

KWPN Stallion Verdi:

Superior in Both Sport and Breeding

Just ten years old, the KWPN-approved stallion and Grand Prix show jumper Verdi already boasts an impressive sport and breeding career. This year, the world-class Quidam de Revel son competed in the Olympic Games under Maikel van der Vleuten. In addition, Verdi, who was approved by the KWPN as a three-year-old, is proving himself a superior breeding stallion. With his oldest offspring excelling in the ability tests and young horse classes, Verdi is rewarding the numerous breeders who had confidence in him from the start.



The ten-year-old Grand Prix stallion Verdi is a world-class show jumper under Maikel van der Vleuten. The combination was three times clear in the team competition at the London Olympics.

VDL Groep Verdi TN (Quidam de Revel out of Clarissa s.Landgraf I) was bred by Stoeterij Musterd of Hooge Zwaluwe. Shortly after his birth in 2002, he was purchased by Kees van den Oetelaar and Team Nijhof. “My father was interested in Verdi even before he was born and had pretty much committed to buying him. Soon after Verdi’s birth, Van den Oetelaar went to look at him and was immediately

smitten. Since then, we’ve shared registration of the stallion,” explains Henk Nijhof, Jr. of Team Nijhof. “At the time, he was a very nice Quidam de Revel, and that hasn’t changed. We prepared him for the stallion selection and presented him to the KWPN. I’m not quick to praise a horse, but Verdi has always been special to me. He always jumped well at home, and fortunately he also

jumped well at the stallion selection. In ‘s-Hertogenbosch, he jumped really well, so a lot of people were surprised when Verdi wasn’t invited for the championship. Perhaps it had something to do with his Register A papers,” added Nijhof, Jr.

The Performance Test

Despite no invitation to the championship, Verdi was selected for the performance test.

Verdi

Name: Verdi

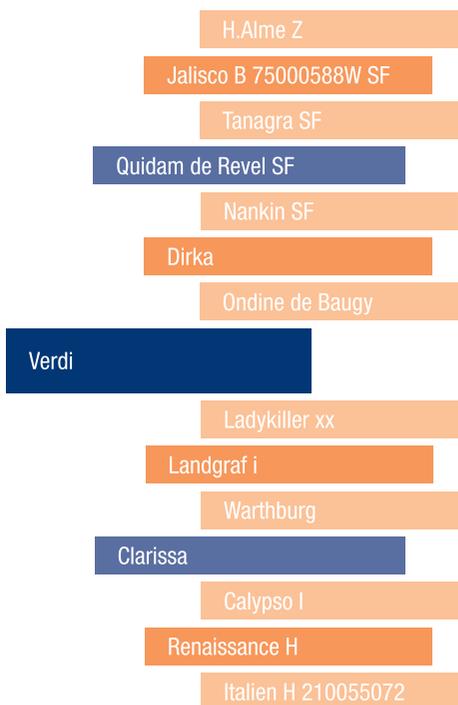
Lineage: Quidam de Revel x Landgraf I

Born: 2002

Level: Grand Prix show jumping, Olympic team

Height: 1.72m

Oldest Offspring: Age six, competing in international show jumping, Youngster Tour



At first, his registered parties wanted to present him for the fall performance test and advertise him in Team Nijhof's brochure under the heading Coming Stars. "We had our doubts about presenting him for the spring performance test because he developed a girth sore two days before we

were supposed to drop him off. But since he was fine under saddle, we decided to go ahead and take him to the performance test on Monday. Even though we thought he might not pass the vet check then, we figured he could join the other horses later. In those days, if a stallion didn't pass the vet, you could take him home and bring him back after ten days. We thought that would be enough time for the sore to heal. Fortunately, the swelling subsided faster than we had anticipated, and the vet didn't see a problem when we dropped off Verdi, so we left him in Ermelo. But because we didn't really expect him to pass the vet check, his preparation wasn't ideal. Fortunately, he developed well in the spring performance test," explains Henk Nijhof, Sr., in whose name Verdi is also registered.

As a three-year-old, Verdi showed outstanding talent as a jumper in the performance test. He demonstrated abundant to very abundant scope and gave his test riders a more than sufficient feeling. However, with a 7.5 for jumping talent, he was not immediately among the top stallions of his birth year. "We had no doubts about Verdi's jumping talent, but he's built a little on the forehand, which is reflected in his way of moving and jumping. For those reasons, the test riders were not unanimously for his approval, although the Committee had no doubts. However, that issue played a part in his score for jumping talent," explains Arie Hamoen, Chairman of the Stallion Selection Committee for jumpers. Ultimately, Verdi was approved with a total of 57 points, which places him in the

middle bracket of jumping stallions.

