

# THE FRENCH HORSE INDUSTRY

France is one of the countries that has the largest equestrian patrimony and history. The French sport horse breeding industry is one of the most successful in the world: Anglo-Arabe and Selle Francais horses are among the best performers on the international scene. Neighboring breeding nations such as Holland, Germany, Belgium and Ireland draw from French bloodlines to improve their native breeds.



Thierry Pomel riding one of his young Selle Francais horses

Horse Times Editor in Chief, Eng. Khaled Assem was invited to attend the Saint Lo horse show which was held during August 8th till August 12th 2001.

The aim of the show was to promote the Selle Francais stallions, mares and foals. His visit included both the National Stud farms and some of the private ones as well.

This was through the UNIC, a French non-profit making organization which promotes French-bred horses world wide. As part of its function, UNIC organizes tours to France so interested breeders, riders and horse dealers can contact French horse professionals and visit auctions, championships and so on. They also help co-ordinate export licenses as well as all the necessary certificates, customs forms, insurance and transport.

The French horse industry is specific in that it is financed by its betting System. Its development therefore depends on racing and on its off course and on course betting system.

Over 247 millions francs are reallocated to promote French breeds, develop riding, build equestrian facilities, help the racing societies, purchase national stud stallions and run the national stud farms. The French Equestrian Federation is in charge of developing the equestrian disciplines which are practiced in 3132 riding schools by 620 000 riders, 62549 of them having a competition license.

The French horse industry provides over 50 000 jobs in the public and private sectors. Furthermore and unlike most foreign states, the French breeding industry is supported by a long established and efficient infrastructure: The French national studs (a department of the ministry of agriculture) controls the evolution of the various native breeds through a long term selection of breeding stock, computerization of breeding (SIRE), the development research (INRA) and the extensive promotion of French breeding through (UNIC).

### NATIONAL STUD DEPARTMENT

The national stud department is 300 years old dating back to Louis XIV's time. At that time, the French authorities wished to encourage breeding by allowing breeders to use these stallions for low covering fees, for army and farming purposes. Through the years, the national stud has gone through wars and political conflicts by keeping a state department for breeding.

Today, the national stud is a well established institution in charge of: Managing 32 stud books for horses and ponies approved in France thanks to (SIRE), the French equidae identification and registration computer system. Controlling racing and betting. Controlling equestrian centers. Research on equines. Developing equestrian activities: racing, riding, leisure and draft horses.

The national stud runs 32 stallions stations in 23 districts. Each stud has a staff of real technicians specialized in the various French breeds. Stallions are available for interesting covering fees and coverings are either natural or by artificial insemination (fresh, frozen or refrigerated semen).

### There are 1305 national stallions:

65 thoroughbred, 45 French trotters, 85 Arabs, 121 Anglo-Arabs, 221 Selle Francais, 90 ponies, 653 draft horses. These stallions cover one third of the mares, given a total of 33807 mares per year.

If for many centuries, the national stud have played a major role in supporting breeding in France, private breeders have also been very active on the market.

Today, both sectors have to face international competition and have to adapt their development policies in order to remain competitive. Since this year the French government gave the authority to develop the stud-book to both national studs and breeders.

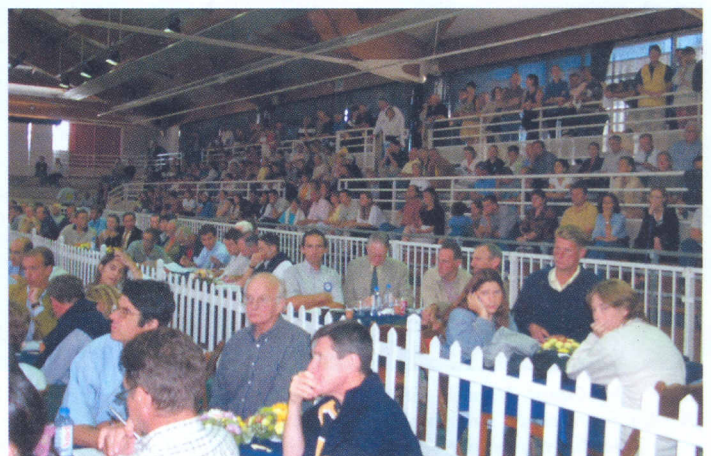
### SIRE: Equidae identification and registration system

This system was created in 1966. It processes data of 41 breeds, 55,000 births and 44,000 breeders. It has three departments:

*The registration department in charge of:* management of stallions and breeding, management of births, management of identification and management of draught horses.

*The horse and owner management department in charge of:* original stud books certificates, passports, registration cards, sport horse list (A) and imported horses.

*Promotion and communication department in charge of:* stud books, catalogues, harasire computer system, index and statistics. On the international scene, the SIRE is in charge of representing and promoting French breeds within major international organizations such as: ECAHO, WAHO, CIAA and WBFSh.



# UNIC



## UNIC (Union Nationale Interprofessionnelle du Cheval)

UNIC is a non profit-making union of associations. It gathers almost all breeders and horse users. UNIC will provide free service and all the information you need regarding:

- Precise dates of the championships and auction sales.
- How and where to contact French horse professionals: horse dealers (in order to be taken on tours to buy French horses), breeders, riders, vets, farriers, saddlers, feed manufacturers...
- Help coordinate export licenses: sanitary, certificates, customs forms, insurance and transport...
- Dispatch qualified technicians to foreign countries, organize sessions and clinics in France on all subjects related to horses (riding techniques, horse care, organization)....

