

SPOTLIGHT ON KOMO AND ESKADA

Charlotte Bredahl Baker rides both the Grand Prix horse Komo (G.Ramiro Z x Bienfait by H Alm Z) and the up-and-coming Eskada (Inspekteur x Joyce by Elegant).

by Charlotte Bredahl Baker

In 2002 I got a call from a lady named Sayoko Nakatani. She told me she had a nice four-year-old Dutch Warmblood gelding in Canada. She asked if I would be interested in training him and I said I was. First Sayoko came to visit me and see my place in California. Then I flew to Canada to see the gelding. Eskada was a very nice, tall and elegant horse by Inspekteur and I brought him home in the fall of 2002. He turned out to be a very talented, but very insecure horse. I spent the next year just working on his training and insecurities. I didn't show him at all in 2003. In the spring of 2004 he was ready to show. We started at Third Level. He did great and very quickly qualified for the CDS/USDF finals. We continued on to Fourth Level and also qualified for that level.

He ended up winning both at Third and Fourth levels, at both the California Dressage Championship and at the USDF Region 7 Championships. In 2005 he continued winning both CDS and USDF Championships at PSG and Reserve at Intermediaire I. He also qualified for the National Championship at Gladstone.

In 2005, the U.S. very sadly lost one of their top rid-

ers, Carol Plough. She had been very successfully competing the twelve-year-old Dutch gelding Komo at Grand Prix. I had been a good friend of Carol's, as well as of Komo's owner, Kathy Pavlich, for many years. In June of 2005 Kathy decided to send Komo to me for training. Carol had done so well with him that I knew I had big shoes to fill. I absolutely loved Komo from the first time I rode him. He is so eager to work, sometimes with more go than I need. Late in the summer I managed to qualify him for the CDS/USDF Championships and we ended up winning both classes.

In 2006 I knew I had two very special FEI horses (a once in a lifetime chance) and decided, with my family, to go to Florida for the show circuit.

In early January I flew with the horses on a Tex Sutton flight to Miami. My husband, Joel, and my son met me

in Wellington, Florida. We rented a little house and stayed almost three months. It was an incredible time.

The shows were huge and there were about 40 horses in almost every FEI class I entered. With most of their team riders there, the Canadians had a very strong influence.

Of course all the top East Coast riders were there as well. In the warm up arenas you would see many of the big names of dressage coaching from the side lines: Klaus Balkinghol, Hubertus Schmidt, Lars Petersen, Kathy Connelly, Betsy Steiner, Robert Dover, etc.

There was always an excuse to have a party or some kind of social event or fundraiser. My favorite was the Challenge of the Americas, an international Grand Prix team competition benefiting the Breast Cancer Research Foundation. I was asked by Betsy Steiner to help out with the quadrille practices. Unfortunately I had never even ridden in a quadrille, never mind a Grand Prix quadrille, so I was of little help. But I loved going and watching everybody practice. The team I was involved with included Sue Jacoma, Bent Jensen, Linda Aliko, George Williams and Betsy Steiner. They practiced once or twice a week for weeks. It was wonderful to see the great camaraderie among the riders. Quadrilles really bring out the team spirit.

The clinics in Florida were countless and included lots of well-known trainers. USDF held their annual trainers conference with



Photo: SusanJStickle.com

CONTANGO DECEASED



*Betsy Steiner, Brent Jensen and
Charlotte Bredahl Baker*

Hubertus Schmidt. He was fantastic. They also held a major Young Riders clinic with Debbie McDonald, Steffen Peters and Lars Petersen. Once a month Kathy Connelly organizes a very nice schooling show at her place. I got to judge one in February and many top riders came to practice.

Klaus Balkenhold spent a lot of time in Florida during the winter and I was lucky enough to work with him on both horses. Komo was on the USEF Grand Prix list and Eskada was on the USEF developing list. After the Florida shows both horses qualified for the USET National Championship in Gladstone.

My husband is an avid polo player and he could go and watch some of the best polo in the world every day, just five minutes from where I was training. At night we would sometimes go watch some of the top show jumpers in the world. Wellington truly is the Disney World for horse lovers!

On April 17th the KWPN approved stallion Contango died in his pasture of heart failure. Contango was very healthy, he was in great condition and there was nothing wrong with him. He went out to pasture as in his daily routine and went to roll as was his custom. His heart must have failed as soon as he laid down, because he never got up. Contango would have been 19 years old on April 30th.

Contango (by Kronprinz xx) was bred in Germany by E. Wichmann and was imported to Holland as a five-year old. In Holland he was trained to Grand Prix level by Els Janssen, also very recently deceased. He was sold to Iron Spring Farm in 1995 and competed at Grand Prix level with owner Mary Alice Malone. He was retired in 2002 and earned the Preferent predicate in 2006.



Photo by SusanJStickle.com

Contango sired a number of nice dressage and jumper horses. Currently there are six competing at Grand Prix level dressage. Nanou (ds. Kaisterstern xx), who was bred and ridden by Contango's former rider Els Janssen, Maverick (ds. Sultan), Madorijke (ds. Voltaire), New Tango (ds. Saluut),



Photo by Terri Miller

May Fair (ds. Amethyst), and Maestro. Three other offspring are jumping internationally: Nouvelle (ds. Purioso), and full brothers Broere Maroon and Broere Newton (ds. Voltaire).

Two of Contango's sons and two of his grandsons are approved for KWPN breeding: sons Citango (ds. Jazz) and Maestro (ds. Joost), and grandsons: Tango (s. Jazz) and Westenwind (s. Flemmingh).

Iron Spring Farm still has frozen Contango semen available for breeding. The semen is EVA positive. Mares must be vaccinated and the semen cannot be shipped to Holland.

Contango was buried at Iron Spring Farm next to Roemer and Sebastian.

He will be sorely missed!

