

Swedish news, July 2009

We're half-way through the year and the competing Connemaras in Sweden have been busy promoting their breed. Several major national competitions have been held including the Swedish dressage championships for ponies, some riders have already been abroad competing their ponies and the best riders are now preparing for the European championships in dressage, show jumping and eventing.

Dressage

The dressage ranking after the first half of the year has seven Connemaras and four part breeds among the top 100 dressage ponies. The highest placed connemara is Backens Lotus (by Rolls Royce out of Princess Jasmin) who has had a good year so far with many wins and placings at competitions up to national level. At the Swedish dressage championships he made it to the final where he was seventh though not placed. Several other Connemaras, such as Hagens Qumulus (by Värnbergs Orion out of Hagens Fondora), Köhls Fiolina (by Shirley's Thunderbell out of Hagens Ellina), Golden Garlic (by Juno Rory out of Ambrosia) and Lotus II (by Rolls Royce out of Lorette V) also did credit to the breed by qualifying to the Swedish championships. It is interesting to note that the stallion Rolls Royce (by Rory Ruadh out of Brantshamar Julie) had two sons qualifying for the Swedish championships and his full brother Juno Rory also had a son qualifying making the competition a small family get-together.

Another pony to compete in the Swedish dressage championships was the partbred Verdi. Verdi, who is a licenced riding pony stallion, has the Connemara stallion Lofty Roderic as



Figure 1: Hagens Rosmara (by Värnbergs Orion out of Hagens Andora) *Photo: Jenny Hagenblad*



Figure 2: Lillefot (by Frederiksminde Hazy Chance) *Photo: Jenny Hagenblad*

his maternal grandsire. This pony has been one of the most successful dressage ponies so far this year. At the Swedish championships he won his category by a large margin. He has also been to the Netherlands where he took a creditable 8th place and he is now part of the Swedish dressage team to the European championships. He will also compete at the pony classes at Falsterbo International Horse show next week. At Falsterbo Verdi will be competing against another Connemara pony, Hagens Rosmara (by Värnbergs Orion out of Hagens Andora) another pony with a successful career this year, who won a wildcard for the Falsterbo show.

Eventing

Two Connemararas are on the rankings for eventing ponies, and both are approved stallions. Grange Flynn Sparrow (by Ashfield Festy out of Grange Agnes Sparrow) and Nice-n'-Curly (by Nice-n'-Easy out of Corinne II) have both continued to event successfully this year. Another pony to continue on a successful eventing career is the partbred Lillefot (by Frederiksminde Hazy Chance) who presently holds number three on the ranking. Lillefot was third in the eventing cup "Bamse Cup" and he is one of three ponies to represent Sweden at the European eventing championships this year.

Show Jumping

Eight Connemararas can be found among the present top 100 show jumping ponies, with an additional five partbreds. The highest ranking of them all is Sceilig Siofra (by Deise Sam Maguire out of Gentle Jessie) at number six. This little mare has been a reliable show jumper for many years now and competed at the Nordic/Baltic championships several



Figure 3: Some Man For One Man (by Ashfield Bobby Sparrow out of Misty Maiden)
Photo: Jenny Hagenblad

times. This year she was part of the Swedish team winning a silver among the smaller ponies (130 - 140 cm).

Another silver winning Connemara at the Nordic/Baltic championships was Some Man For One Man (by Ashfield Bobby Sparrow out of Misty Maiden), presently ranking 47 on the top 100. He not only won a team silver among the larger ponies (140 - 148 cm) but could also go home with an individual silver medal. Some Man For One Man is also reserve to the Swedish team going to the European show jumping championships later this summer.

This show jumping team will have a healthy presence of Connemara blood with one pure-bred and one partbred Connemara. Lexus Justice (by Westside Fred out of Dunamoney Lass) has had a very successful season so far. He has already travelled as far as Germany to compete and won a class at the international competitions at Freudenberg. Another pony to already have competed internationally is the partbred Golden Star (by Poetic Justice). At Wierden in the Netherlands he was part of the Swedish team coming second in the nations cup. Lexus Justice and Golden Star are placed 17th and 16th so far in the top 100, and will both be on the Swedish team at the European championships. They have also qualified to compete at Falsterbo International Horse Show in July.

In Sweden a very popular show jumping cup is Ridsport Pony Cup. Qualifiers are held throughout the country, and the ponies gaining most point go on to the finals in Stockholm in August. The winner of each qualifier gets a much coveted red rug. Among ponies 130 - 140 cm the present leader is the Connemara Elektors Twist (by Lofty Roderic out of Glenayre Mystique). Twist's rider Nicilee Ångman has been busy in the qualifier and is also on 13th place with her other Connemara Caperann Shamone (by Kylemore Rocky out of Turlough Beauty), tied with yet another Connemara, Phalcon (by Öxenhalm Marble Jr out of Gräns Lady Stella). The larger ponies (140 - 148 cm) also has Connemaras well



Figure 4: A future double three-year-old test awardee - Gräns Cesar (by Gräns Roeson out of Komtessa) in 2007 at 13 month of age. *Photo: Gerd Eriksson*

placed. On a tied 9th place is Poetic Joyce (by Poetic Justice out of Lolita). His rider Stephie Watson also rides the partbred Poetic Brummelisa (by Poetic Justice) who on 14th place is tied with Ix de l'Aulne (by Dexter Leam Pondi out of Castille de l'Aulne). With two more qualifiers the race is still on for the red rugs and the finals in Stockholm.

Young ponies

At three-year-old tests ponies are assessed to get an early indication of where their talents lay, but also to help identify stallions that sire talented performance ponies. The ponies are shown in hand and loose jumping and are scored for breed type, conformation, movements and jumping technique. Ponies that score well are given awards for gaits and/or jumping. The tests are held either during spring or during the early autumn, so some of the three-year-olds for this year have already been tested.

Several of the Connemaras that have participated so far have done so with great success. In fact during the spring, more Connemaras have left the tests with an award than without. Three ponies have achieved double awards, the half siblings Holmtebo Crested Ten (out of Hagens Ultra) and Holmtebo Sinead (out of Hagens Star), both by Hagens D'Arcy and Gräns Cesar (by Gräns Roeson out of Komtessa). Hagens D'Arcy has had a good season for his first group of three-year-olds with awards to all three tested progeny, as his daughter Holmtebo Bridie gained a jumping award. Another stallion who's progeny have done well this year is Coosheen Finbarr with awards to two out of three tested offspring: a gaits award to Lofty Rowena (out of Lofty Romilly) and a jumping award to Lofty Finnegan (out of Beezies Bounty).

/Jenny Hagenblad