*Jean-Yves CAMENEN has been recently appointed General Manager of UNIC.*

For more information concerning UNIC contact: Tel +33.1.53.34.17.50 or Fax +33.1.48.24.42.40, web site: <http://www.chevalunic.fr>



## THE SELLE FRANCAIS

The term Selle Français was created in 1958 and has since then been used to refer to all Warmblood horses in France who were, according to their regions of birth, previously called Anglo-Normand, Berton, demi-sang du Centre or Charolais.

The Selle Français stud-book born from cross-breeding between local mares and thoroughbred stallions, dating back to the 19th century. Usually of substantial size with an impressive muscle mass, both a powerful and energetic animal, height: 1,65 to 1,70 m., kind disposition, definite power, energetic gaits, inbred jumping ability and adaptability. Fit for all equestrian disciplines and show jumping in particular and breeding stock.

The cradle of the Selle Français was located in the Manche department in the area of the Saint Lo national stud and in the lower Normandy. Today, Selle Français breeding has developed in the center-east (Cluny national stud), in the east and in the north. Except in the area of Pau, Selle Français stallions are present everywhere in France. Private owned stallions represent more than half of the stallion population.

National Breeding shows with the purpose of educating, selecting and valorizing 4, 5, 6 year old horses in the three disciplines of dressage, showjumping and eventing is being held all over the year. Breeding shows takes place in Le Pin and Fontainebleau for foals, 2 and 3 year olds and stallion licensing show in Saint Lo. Each year, young horse national finals take place in Fontainebleau for showjumping, in Pompadour for three day event and in Saumur for dressage. Selection being very much oriented towards its jumping ability, the Selle Français is a much sought after show jumping horse, in France as well as in foreign countries. Many products are exported and have joined foreign international show jumping and eventing teams. Its performances in these two disciplines enable it to be best placed for the selection indexes (Individual index and BLUP).



*The Great Alme Z, SF 1966, by Ibrahim x Girondine by Ultimate. A true foundation sire, he has left an imprint in most European stud books. Galoubet A, I Love You, Rochet M, Baloubet du Rouet an Ratina Z.*

Selle Français genes have fed the greatest stud books which played a major role in other European Sport horse:

- Cor de la Bruyere*, born in 1968 (Rantzau XX) is one of the leading sires in the Holstein studbook. His offsprings are to be found in most of the German, Belgian and Dutch breeds. He has been regularly placed at the top of the list of sires fathers of Jumping winners.
- Alme Z*, born in 1966 (Ibrahim SF), exported to Zangerscheide Stud - Belguim, also a leading sire in the Netherlands, Luxemburg and France.

-*Vertuoso ex Furioso II* (Furioso PS), exported to Oldenburg, Germany, has been top of the list of the German sires, fathers of equestrian sport winners.

-To mention a few others; *Quidam de Revel*, *Jalisco B*, *Narcos II*, *Major de la cour* and *Uriel*.

Selle Français blood ran in the veins of *Jus de Pomme* (Primo de Bruyere), as well as in the blood of the great *Ratina Z* (granddaughter of Alme and of Voltaire son Furioso II)

The Selle Francais is a highly competitive partner whatever the equestrian discipline, allowing riders of different nationalities to defend their country's colors at the highest level of competition. Here are some of the most recent performances of Selle Francais horses on the international scene:

- Baloubet du Rouet (Galoubet A SF) ridden by Rodrigo Pessoa (Brazil), 1998, 1999 and 2000 Jumping World Cup winner.
- Thor des Chaines (If de Merze SF) ridden by Thierry Pomel (France), team and individual Jumping silver medallist at the 1998 World Equestrian Games in Rome.



*Galoubet A, Son of Alme Z and Sire of Baloubet du Rouet. It has been said "He is a horse that can jump the world"*

- Bambi de Briere (Arquebusier SF) ridden Rodolphe Schere (France) 1998 Punchestown CCI\*\*\* and silver team medallist at the 1998 World Equestrian Games in Rome.
- Dope Doux (Fort Grandchamp SF) ridden by Marie-Christine DUROY (France), Three-Day-Event rider, winner of the 1997 stud book World Championships.

Selle Francais horses are also competing at the highest level in Belgium, Spain, Ireland, Italy, Holland, Germany, Switzerland, Brazil, South Africa, Argentina, Bulgaria, Chili, China, Malaysia, Portugal, Egypt...

Furthermore, everybody remembers the outstanding victories of Galoubet A, I Love You, Jappeloup, Quito de Baussy...



*Quitto de Baussy SF Individual showjumping Gold medallist, Stockholm at the age of eight with Eric Navet*

- Rochet M, (Jalisco B SF) individual showjumping Bronze medal Atlanta 1996, ridden by Alexandra Ledermann (France).
- Twist du Valon (Narcos II SF) ridden by Mc Lain Ward (USA) winner of several National and International Jumping Grand Prix, and 1999 Horse of the Year in the United States.
- Ashley ex Alize des Isles (Le Tot de Semilly SF) and Michael Whitaker (Great Britain) ranked 5th at the 1999 World Cup Jumping finals and winner of several National and International Jumping Grand Prix.
- Carnute (Oberon du Moulin SF) Danish Thomas Velin's Olympic horse.
- Champion du Lys (Laeken SF) ridden by Ludger Beerbaum (Germany) winner of a lot Grand Prix.



*Rochet M individual showjumping Bronze medal Atlanta 1996, ridden by France's Alexandra Ledermann*



*Baloubet du Rouet SF Double winner of the World Cup showjumping finals with Brazil's Rodrigo Pessoa*