

Latvian Warmblood Studbook supports young breeders

BY LAINE ORBIDANE / IYB

PHOTOGRAPHY: AIJA LUSE, LUIZE DINSORFA, JOLANTA ROTHBERGA

The activities of Young Breeders of the Latvian Warmblood studbook supported by the Latvian Warmblood Horse Breeders Association started only two years ago, in 2021. Membership of International Young Breeders was the first step alongside building a team to participate in the 2022 World Championships in Ermelo, the Netherlands.

In October 2023 we hosted our first Latvian Young Breeders National Championships, and Diana Pelsa, a senior member of the Latvian World Championship team in shares her experiences: Progressing from her involvement in young breeders, Diana recently used her experiences and knowledge gained to offer back as a judge at the recent National Championships during the in-hand discipline. She is also studying and practicing to become an inspector for the Latvian Warmblood Studbook in the future.

First steps in horse breeding

According to Diana; “I have always aspired to breed horses – it’s been my dream, my plan. When I first came across a social media post about pre-selection for the Latvian Young Breeders team and the opportunity to take part in the Young Breeders World Championship, I made the decision to devote 100% of my efforts towards it. I felt the opportunity presented as a step toward realising my dream.

“I bought my first horse already with the intention of breeding. She was a four-year-old, Latvian Warmblood (LWB) mare that I sourced in 2017 directly from her breeder with whom I was training at that time. In

2022, I celebrated my first foal from this mare. Then in 2019 I purchased a wonderful nine-year-old LWB gelding for jumping training, who turned out to be a bit ‘spicy’.

“I graduated from the Latvia University of Life Sciences and Technologies in 2021 with a Professional Bachelors Degree in Agriculture and Zootechnician in Breeding. Furthermore, also in 2021, I joined as a member Latvian Warmblood Horse Breeders Association.

“Currently I have five LWB horses of which two have Latvian Heavy Warmblood (LHWP) bloodlines. LWB horses are typically large, exceeding 160cms at the withers, and stallions often reach 170cmd or more, athletically built, with well-defined toplines, suitable for various equestrian sports. The aim of breeding LWB is to preserve and develop two historically established horse types, which are the sport and draft types, and to popularise the valuable traits of LWB, such as their good-naturedness and balanced mind.”



Young Breeder Diana Pelsa

Becoming a ‘Young Breeder’

“In July 2021, there was a pre-selection process for team formation, comprising a theory test and an interview, which marked the first Latvian Young Breeders event of many since. Following that, practical horse training sessions occurred approximately once a month, and we had the opportunity to provide volunteer work at various shows. I happily participated at all of the training and show events.

“My perspective has changed the most. Now, when I look at a horse, I automatically start analysing it – its conformation, movement, and what would be the most suitable discipline or rider for it. I have definitely learned a lot, made new friends, gained valuable experience and confidence in what I do, also



LWB Young breeders in training clinics during preparation and team building for the championships. (l-r) Anna Sellere, Liana Stulpina, Sendija Samohvalova, Alise Lutinska, coach Laine Orbidane, Diana Pelsa, Evita Bogomola, Velta Krustina, Madara Soma



LWB junior and senior teams with team coach Laine Orbidane and LWB Horse Breeders Association chairman of the board Aija Luse at the WBFSH International Young Breeders World Championships in 2022. (l-r) Sendija Samohvalova, Katrina Snore, Beatrise Balama, Laine Orbidane, Paula Klavina, Aija Luse, Anna Sellere, Liana Stulpina, Diana Pelsa

reassured myself that I'm heading in the right direction. Following the Young Breeders World Championship, I gathered the courage to acquire two more broodmares."

Most important lessons and opportunities

"Young Breeders activities provided me with the right place to gain experience, learn, and acquire genuine, up-to-date information, as well as growth opportunities and making new contacts with like-minded individuals. Overall, joining Young Breeders can be a transformative experience.

"The world of horse breeding is ever-evolving. Staying updated with the latest techniques, research, and industry



LWB team in 'turnout' at the WBFSH International Young Breeders World Championships in 2022. Diana Pelsa braiding, alongside Paula Klavina

trends is crucial for success. Theory is important, but hands-on experience is invaluable. Working directly with horses and experienced professionals provides practical skills and insights.

"I have had the opportunity to participate in the Young Breeders World Championship in the Netherlands 2022 and visited the VDL Stud where we were shown foals, youngsters and stallions, one of which captured my eye – Indoctro. That's why I aspire to someday acquire a foal from this famous stallion, hopefully from a good damline.

"I had opportunity to learn from experienced breeders, trainers, and industry experts regarding breeding, feeding, stable management, health and welfare, conformation, and free jumping, also grooming. I had several opportunities to visit different stables and breeding farms with various horses and housing systems, which I otherwise wouldn't have been able to experience.

"Additionally, in 2023 was the third time that I had the opportunity to participate in Latvia's young horse competition 'Autumn Pearl' as a volunteer, and my favorite duty was awarding ribbons to the horses. I also this year had the opportunity to travel to Estonia with my colleagues to talk about the Young Breeders movement and I was a part of the judging panel at a Latvian Young Breeders championship, which was also a selection for 2024 WC team.

"Young Breeders involvement has been so beneficial to my personal development and learning more about the different aspects of horses. The chance to discuss with others is so valuable and most importantly new friendships made." ■



In-hand presentation during the October 2023 Latvian Young Breeders Championships. Liana Stulpina, Latvian Young Breeders senior champion