

Majestic Gaits Sport Horses

By Natalie DeFee Mendik

With strong international connections, Majestic Gaits brings the highest echelons of sport horse breeding to the United States. Standing the two Dutch Warmblood (KWPN) stallions, Navarone and Farrington, the Hanoverian stallion, Schroeder, and offering frozen semen from over 30 of the best stallions in Europe, Majestic Gaits offers the bloodlines breeders need to produce FEI-quality dressage, jumper and event horses. For a quarter of a century, Majestic Gaits has bred First Premium and Top Ten Dutch Warmbloods.

By crossing only the best stallions with the best mares, Majestic Gaits' mission is to breed Sport Horses capable of competing at the highest levels of the Olympic disciplines, yet also possessing the disposition suitable for amateur riders. "While we're breeding for the Grand Prix, we also want trainability and good character for the amateurs who make up the majority of the American market," notes Majestic Gaits' owner, Kathy Hickerson.

Consistently ranked in the top ten of KWPN breeders in North America, Kathy Hickerson knows her stuff. In 2010, Majestic Gaits produced the top-ranked KWPN jumper filly in the nation. 2010's inspection season also brought home three High Score Keuring Awards and all First Premiums for dressage fillies.

Majestic Gaits brings a decade-long business partnership



Photo: Unbridled Photography

with the world-renowned VDL Stud in Holland into the equation. VDL Stud, a "KWPN Breeder of the Year" title holder, stands a long and impressive list of Dutch and German stallions. Olympic Games, Nation's Cup, World Cup, World Equestrian Games, and European Championships: VDL's stallions and offspring are world-class competitors. "VDL breeds only the best of the best," says Hickerson. "I feel honored to be partners with them."

Through Majestic Gaits, breedings to VDL Stud's stallions are offered at the best price possible. With the purchase of three frozen semen doses, a live foal guarantee is offered via a fresh-cooled semen option from one of Majestic Gaits' three stallions.

Majestic Gaits' up-and-coming stallion is the seven-year-old Hanoverian, Schroeder (Sandro Hit x Escudo I). Schroeder began his show career with a fourth place finish in the USDF 4-Year-old Material Horse of the Year rankings. In 2008, he was the top-ranked Hanoverian stallion in the nation as the USDF Hanoverian Stallion In Hand, and then in 2010 he finished 11th in the nation in the FEI 6-Year-Old National Championships.

All of this was accomplished with talented rider and recent college graduate, Makenzi Wendel, who is climbing the dressage ladder with Schroeder. "Most people only hire professionals to ride their stallions," remarks Hickerson. She notes that Schroeder's ability to succeed in dressage with a relative newcomer onboard attests to his fantastic temperament and ridability.

After much searching for a stallion that offered the complete package of temperament, movement bloodlines and conformation, Hickerson purchased Schroeder as a two-year-old at



Photo: Unbridled Photography

*The seven-year-old Hanoverian,
Schroeder (Sandro Hit x Escudo I).*



Photo: Carole MacDonald

Navarone is approved by: Dutch Warmblood (KWPN); Oldenburg Horse Breeders' Society - German Oldenburg Verband (OHBS- GOV); International Sporthorse Registry Oldenburg Registry North America (ISR/OLD-NA); Belgian Warmblood Studbook (BWP); Rheinland Pfalz-Saar International (RPSI); Canadian Warmblood Horse Breeders Association; Canadian Sport Horse Association; Westfalen Breeding Association for Westfalen and Rhinelander mares; Swedish Warmblood Association North America (SWANA) for Swedish mares

Schroeder is approved by: Hanoverian; Dutch Warmblood (KWPN) PROK and Scoped; Oldenburg Horse Breeders' Society - German Oldenburg Verband (OHBS- GOV); International Sporthorse Registry Oldenburg Registry North America (ISR/OLD-NA); Belgian Warmblood Studbook (BWP); Rheinland Pfalz-Saar International (RPSI); Canadian Warmblood Horse Breeders Association; Canadian Sport Horse Association; Westfalen Horse Association for Westfalen and Rhinelander mares

Farrington KEUR: Dutch Warmblood (KWPN); Belgian Warmblood Studbook (BWP); Canadian Warmblood Horse Breeders Association; Canadian Sport Horse Association; Westfalen Breeding Association for Westfalen and Rhinelander mares; Swedish Warmblood Association North America (SWANA) for Swedish mares

auction in Verden, Germany, where he also completed his stallion testing. Schroeder is world class. He is by the world's young horse dressage champion, Sandro Hit, and his dam sire is world young jumper champion, Escudo I. His States Premium mother is Esmeralda, a two-time champion mare in Germany.

Schroeder's first crop of foals is now three and show great promise, including his fantastic disposition.

Senior stallion and Grand Prix dressage star, VDL Navarone (Olympic Jus de Pomme x Armstrong), is a seasoned competitor who has produced countless FEI winners in show jumping and three-day eventing. VDL Navarone is the only KWPN-approved stallion by the two-time Olympic medalist, Jus de Pomme. Navarone's offspring are currently garnering great success at CSI and CCI competitions in Europe.

Navarone has competed to Grand Prix level in dressage. He also successfully competed at the 1.40 level in show jumping in Europe, and while already a formidable dressage competitor, is now reentering

the jumper arena again in the United States. In addition, Navarone was named Champion at the International Sporthorse Registry- Oldenburg/NA licensing at Hilltop Farm in 2009, where he also received his lifetime breeding license.

Also standing at Majestic Gaits is the KWPN stallion, Farrington (Wellington x Doruto). Farrington is grandson to VDL Stud's foundation stallion, Nimmerdor, KWPN "Stallion of the Century." He is one of the few Dutch Warmblood stallions with Doruto bloodlines that sired multiple international champions, including Ideaal, Olympic Barbria and Chevalie.

Having produced exceptionally high-quality offspring, Farrington was awarded the KWPN Keur Predicate in 2002, a high honor reserved for producers of top foals and international competitors in sport and breeding. Farrington's own career was cut short due to a leg fracture at age five. Nevertheless, his offspring possess the gaits and character to shine in the Grand Prix and are hot contenders at the FEI level in Europe.

Hickerson is a strong believer in promoting quality sport horses in the United States. Majestic Gaits has imported fillies from good bloodlines to boost Dutch Warmblood breeding in the American market. All of Majestic Gaits' foundation mares were imported from Holland as highly-rated Keur, Elite and Sport mares and represent three-generations of quality dam lines.

Hickerson also believes in promoting education about sport horse breeding. She serves as Sport Horse Director with New England Dressage Association and has, over the years, promoted the KWPN-NA in various capacities. She was recently elected to the USDF Sporthorse Committee and was awarded KWPN Member of the Year in 2010. She's available for helping breeders choose the right stallion for their mares and make a successful venture of the breeding process. In addition, Majestic Gaits offers for sale prospects imported from Holland and also accompanies clients to Holland.

See these world-class stallions online at www.majesticgaits.com and www.vdlstud.nl or contact Kathy Hickerson at 603-557-4054.