

# Stallions of the Hanoverian G-Line

*The second article in a series exploring the Hanoverian bloodlines with particular reference to their influence in the development of the Hanoverian horse in New Zealand*



**Goldfisch II**

The originator of this highly successful line was Goldfisch II, born 1935, descending from the thoroughbred stallion, Goldschaum xx (b. 1891). Goldfisch II stood from 1939-58, producing nine licensed stallion sons, the most important of which were Gotthard and Graf. Graf sired the famous Hanoverian stallion, Grande and it is through Gotthard and Grande that this line continues to this day. Strangely, both stallions were somewhat lucky to have been approved for breeding at all, yet both proved to be producers of talented, international competition horses, bringing this line into acclaim in both dressage and jumping.

## Gotthard



**Gotthard**

Gotthard descended on his dam's side from the Shagya Arab Amurath I, and in his photo his Arabian ancestry is obvious not only in the short, flat croup, but also in the rather lovely head and large, soft eye. The late Werner Schockemohle is quoted as describing him thus -

" He looked weak and lacking in his expression - he was not developed sufficiently in the shoulder and in the formation of his neck. No-one could guess at the time [of his licensing] how lovely and expressive the horse would be ten years later. The fully matured Gotthard impressed through his perfect shoulder and his perfect neck, and even his head could be classed as nice - even though he

had a few too strong cheek bones from his Arabian ancestry, otherwise the head was clear and dry with a wide forehead and a lovely big eye. His croup could have been a little longer and a little bit more sloped in the top line. His hind legs were quite good but you have to admit that his hocks could have been better.

"Somewhat spongy, a thick horse with flabby, soft muscle, a big, badly constructed shoulder, not particularly impressive neck, back or shoulder.

"His limbs are strong, but incorrect, a foreleg that clearly turns out, and is a flaw that he clearly passes onto all his offspring."

However, Gotthard became known in his time as the best producer of jumping horses in

the world. Over the generations, his descendants have improved in type without losing this jumping ability.

Not surprisingly, Gotthard's unpromising appearance did not win him immediate popularity with breeders and he did not get good mares, some years no mares at all, until his daughter, Goldika, brought attention to him through her sensational jumping performance with Gerd Wiltfang. At the age of 21 he began to get good mares, and eventually sired 398 competitive horses with earnings of nearly two million deutschmarks. He had 34 licensed stallions and 26 state premium mares to his credit. His most highly rated son was the Westfalian, Goldberg, while in Hanover, Gardestern I, Goldpitz, Goldstern and Godehard all continued his line.

As well as Goldika, Gotthard's internationally competitive offspring included Goya, Gonzales, Galipolis, Queensway Big Q, Goldfink, Golden Gate, Graf Sieno, Graf 2, and he is still represented in recent times by descendants such as Goldfever, ridden by Ludger Beerbaum. Goldfever descends directly from Gotthard through his sire, Grosso Z. Gotthard can also be found in the damline of many jumping horses and jumper horse sires.



***Gymnastic Star, imported from Germany into Australia, has been used in NZ via frozen semen.***

***Photo courtesy of Kinnordy Stud.***

In New Zealand, via the use of frozen semen, the Gotthard line is well represented by offspring of the Glueckspilz son, Gymnastic Star, imported into Australia by Holger Schmorl. Line bred to both Gotthard and to the famous Ferdinand son, Wendekreis, having both stallions appearing on his sire's and dam's sides in the fourth generation, Gymnastic Star is a great example of the way Gotthard's line has improved in type and movement through the generations. His early NZ progeny are now making their presence felt in dressage competition here.

## **Grande**

Born in 1958, by the Goldfisch II son, Graf, Grande was able to produce horses talented for dressage, (thanks to the influence of his Duellant dam), as well as for jumping.

Short, stocky and chestnut, Grande's appearance in his photo gives no hint of the major influence he was to have in Hanoverian breeding. However, he produced 33 approved sons, 34 state premium mares and sent three of his showjumping progeny to the Olympic Games – Grande Giso for Holland, Grande for the USA and Gute Sitte for Belgium.



***Grande***

Grande's sons and grandsons have carried on his remarkable influence: His son Gralritter became a top sire of international jumping horses, including Grandeur, which won over one million deutschmarks as a showjumper and went on to be a superior sire in his own right. Another Grande son, Graditz, sired Isabell Werth's famous dressage horse, Gigolo.

Progeny of the Grande son, Graphit won almost two million deutschmarks; leading Hanoverian sires Grundstein I and Grundstein II were by Graphit; Graphit also sired the Hanoverian licensed stallion, Grannus, whose pedigree, with Gotthard in the dam side, brought the lines of Grande and Gotthard together. This line breeding was further consolidated in 1988 when the Grannus son, Graf Grannus, was born. Graf Grannus is out of Goldmaedel, a mare by the Gotthard son, Goldloewe. Goldmaedel's dam was by another Gotthard son, Goya.



***Graf Grannus, Hanoverian stallion of the year 2004. His pedigree combines the blood of Gotthard and Grande***

Graf Grannus was 2004 Hanoverian stallion of the year. His best-known licensed stallion sons are Goodman, Ginsberg and Graf Top.

