

Sport horse

Let's show our support for British studbooks



Carole Mortimer

THE World Breeding Federation for Sport Horses (WBFSH) has recently published its end of year rankings. Love them or hate them — any ranking system has its supporters and detractors — they make for interesting reading.

For the second year running, the Dutch studbook, the KWPN, leads in both dressage and showjumping. In eventing, last year's leader, the Irish Sport Horse studbook, has been demoted to second behind the Hannoveraner Verband. Who, not that long ago, would have thought it possible that the Hanoverian, formerly the world's leading dressage horse (second this year), would be the leading event horse as well?

There is, however, good news for British breeders in that the Anglo European Studbook (AES) has leapt into both showjumping and eventing rankings in 10th and fourth place respectively, having basically been nowhere previously. This is a good sign that British breeders are going in the right direction in producing successful world-class horses, particularly in showjumping — and no mean feat considering the size of the studbook compared with its continental counterparts.

The rankings are finalised using performance records of horses in FEI competitions, based on the studbook with which the horse

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For British studbooks to progress, breeders need to register their horses here

was initially registered. The FEI points of the top six horses from the studbook — which has to be WBFSH recognised — count.

Why register elsewhere?

IN Britain, five studbooks are WBFSH recognised; Sport Horse Breeding of Great Britain (SHB(GB)), the AES, Warmblood Breeders UK, the British Hanoverian Horse Society (BHHS) and the Scottish Sport Horse (SSH).

The WBFSH does not recognise the thoroughbred studbook — the General Stud Book (GSB) — nor its cousin the Non-Thoroughbred Register (NTR), which is usually unfortunate for several good British event horses. Those that were originally bred to race, for example, do not count.

If a breeder chooses to register their stock with a non-British studbook then, even though the horse might be British-bred, any future success will be attributed to the foreign studbook, which will always hinder the recognition of British-bred horses.

This year, as before, there are examples of good British-bred horses leading other studbooks to a top ranking. How on earth, though, do six horses with British FEI passports and by British stallions get to be attributed to the Slovenian warmblood studbook — 23rd in the eventing ranking? A mistake, surely, but six times over!

While it is understandable that British breeders wish to improve stock and make use of proven bloodlines by buying in mares or

using stallions from other studbooks, why register resultant progeny with the foreign studbook?

The subsequent registration of ensuing offspring becomes even more convoluted, especially for the unsuspecting buyer who is not familiar with the potential complexity of horse registration.

Recognition and progression

THERE is a belief that British studbooks lack the cachet of the continental books and that a horse is more attractive to a buyer if registered elsewhere — a bit like buying Heinz baked beans rather than other brands.

True British sport horse studbooks have not, up to now, had any universal recognition. The fact that there are five, rather than a single one, doesn't help — although that's another story.

But they are also still comparatively young — sport horse breeding didn't really take off in Britain until relatively recently. But, surely, if British books are not supported, then their international recognition won't progress?

Ultimately, there is only one way to further the improving standing of British-bred horses and that is to register and grade all British-bred horses with WBFSH-recognised British studbooks. H&H

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Bloodlines

Super Trooper De Ness, Belgian Sport Horse (sBs) 2002

Approved: AES, SHB(GB)
Sire: Vigo D'Arsouilles BWP 1998
Dam: Patrones RH.1979 (Polydor-Patron)
Owner: Old Lodge
Stud Fee: £500 (2010)

WINNING the Horse of the Year Show (HOYS) grade C championship was the icing on the cake of another successful year for the eight-year-old Super Trooper De Ness.

Acquired through Brightwells 2007 sale, Super Trooper De Ness is one of the first crop from Belgian showjumping stallion Vigo D'Arsouilles, who at the World Equestrian Games (WEG) became world champion under Philippe Le Jeune. Le Jeune also rode his sire, the Quidam De Revel son Nabab De Reve, with whom he won a team bronze at the 2002 WEG.

Vigo is just one of many successful jumpers by Nabab, whose influential sons also include the Belgian jumper and sire Kashmir Van Schuttershof.

On his dam's side, Vigo is by the selle Français Fleuri De Manoir, who brings the jumping blood of Ibrahim — one of the significant foundation stallions of the French sport horse.

Super Trooper's dam, Patrones, is no less influential, being by the Westphalian jumping sire Polydor, who during his 25 years at stud came to be considered the most eminent jumping sire of his time. In 2003, the life winnings of his progeny were almost €4m.

Patrones is out of Paty, who is by the Trakehner stallion Patron. This long-lived stallion sired more registered Trakehner daughters than any other, as well as several influential sons including Pasternak.



Super Trooper De Ness in action