

IYB: Educating and supporting the next generation of breeders

BY WENDY CONLON / IYB

PHOTOGRAPHY: COURTESY IYB

The concept of the Young Breeder Championships was born in Germany in 1997, initiated by Dr. Ludwig Christmann, then deputy director of the Hanoverian Breeding Society, who wanted to involve youth more intensively in breeding matters.

What started informally, and developed into National Championships in Germany has since mushroomed with World Championships now hosted normally every other year by a different studbook around the globe, with individual studbooks hosting their own National Championships or selection systems in advance.

The aims of the World Championships are to bring young breeders (aged 15 to 25 years of age) together across countries, breeding associations, and languages to learn, compete, and network. The spirit of the championships is to incorporate competition with education, supporting participants in the development of the skills and knowledge required for successful sport horse breeding. Given the age categories concerned, not all participants are as yet active breeders, and that is not a prerequisite.

The WBFSH International Young Breeders World Championships provide an opportunity for young persons to compete and benchmark themselves with their peers in various disciplines relevant to sport horse breeding, including theory (equine reproduction; nutrition; stable management; health and sport), conformation and athleticism assessment, turnout, and in-hand presentation.

The first World Championships was held in Verden Germany in 2001 in tandem with the European Dressage Championships that same year. The Belgian Warmblood Studbook hosted at Minderhout in 2003; Danish Warmblood Studbook at Aarhus, 2005; Irish Sport Horse Studbook at Kildalton Agricultural College, Kilkenny, 2009; Selle Francais

at Chazey-sur-Ain Horse Park, near Lyon, 2011; and Swedish Warmblood Studbook at Flying National Stud, 2013.

A collaboration between the Hanoveran Studbook Great Britain, Warmblood Breeders Studbook UK, and Sport Horse Breeding of Great Britain, hosted the 2015 championships at Hartbury College in the UK. The Canadian Warmblood Horse Breeders' Association hosted at Spruce Meadows in 2017; while the Austrian Warmblood Studbook at Austrian Horse Centre, Stadl-Paura, most recently in 2019. The next World Championships, following a Covid-imposed deferral, is planned for Ermelo, the Netherlands, July 7-9, 2022, hosted by the KWPN Studbook.

It was at Minderhout, Belgium, when the first non-European team joined the competition. The participation of the Canadian Warmblood Horse Breeders Association team emphasised at the time the worldwide interest and potential for growth.

Recent World Championships have welcomed in the region of 20 teams from countries including Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Great Britain, the Netherlands, Ireland, Sweden, and the United States, and look forward to welcoming the newest members from Latvia at future championships.

Foundation

The International Young Breeders (IYB) organization was founded in 2009 during the World Championships in





teams/individuals, though supported by a studbook, are mentored and managed by persons peripheral to the studbook, while in other regions the studbook has a young breeder programme integrated within the studbook structure itself.

The IYB committee can be contacted via the secretary Wendy Conlon (Ireland), with any queries wendy.conlon@teagasc.ie

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President – Inge Madsen (Denmark)

Vice President – Live de Greeff (Belgium)

Treasurer – Carolin Kathmann (Germany)

Public Relations Officer – Ines Rathke (Germany) ■

Ireland, bringing a more formal structure to the organization, and is proud to be in the family of the WBFSH and supported by them.

To participate in the championships, teams or individuals must first be aligned with a WBFSH member studbook who are, or become members of the International Young Breeders organization. The addition of new members to the IYB organisation is always welcome. In some regions Young Breeder



(Photos, this page, from the top: Getting into the IYB championship spirit; Judging at Chazey-sur-Ain, France, 2011; At Spruce Meadows, Calgary, Canada, 2017; Prize-giving at Stadl-Paura, Austria, 2019