It is difficult to document the far reaching influence that Grande has had in the Hanoverian breeding program; his name appears often as damsire, as in the case of the successful breeding stallion, Brentano II, or further in the background of so many of the stallion pedigrees. Sometimes, the lines of Gotthard and Grande cannot be isolated from each other – as in the pedigree of the famous jumping stallion, For Pleasure,

where we see that his dam, Gigantin, is by the Grande grandson, Grannus, out of a Gotthard granddaughter. Breeders still count it a positive to find Grande in the damline of prospective broodmares, as in the case of the Lauries Crusader xx mare, Lusenka, imported to NZ in 2006 by John and Angela Smith.



***This headstone at the Celle state stud in Adelheidsdorff commemorates the great G-Line foundation sire, Grande.***

***Photo Sue French***

Grande passed away in 1989 after a phenomenal 25 years at stud, and is buried in the grounds of the Celle State Stud at Adelheidsdorff in Lower Saxony, where a commemorative stone marks his resting place.

In New Zealand, The blood of Goldfisch II arrived with the first two Hanoverian stallions to be imported from Germany in the late 1970s. Winnebago and Witzbold were both by Winnetou, which had a Goldfisch II mare as his dam.

In Australia, Kinnordy Stud imported the Gotthard grandson, Graf Landau, a horse from a Wendekreis mare which had Goetz as its damsire. Goetz, a great grandson of

Goldfisch II, was sire of Hugo Simon's well-known successful showjumper, Gladstone, with which Simon won the first ever Volvo World Cup in 1979, (among many other major wins, spanning a decade of international showjumping). Gladstone, through his damsire, Weingau, carried Goldfisch II on the damside of his pedigree also.



**Genius**

## Genius

The Grande branch of the G-line has been represented in New Zealand by his grandson, Genius (Garibaldi I/Diskus), imported in 1983 by Neil and Rita Fox of Te Peka Hanoverian Stud in Southland. Genius offspring have performed well in New Zealand in all disciplines. Winter Gingko competed in eventing to intermediate level with Neil Sharpe, Tielcey Park Glenbrook was an advanced eventer with Anna Stewart, as well as competing in open show hunter and reaching medium level dressage. In the showjumping arena Genius was well represented by horses such as Dunstan Guinness, Garland, Gallipoli and the grand prix showjumper, Godfather. Many Genius offspring competed successfully here in dressage: Glad Tidings had many wins at

open medium; Golden Lad had many wins and championships up to Intermediaire I, as did Garibaldi, ridden by Alex Matheson. It was a Genius daughter, Gabana, that was ridden by Louisa Hill at the Athens Olympic Games in 2004.

Genius served mares in New Zealand from 1983 until his death in 2003; some of our breeders are still using his daughters. Giselle, out of the thoroughbred mare, Paratata xx had foals by Dynamit for Vollrath stud; the intermediate eventer, Ginevara, has had two lovely colt foals by Dream Boy, for Jenny Veitch; Dave and Bridget Sutton of Henton Lodge Hanoverians are using Galator; Gary and Wendy Freeman have been breeding lovely Anamour foals from Georgie Girl (Genius/Witzbold); Matthews Hanoverians bred from Gaibana and have kept her Anamour daughter, Anteaga MH to breed on with. Gaibana is now in the brood mare band of Shelley Williams. However, our most prolific producer (in NZ) of G-Line progeny to date has been Matthews Hanoverians.

Judith and Peter Matthews have in their broodmare paddock the Genius daughters Grand Gift and Greta Garbo. Grand Gift was a bottle reared orphan and has only ever been a brood mare. Her Dream Boy daughter, Dream Gift MH, currently under saddle with Sean Bignall and competing at medium level, was her first foal. She has had two colt foals by De Niro.

Greta Garbo competed up to medium level in dressage and has borne four foals for the Matthews, only one of which, Fiesta MH by Fabriano, (currently a two year old) is a filly. She will be kept by the stud for breeding.

Judith and Peter also have two Graf Landau daughters, Gratiola and Grimalda, imported from Kinnordy Stud in Australia.

Gratiola (Graf Landau/Winterkoenig) is currently pregnant with her 6th foal by Gymnastic Star. The Gratiola/Gymnastic Star mix seems to produce attractive horses that sell easily, and so far, all Gratiola's progeny have been sold.

Grimalda is by Graf Landau, and also carries Gotthard in her dam's pedigree. She has had a season competing in dressage and has since borne three foals, all fillies. Judith and Peter have kept the first of these, Grandessa MH, by Gymnastic Star, for breeding. Grandessa MH, in her turn, has produced two fillies: Whitney MH by Weltmeyer in 2005 (unfortunately deceased), and Belle du Jour MH by Brentano II in 2007. She is expecting another foal by Brentano II in 2008.

A publicity booklet published by the German Hanoverian Breed Society in 2007 states that there are only a few representatives of the G-Line left (standing as breeding stallions in Germany). There are the Graf Grannus sons, Ginsberg and Graf Top, Goethe By Grosso Z, and the Grand Garcon son, Grand Cru. The G-Line might be past its zenith in Germany, but it seems to be alive and going strong down under!

*(Information for this article was taken from a lecture by Dr. Ludwig Christmann during the Breed Orientation course 2002 and a talk by Dr. Jochen Wilkens during his NZ tour in 2005. Photographs, unless otherwise stated, are from the Hanoverian Stallion register, courtesy of the Celle State Stud in Germany.)*