Popular With Breeders

Despite a less than spectacular score in the performance test, breeders immediately lined up for Verdi, who bred a considerable number of mares his first season at stud. According to Nijhof, Sr., his ability to draw breeders was due to his talent as a jumper and his interesting pedigree: "In those days, Quidam de Revel was definitely very 'hot,' and Verdi is also really well bred on his dam's side: the renowned Holsteiner jumping sire Calato is out of a full-sister to his dam, which means that Verdi is a descendent of the valuable Holsteiner-line 474a, which has produced several KWPN-approved sires. In addition, Verdi is a very attractive horse with correct conformation. As a result, he immediately caught the interest of breeders, even though he didn't score the most points in the performance test."

Now at age ten, Verdi attracts as much attention from breeders as ever. "At first, he was used only in the Netherlands, but over time, foreign breeders also started showing interest in him. I think that to date he has probably serviced more foreign mares than Dutch mares. Because of his outstanding achievements at Grand Prix-level, he's in demand world-wide," says Nijhof, Sr.

A Consistent Performer

As a four-year-old, Verdi was put in training with Eric and Maikel van der Vleuten. Currently, the stallion is a successful Grand Prix-level jumper under Maikel van der Vleuten. Among the duo's competitions this year was the World Cup Final in 's Hertogenbosch. Year in and



Dirk Caremans

Several outstanding jumpers from Verdi's first year at stud include Bibi-Sijgje HS (pictured here), who scored well in the mare test and was second in the VION Cup this year.



Dirk Caremans

Last year, two offspring from Verdi's first year at stud qualified for the final of the World Championships for Young Jumpers in Lanaken, one of which was Eurocommerce New York with Leon Kuypers, who are pictured here.



Charlotte, who showed in the National Mare Inspection, was among the best scoring Verdi daughters. In Warga, she earned a top score of 86 points in the IBOP.



Verdi daughters also excel in the inspections, as evidenced by Cilanta, who won the Overijssel Central Inspection in 2010.

year out, Verdi has proven that he is among the top horses of his birth year. He is a stellar example of a stallion which has developed well in both sport and breeding, successfully combining a challenging competition schedule with a very busy breeding program.

In early 2011, Stal van der Vleuten acquired a 25% share of Verdi, the same percentage as Kees van den Oetelaar; Team Nijhof has always had a 50% share of the stallion. "Verdi is very well managed and has done very well with every opportunity he's been given. He now ranks among the leading KWPN-approved jumper stallions," explains Hamoen. Although Verdi is a late-bloomer by nature, as is often the case with Quidam de Revel offspring, he has been in the show ring since the start of his career. For instance, he won the L-class of the Stallion Competition as a four-/five-year-old; and as a five-year-old, he finished seventh in the World Championships for Young Jumpers at Lanaken. As a six-year-old, Verdi won the final competition of the VION Cup; and the following year, he captured the VION Cup under Eric van der Vleuten. The same year, he made his Grand Prix debut and continued competing at that level as an eight-year-old. Verdi's best results include third place in the Grand Prix of Geesteren as an eight-year-old, second place in the World Cup competition in Helsinki, third place in the Grand Prix of Falsterbo, first place in the Grand Prix of Lummen, third place in the GCT competition in Valencia, fifth place in the GCT competi-

tion in Abu Dhabi, and just recently, fifth place in the GCT competition in Doha. In the summer of 2011, the then nine-year-old stallion made his team debut and contributed to the Dutch victory with a double-clear result. The Verdi/Van der Vleuten duo was also part of the Dutch team for the 2011 European Championships in Madrid, where they emerged double-clear again on day one of the competition. Thanks to Verdi, the sport career of 24-year-old Maikel van der Vleuten has taken off like a rocket.

Confidence from Breeders

From the start, Dutch breeders had confidence in Verdi, who is indeed living up to expectations. Verdi daughters, in particular, are doing very well: they earn high scores at the inspections and ability tests. In the young jumper competitions, Verdi offspring are also receiving positive attention. The stallion's oldest sons and daughters are age six, and a number of them already boast international experience.

"Verdi seems to leave his stamp more on mares than on stallions," asserts Hamoen. "The mares usually have more 'blood' and are noted for their good reflexes over jumps. The stallions are less consistent, and although we've selected several for the performance test, we haven't been able to approve any yet."

