

Young BWP members: Passion and a willingness to learn

BY KRIS VAN STEEN / IYB

PHOTOGRAPHY: BWP

Belgian Warmblood (BWP) is a studbook made great by the horses that excel all over the world, but especially by the breeders who breed these great horses. Within this community are young breeders who have inherited the passion from their family, or became passionate about breeding through equestrian sports.

We spoke to three young Belgian Warmblood-breeders. Each of them already participated in the World Championships for Young Breeders.

“I slept above Diamant de Semilly”

Emile Vandorpe inherited the passion and interest for horses and breeding through his genes. He is a more than talented rider and at the World Young Breeders' Championship in Ermelo (2022), he achieved the highest score in the section for judging conformation, taking the gold and the title of World Champion. In 2015, when he first participated in the World Young Breeders' Championship in Great Britain, Emile already won silver in the part of judging free jumping.

“We have a tree farm at home and I am self-employed in landscaping. But there have always been horses in my life, that of my parents, and my grandparents. My work obviously comes first, but equestrianism and breeding play a leading role in my life.”

Knowledge: “I try to gain as much knowledge as possible about breeding. The moments that [young] BWP organizes are ideal and always very pleasant learning moments. I enjoy those breeding visits, and also regularly did so at the weekend during my ‘green management’ traineeship in



Julie Van de Voorde

Normandy. I had the opportunity to stay at Eric Levallois' stud farm – Le Haras de Beaufour – for three months. I slept there above Diamant de Semilly's stable [smile], and I was able to talk about breeding with Eric who is obsessed with the genetic background of showjumpers.

“During the weekend I went to the stables at Haras de la Pommes, and also visited Penelope Léprèvest and Kevin Staut. I still have very good contacts with all those people. I have also twice visited Brazi and noticed that Belgian horses and mare lines are very popular there. The more I can discover about horses and breeding, the better.”

Manageable breeding: “We breed one or two foals a year. Never big numbers; always manageable. I train the horses myself until they are seven years old, and then they are usually sold. Queen de Hurtebise (Kashmir van Schuttershof) is a mare – the full sister of Reveur du Hurtebise – with whom we have already bred several good horses. Querida du Bois (Doree van de Moskifarm), which I am currently riding, is also from that lineage. Rosanna du Bois (Dore van't Zorgvliet) is a seven-year-old mare who is currently doing well in sport with French rider Jordan Gennaro. Quistria du Bois is also a seven-year-old we bred ourselves, and she is currently jumping under the saddle of Guillaume Batillat. She was second in the Grand Prix for seven-year-old horses in Royon. I rode her dam myself up to



Emile Vandorpe



Katrien Hulsbosch

Im35 level. She was then sold to Pilar Cordon, but is now back for our breeding.”

“I learned to look at a horse critically and objectively.”

Julie Van de Voorde (19) was also there at the World Championships in Ermelo, where she finished fifth in the ‘presenting a horse’ section. “Ever since I was a child, we went to BWP activities together with the family. Thus, like my family, I became passionate about breeding.”

Friends: “The World Young Breeders’ Championship in 2022 remains a highlight and an unforgettable experience. We are still a close group of friends with our BWP team and we have met people from all over the world with the same passion and interest in horses. During the preparation for the World Championship, thanks to Young BWP, I learned how to look at and judge a horse critically and objectively, both on conformation and in free jumping. And I learned how to present a horse properly... Successfully.” [Laughs]

Klothoef: “My parents have been breeding, using the stable name ‘de Klothoef’ for 20 years, with an average of two foals a year. I find it fascinating to learn from my dad in his search for a suitable stallion to go with our mares. We bought a new broodmare this summer (Billy Congo x Kannan) who has a lot of achievements on her track record. We bought this mare to have a different bloodline in our breeding. If the breeding products are not sold when they are young, we train them ourselves, so we almost only have young horses in our stables. From riding and guiding these young horses, I can also learn a lot. Helping with free jumping, lunging, and saddling teaches me to watch and judge the differences in horses. I also enjoy going along to the video day and preparatory activities of the Horseman Auction. There, many different bloodlines come together and it allows you to compare foals.”

BWP Stallion Approval: “I also try to see the BWP stallion approval, although that is during school exams, because here too you can make a good comparison of the stallions and their way of jumping. Based on the results and

whether the stallions are approved or not enables me to reflect on my thoughts. For now, I watch and learn by watching my parents breed, but later I hope to breed a foal myself one day. I also enjoy listening to the views of other breeders and riders also via podcasts. For now, I can only share that advice to listen and watch ‘real horse people’ as much as possible.”

“New connections and insights are fantastic.”

Katrien Hulsbosch (35) is from Peer in Limburg, and was already a World Champion among young breeders in 2011. Her own ‘van’t Huka’ breeding farm is still young, having seen the birth of a first foal in 2007, a second in 2008, followed by 2012 and 2015, bringing the total to five. “That number has only increased in recent years,” adds the newly qualified veterinarian, who already has an approved stallion and an elite mare on her breeding record.

New connections: “My experience with Young BWP has been super positive. It is a nice group and you get to know new people every year. The world championships are great as they are organized in different countries and you meet new people from all over the world. Young people with the same passion for horses and for breeding always gives new connections and insights. Fantastic.”

Van ‘t Huka: “My breeding comprises several mares. The foals are given the surname ‘van’t Huka’ (Hulsbosh Katrien). It doesn’t have to be very complicated. [Smile] I am proud of my breeding products such as the stallion Qanthago van’t Huka (Kannan x Carthago), the BWP-approved stallion Sherlock van’t Huka (Catoki x Thunder) and the BWP elite mare Pasadena van’t Huka (Cicero x Calypso III).”

Top sport: “Recently, I also started pony breeding. [Smile]. Very exciting and also challenging. I am hugely passionate about breeding and constantly want to learn. My dream and goal is top sport. I therefore hope one day I can follow ‘van’t Hukas’ at the very highest level. That’s what I think we all do it for.” ■



Emile and Katrien to the right of the horse, Julie left of Wiebke Van de Lageweg