the host, show director, and together with Paul Schockemoehle, the major organizer of the "International Riders' Festival" in Hagen. Norbert Koof, the 1982 World Champion in jumping and the youngest champion in the history of the World Championships was a patron of this year's Festival. Koof, who suffered a terrible riding accident in 1994 and whose legs are still paralyzed, never let himself go. One would not realize until second side that he is sitting in a wheelchair. Norbert Koof says he looks ahead and hopes to be able to run again one day: a wonderful patron for this Festival!

The "International Riders' Festival" presents each year the

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FEI World Challenge in show Jumping and Dressage, which is the event with the most exotic flair. Riders from countries like Ecuador, Columbia, Namibia, South Africa, New Zealand, Russia, Estonia, India and The United Arab Emirates come together to compete on top horses provided for them by Ullrich Kasselmann (dressage) and Paul Schockemoehle (jumping).

This year fifty riders from more than thirty nations qualified for the FEI World Challenge in Hagen after more than one hundred qualification rounds in sixty countries around the globe. Amongst them Dr. Annika Reintam, a young anaesthesiologist at Tartu University Clinics, from Estonia. She qualified for the "International Riders' Festival" in jumping already for the second time. Annika, who was a wonderful guest at my family's home and gave me the pleasure of accompanying her these days in Hagen, told me that it was wonderful to be in Hagen again, to meet with so many people from all around the world and to ride on such outstanding horses, the like of which are hardly to be found in the whole of Estonia. At the end Annika made us especially happy by winning the FEI World Challenge in Jumping and becoming "Master of World Challenge". In the Final she performed in four rounds, each on a different horse, with sensitive and controlled rides, two clear rounds and a total of eight penalty points. In dressage it was the South African Andrea Harrison who won the FEI Word Challenge 2004. The FEI World Challenge Dressage for Children was won by Brigette Learmonth from New Zealand.

Arno Neessen from the Netherlands - who has already brought much joy to the Egyptian riding scene by his resumed trainings and his skilful choices of horses - is officially appointed by Performance Sales International as trainer for the participants in the Word Challenge Jumping. He thereby travels to the different participating countries to give trainings and he also looks after the riders during the Festivals in Hagen.

The major idea of the Word Challenge is to promote skilful riders from all those nations who are longing to match the elite horse riding nations and in addition to establish a place of meeting and an impetus for personal and equestrian sport development.

The "International Riders' Festival" was also the scene for the Nations' Cup in show jumping which in Germany is the equivalent to the CHIO in Aachen for both Young (18-21) and Junior (16-18) Riders. The Nations' Cup for the Young Riders CSIOY was won by the French Team followed by the Dutch Team with Chef d' Equipe Rob Ehrens; the German team took third place. Germany took first place in the Junior's Nations' Cup CSIOJ, while the second place was shared by the Dutch and the French Team. The course builder and chief of the course for all the show jumping was another famous name -Olaf Petersen-; from Egypt the renowned General Ihab was a judge for the FEI Word Challenge Jumping and the Nations' Cup.

The Festival also presented the Grand Prix Freestyle, which was won by the American dressage rider Leslie Morse, the American Lisa M. Wilcox finished fourth. The Grand Prix was of special importance to the US-Team as the Festival was the occasion for the official sifting for the Olympic Games in Athens.

...Let me end by adding that during these days in Hagen one could rush from one spectacular event to the other and the Festival even had more excellent riding events worthy of mentioning, but the "International Riders' Festival" in Hagen will come back again in summer 2005... ▢



Annika Reintam riding during the festival



The Show Jumping Arena



Course designed by Olaf Petersen



Bianca and Ullrich Kasselmann