Nijhof, Sr. agrees that the mares initially appear to have more 'blood' and talent: "But his oldest offspring are getting better. Verdi was also a horse that needed time,

even though he always performed well. His oldest male offspring jump better now than when they were three, so that gives us a lot of hope for the future."

Last year, two Verdi offspring competed in the final of the World Championships for Young Jumpers in Lanaken. Both are registered to Stal Eurocommerce and were acquired for a considerable sum at the Expo Talent Sale in Hengelo. These two horses, Eurocommerce New York (formerly known as Bon Ami-O, ds.Watzmann) and Eurocommerce Melbourne (formerly known as Back Home HS, ds.Zeus) each jumped clear in the basic course of the final under Leon Kuypers. They are currently being trained further in the sport. The Verdi offspring Bailey (ds.Lauriston), another top auction horse, was sold through Dutch Sport Horse Sales. Van Schijndel's Balderas (ds.Voltaire) is proving a good future horse for Piet Raymakers. The combination's achievements include winning the Youngster Tour at the CSI2* in Wiener Neustadt. In addition, the Verdi daughter Bibi-Sijgje HS elite EPTM-jump (ds.Heartbreaker) is excelling under Kristian Houwen finishing second in the VION-Cup this year. A resolute jumper, Bibi-Sijgje HS made a good impression in the mare test, scoring 79.5 points.

Many Verdi offspring from the C-year are proving themselves in the sport, such as Calanta (ds.Wellington), the winner of the four-year-old class at NIC Assen. Prior to the competition, Calanta had received

acclaim under Henri Stegeman in the four-year-old class at the CSI Twente in Geesteren. Under Sander Geerink, the Verdi son Cerdí (ds.Cavalier) won the pre-selection of the GMB young horse competition in Laag-Soeren. And in the Pavo Stallion Competition in Belgium, Bart Bomeré excelled with Caspar (Verdi x G.Ramiro Z) in the five-year-old division.

Outstanding in Ability Tests

Verdi offspring are also excelling in the ability tests. In the first IBOP of 2012, Verdi's daughter Coline (ds.Garanco) earned a top score of 85.5 points in Luttenberg. For her outstanding jumping form, she received a 9 and convinced the committee of her jumping talent. The top IBOP horse Charlotte (ds.Kalusha), who was born the same year as Coline, scored 86 points in Warga. Prior to that achievement, she showcased her talent in the inspections, placing second in the Tolbert Central Inspection and receiving an invitation to the National Mare Inspection. In the IBOP, she received 9's for form and talent as a jumper. With 80 points, the Verdi daughter Diamante (ds.Numero Uno) also drew praise in the IBOP. Daloma (out of the Grand Prix mare Paloma s.Ferro) is another successful Verdi daughter, who passed the IBOP with 77.5 points. Verdi daughters are also the subject of praise at the inspections. At the 2011 Central Inspection of North Holland, Belusha HJB (ds.Corland) was deemed the best jumper among mares ages 4 - 7. The same year in Zeeland province, the



Calanta (s.Verdi), ridden by Henri Stegeman, won the four-year-old division last year at NIC Assen.

Verdi daughter Donna Corra (ds.Hugo) won jumper mare champion at the Central Inspection; furthermore, she was the only mare to receive an invitation to the National Mare Inspection. In 2010, Cilanta (ds.Epilot) won the Champion title in the three-year-old division at the Overijssel Central Inspection. "Verdi daughters are quite uniform. They're usually bay with few markings and have a real 'blood-look' and athletic conformation. That and their resolute jumping talent ensure that they do well in the inspections and the ability tests," asserts Hamoen.

A Promising Future

Verdi is best paired with mares which have a dash of Thoroughbred blood and are not built too downhill. "Up to now, we've seen

the best Verdi offspring out of mares with blood and that are not too small. For instance, 1.63m/1.64m or taller is ideal for Verdi," asserts Nijhof, Sr. "They shouldn't be too small or too cold-blooded. For those reasons, Verdi is probably not a stallion that fits with every mare, but with the right combination, he can produce a very good jumper. We're convinced of that!" Henk Nijhof, Sr. is optimistic about the future: "Verdi is a very consistent performer and has been an asset to the Dutch team several times. After the World Cup Final, we eased up on his show schedule, and we'll determine his schedule for the rest of the season with chef d'équipe Rob Ehrens. We hope that Verdi has many years ahead of him in both sport and breeding because he's living up to high expectations on both fronts."



In this year's IBOP in Luttenberg, Coline (s.Verdi) demonstrated abundant jumping talent and received an outstanding score of 85.5 points.



The Verdi daughter Diamante (ds.Numero Uno) performed well in the IBOP, scoring 80 points.