

Prima Equestrian, Mount Albert, ON, Canada

Onward to Canada...

Knowing that the KWPN members – jury or otherwise – always seem to have ‘issues’ or extra-ordinary experiences with Canadian customs (and trust me – THOSE stories must be saved for the Annual Meeting cocktail party!), we tip-toed through the lines and cubicles of officialdom in the Toronto airport. Although no misadventures occurred coming into the country, immigration must have decided we were a little smug about it and tweaked the weather. This was the ONLY rain on the entire tour(s).

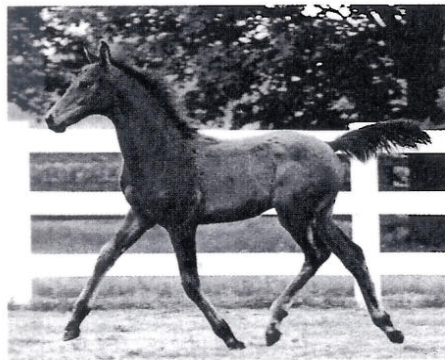
The spectator turnout at the great facility of Roy Maher and Michelle Bartlett was our largest of all locations and their interest and enthusiasm – complete with the assistance of Canadian Olympic judge, Cara Whitham, as announcer – exemplified commitment to quality horses and the KWPN selection process in that area.

The jury finds that each keuring location is like opening presents – with an occasional whopper thrown in! Here, a special present was a Gelders mare, Adessa (Koss keur x Odessa keur sport/d by Ahoy) who blew everyone away with her scores – including a 9.5 for her canter and 8.5 for trot. The beautiful mare zinged from foalbook to studbook to ster and keur-eligible in a matter of hours. We all wished we stood in the shoes of owner Beverley Hilton!

The Dressage IBOP had two very high quality entrants. The first entry, Zolette P (Prestige-VDL x Odette N keur by Houston keur) was bred by Prima Equestrian and is owned by Carolyn Couenen. The super-supple mare with great work ethic showed very well and scored ONE point above Zabina P (Cabochon keur x Jeldina keur sport/d by Flemmingh) whose rhythm and top-line use was exemplary, but who undermined herself with tension in the walk.

In the DG Bar Cup the finish was reversed by HALF a point... with Zabina P settling down to work.

The foal groups were dominated by a stunning jumper foal bred and owned by Prima Equestrian. Dabatsa P (Indoctro pref x Uropa by Flemmingh) received very high marks for beautiful conformation and type and had good bone to go with it!



#104 Dabatsa, photo by Roy Maher

Lastly, a youngster who makes a defibrillator unnecessary was the extraordinary Bambino Chin P (Chin Chin x Rolanda elite x Ahorn pref). This Prima Equestrian bred young stallion's technique, scope and reflexes earned top marks for proud owners, Kristina and Maureen Smith. We look forward to seeing him next year.

Mille Grazie!...to our hosts, Roy and Michelle, to Cara, and to the great spectator group!

Off to the airport with smiles for a job well done. Of course our guard was down and we forgot to be apprehensive at the airport. So, just so the record stays consistent, the “Heat” confiscated the branding iron – and – we learned that the flight to Maine was to be not just a plane change at La Guardia but a retrieval and recheck of luggage and a change of terminal all to happen inside of 50 minutes. Somehow, somehow, we made it. I felt like we were racing towards and scrabbling madly through the door of the tiny plane like hobos hopping a freight.

Pineland Farms, New Gloucester, ME

Picture rural New England during harvest season. Picture blue skies with puffy clouds over the woods, ponds and fields. Picture KWPN long-time successful breeders. Picture sleek, expressive and impressive horses.

I've got it...we're at Pineland!! ...and not only all of that, the refurbished period home we stayed in had a washing machine!!

But back to the horses and their humans... the latter all happened to be in the barn aisles hyperventilating into paper bags. Why, you ask? Because Janko did not make it out of Canada!!!

All rose to the occasion, however, and the jury was not disappointed.

The day started indoors with the dressage studbook inspection and free movement. Kristin Story and Nancy Shandler-Conrey's Zeppo (Prestige VDL x Ilanta keur pref by Rossini) wowed us for a first premium and star