

WSI

APPROVAL

Approved under EU and Irish law as the only Irish studbook dedicated exclusively to breeding international showjumpers

BOARD MEMBERS

Dawn Kelly, Ph.D.
(Studbook Administrator)
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WSI MEMBERS IN

Ireland
Australia
Belgium
Brazil
Canada
Dubai, UAE
Finland
Germany
Italy
Poland
United Kingdom
Uruguay
USA

ACTIVE STALLIONS

A-Rod m2s (WSI)
Abdullah (TRAK)
Ai Qing m2s (WSI)
Ai Weiwei m2s (WSI)
Asian Tiger m2s (WSI)
Ballistic m2s (ISH)
Boy Toy m2s (ISH)
Cabrio van de Heffinck (HOLS)
Camillo VDL (KWPN)
Caretano (HOLS)
Cartani (HOLS)
Casall (HOLS)
Cassito (HOLS)
Cavalier Royale (HOLS)
Cefalo (HOLS)
Chien-Ming Wang m2s (AES)
Chipolini VM Z (Z)
Christian (HOLS)
Classe VDL (HOLS)
Clinton I (HOLS)
Condios (HOLS)
Consall B (HOLS)
Cornet Obolensky (BWP)
Desir du Chateau (SF)
Delano W (KWPN)
Dondoctro Ryal K (KWPN)
Dream Boy M (KWPN)
Drumm-M (KWPN)
Farfelu de Muze (BWP)
Favoritas xx (TB)
Classe VDL (HOLS)
Guidam (SF)
Hector van d'Abdijhoeve (BWP)
Hickstead (KWPN)
Hitchcock van Overis (BWP)
Inshallah de Muze (BWP)
Monte Bellini (WESTF)
President (KWPN)
Quintus (BWP)
Richebourg (BWP)
Tresor d'Opaline (BWP)
Triomphe Kervec (SF)
Ulysses m2s (KWPN)
Wang Chung m2s (KWPN)

Warmblood Studbook of Ireland

International Showjumpers with an Irish Accent

5TH ANNIVERSARY OF WSI: A PROGRESS REPORT

On 18 March the Warmblood Studbook of Ireland celebrated its fifth anniversary as a modern European studbook dedicated to breeding international showjumpers. Despite the global slump in sport horse breeding, WSI has grown over the five years while maintaining our strict standards. For example, all stallions and mares must be inspected and approved before they may produce foals for WSI, and before we agree to inspect a mare or stallion for approval it must meet the following criteria: (1) been sired by an approved stallion; (2) possess a full 5-generation pedigree with no missing ancestors and no unapproved stallions; (3) descend from a damline that has produced international showjumpers; and (4) meet the strict limitations on Irish Draught blood (normally zero percent for stallions and a maximum of 12.5 percent for mares). These criteria may appear normal and uncontroversial to breeders in many parts of the world, but in Ireland they are revolutionary: Year in and year out approximately one-third of foals registered by the Irish Sport Horse (ISH) Studbook are sired by unapproved stallions.

While some warmblood mares and stallions imported into Ireland fulfill WSI's criteria and are eligible to be inspected for approval, sometimes we are forced to decline requests to inspect imported stallions and mares because they do not descend from damlines that have produced international showjumpers. And sometimes, although the criteria are met, the inspection reveals that the mare or stallion lacks the athleticism to warrant approval. Our discipline has disappointed these potential WSI members but we try to explain to them the difference between horses for sport and horses for breeding. Unfortunately many of the warmblood stallions and mares born in Ireland and registered by the ISH Studbook, and their progeny, are not eligible to be inspected by WSI because they fail to fulfill criteria (1), (2) and/or (3) and, therefore, are unsuitable for breeding.

We are pleased that horses born into the WSI studbook have been exported to several countries including Germany, France, the United Kingdom, and the United States. These Irish Warmbloods, the eldest of which are now 5-years-old, are having success in sport and breeding. Plus many of the young stallions and mares born into other warmblood studbooks on continental Europe that WSI has approved for breeding are enjoying great success in national showjumping championships in Ireland, having won the Dublin, Millstreet, Cavan, and National young horse showjumping championships, and several have begun careers in international showjumping. Just last weekend one, a stallion we approved a couple of years ago as a five-year-old, won a national Grand Prix in Ireland.

While we are very pleased with the success and development of WSI we are constrained by our local context, which is unique in Europe. In 2012, for example, approximately 200 warmblood foals (foals sired by a warmblood sire and out of a warmblood mare) were born in Ireland, and a large majority of these foals were registered by the ISH Studbook. But many of these foals could not be registered by WSI because their sires and/or the dams fail to meet WSI's inspection criteria.

We also are constrained by the monopolistic and protectionist activities of Horse Sport Ireland (HSI), Ireland's national

governing body for equestrian sport, which administers a total of four studbooks including the ISH Studbook, and the Irish Department of Agriculture, Food and Marine (DAFM), which regulates studbooks. As many of you know over a year ago Irish Warmblood Studbook Ltd filed a complaint with the European Commission over the Irish Minister of Agriculture's refusal to approve our application for an eventing studbook, Studbook CCI; the Minister's refusal to approve Zangersheide's application for the Z-Ireland Studbook; and a number of alleged discriminatory activities conducted by HSI in collaboration with DAFM that have the effect of protecting the ISH Studbook from internal and external competition. While we await final and definitive European Commission decisions on our complaints we are heartened by the Commission's preliminary finding in 2013 that the Minister had erred in refusing our application for Studbook CCI.

However HSI and DAFM are now making the new claim that the proposed eventing studbook will inflict mortal damage on the ISH Studbook by putting in peril the selection program for eventing horses in the ISH studbook. The reason for this alarming claim is that the ISH studbook has so few mares that are capable of producing international eventing horses (and international showjumping horses). According to a written submission made by DAFM to the European Commission, of the ISH Studbook's 9500 active broodmares only 300 are "elite" eventing broodmares capable of breeding "the next generation of elite eventing performance horses". By their own admission only three percent (3%) of mares breeding within the ISH Studbook are capable of producing progeny that will compete in upper level eventing and only six percent (to be precise, 6.8%) of mares breeding within the ISH Studbook are capable of producing progeny that will compete in upper level showjumping. So perhaps these two bodies, HSI and DAFM, know more about the true health and future prospects of Ireland's traditional studbook than do the vast majority of traditional Irish breeders. But in the meantime these bodies are preventing the development of world-class eventing breeding in Ireland by blocking our efforts to launch Studbook CCI.

What does the future hold for WSI? Our future is bright and exciting. The studbook has proven itself highly capable of developing and implementing a breeding policy that selects outstanding mares and stallions. Our first five crops of foals are full of real athletes that are destined to be successful in sport. We have applied for membership in the World Breeding Federation for Sport Horses (WBFSH), and we expect a positive response to our application as we meet all the eligibility criteria and are the only Irish studbook with a strict inspection regime, breeding policy, and population that is similar to what we see in the best showjumping studbooks found in Germany, the Netherlands, France, Belgium, Great Britain, and Sweden. WSI will continue to be small because of the small number of warmblood mares in Ireland (and the even smaller number of warmblood mares that meet our eligibility criteria for inspection for approval). But as we wrote in 2009 on WSI's homepage, "As a studbook we measure our success by the percentage of foals we register that later become international showjumpers."

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