

# Bridgitt Barclay

## MAKING A VISION REALITY

WORDS: Emma Van Tuyl

**"IT'S A LONG TERM PLAN, IN 10-15 YEARS I WOULD LIKE TO REPLICATE HERE IN NZ WHAT EMMY DE JEU HAS ACHIEVED ON THE INTERNATIONAL SCENE IN HOLLAND"**

One of the largest Studbooks in the world, the KWPN is the Studbook of the Royal Dutch Sport Horse which specialises in the breeding of dressage, jumping and harness horses with emphasis on performance, durability and attractive conformation.

The breed is getting more recognition here in New Zealand after sitting consistently high in the world rankings for both dressage and jumping.

It's not hard to pick out international examples of the breed, you just need to look to the top and you will find the likes of dressage stars Valegro, Moorlands Totilas and Jerich Parzival or Olympic Silver medalist showjumping stallion Eurocommerce London.

Bridgitt Barclay and her partner Andy Edwards have acted on their vision to start promoting KWPN here in New Zealand.

Nicole Bours of Dutch Horses Unlimited owns a superb example of the breed in her stallion Appleton DHU and is pleased to see what Bridgitt is doing.

"New Zealand definitely has world class sporthorses available for everyone now, people like Bridgitt help bring New Zealand equestrian sport to the highest level," She says.

### LATE STARTER

Forty one year old Bridgitt didn't start riding until she was 21 years old and the purchase of her first horse followed closely. It was only 8 years ago that she started having dressage lessons after a chance meeting with Coralie Williams after Bridgitt purchased Coralie's property in Kumeu.

This friendship was the catalyst in sparking the fire for dressage in Bridgitt.

"I was lucky enough to own Jaybee Alfredo a Prix St George horse formally owned by Coralie and Ashleigh Williams, he taught me so much (under Coralie's watchful eye) I absolutely caught the dressage bug having him, I loved him so much and was totally devastated when we lost him to a tragic paddock accident at home."

And who really is Bridgitt Barclay? "I'm an amateur rider that dreams of one day riding Grand Prix, I closely follow the European scene, and anyone who knows me knows how much I love Edward Gal and everything Dutch!" She says.

### BRIDGITT BARCLAY HORSES

Emmy de Jeu (winner of the KWPN Breeder of The Year for 2013) saw a Facebook post of Bridgitt's and some light banter between the two started about how nice it would be to have a couple of Emmy's horses in New Zealand.

"We started chatting via Facebook and Skype, then Emmy flew down to NZ to stay with us and next thing Andy and I are in Holland sitting in Emmy's house, meeting all her beautiful horses then choosing which ones we wanted to buy. To top it off, we also managed a visit to Edward Gal

and Hans Peter Minderhoud's barn in Harskamp which was a dream come true for me, and all this in four days."

"The ultimate goal for BBH (Bridgitt Barclay Horses Ltd) is to be breeding world class KWPN dressage horses here in NZ, hence why we chose two of Emmy's stunning mares to help start our breeding programme. We will only use approved, licensed KWPN stallions over our mares and ones that would be interesting and exciting to have in New Zealand.

"It's a long term plan, in 10-15 years I would like to replicate here in NZ what Emmy de Jeu has achieved on the international scene in Holland. She is my mentor and one of my best friends; I'm blessed to have her support and knowledge with me every step of the way. I want to make her proud."

To start her breeding programme Bridgitt has purchased two mares from Emmy; Fiesta de Jeu and Fiora de Jeu.

"They are just simply beautiful," she says of the two mares.

Fiesta de Jeu was recently inspected at a KWPN test and scored highly under the inspectors Bart Henstra and Henk Dirksen. Exciting news for Bridgitt is that Fiesta de Jeu is in foal to the stallion Negro, the sire of super star Olympic Champion Valegro.

"She'll be foaling in Holland next year, as this will be my first foal I'm just hoping for a strong, healthy little guy or girl. Fiesta will be put back in foal to a stallion that we're yet to decide on, we've got a few interesting ideas floating around; Jack Sparrow, Jazz or even Totilas but we need to choose the best sire that would be great to have in NZ."

"Fiora de Jeu is the sweetest mare, she runs with Sither de Jeu (who was Edward Gal's Grand Prix mare before she was retired from competition early in 2013) when they're in the paddocks, and are stabled next to each other at night so she keeps very good company. Fiora would also make a fantastic riding horse, so we'll see if I can resist riding her."

### FLORERO DE JEU – THE COMPETITION HORSE

As well as the two broodmares, Bridgitt has also purchased a riding 4 year old gelding; Florero de Jeu will be the foundation dressage horse of the farm.

"He is just such a lovely horse, so powerful and supple," Bridgitt explains that it was hard to contain her excitement watching him. "He will be trained and competed by Coralie. Andy and I are happy to be owners and watch him progress. We only purchased him if she agreed to ride him, so we were very pleased when she said yes!"

Due to his age, things will be taken slowly so that he can develop and reach his full potential.

"Once he comes out of quarantine in NZ, he'll come home for a week or so before going to Coupe Cubitt Sport Horses for a settling in period and light training while he adjusts to his new life in NZ. Following that he'll begin his professional dressage training with Coralie." •