

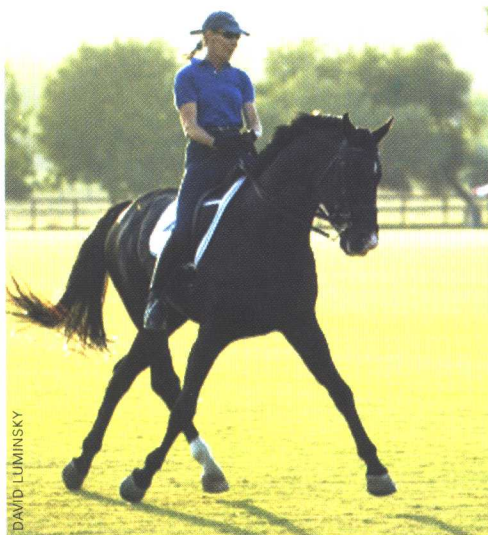
"It's a matter of opinion. I've visited the stud in Europe and the horses I've looked at have been excellent, so I just went with them. I'm a small breeder and I'm looking for a level of consistency. I've stayed in the same bloodlines and more than two-thirds of my sales are repeat customers or referrals from previous customers."

## The Monsieur Connection

Charlotte Bredahl-Baker has competed in dressage for 27 years. Born and raised in Denmark, she grew up with horses and as she puts it, "I rode anything that had four legs."

She reached the pinnacle of competition at the 1992 Olympics in Barcelona on a horse nobody wanted, Monsieur—then an 11-year-old Danish warmblood chestnut gelding—helping the U.S. Olympic Dressage Team to a bronze medal finish, the first for the U.S. since 1976.

Monsieur was five years old when Bredahl-Baker got him in Denmark. Without the money to buy a horse, she formed a partnership to purchase him. A friend paid \$10,000, and Bredahl-Baker provided all the training.



Charlotte Bredahl-Baker is seen here with Windfall CB, a Hanovarian warmblood, named United States Horse of the Year for Intermediate level one.

"In the beginning, people didn't think he was that special," she notes. "When I started showing him, everybody saw that he was a challenge because he was terrified of everything. He definitely had a crazy side to him, but I was the only person who thought he was going to be good."

Every time a prospective buyer came by to ride Monsieur, he acted like he'd never been trained. Because no one wanted

him, Bredahl-Baker spent countless hours with him building a trust that's rarely surpassed. Later on, as the horse became successful, she had some of the best competitors in the world ride him, but Monsieur would not cooperate. "It was funny, but also embarrassing," she confides, "because people thought I'd trained him in a different way, but it was Monsieur just being Monsieur!"

"It was a special feeling. I've never had a partnership with any other horse like this one," she reveals. "I could get on him and think of things I wanted to do and they would just

## The Breeds

Although to most English-speaking horse enthusiasts the word "breed" denotes a closed studbook (the registry containing the history of specific breeds), for the European warmblood breeding community, it has a different connotation. There, breed refers to the "breeding area" as much as to the strict purity of the bloodlines. Each area sets its own goals and style of administration that give specific qualities and characteristics to its horses. The breeds featured here provide an example of this distinction.



### Dressage

Dressage is a competitive event during which the rider, providing minimal signals, guides the horse through a series of precise, controlled maneuvers. Horse and rider act as team and are judged on elegance, precision and discipline of the horse's movements.

### The Holsteiner

First written records of Holsteiner horse breeding date as far back as the 13th century in the northernmost province of Germany—Schleswig-Holstein—when monks were granted grazing rights at the monastery at Uetersen. They continued to breed fine horses until the Reformation when monasteries were transferred to private landowners. By 1686 laws were passed to ensure the quality of the breed. Originally a large, powerful horse, the Holsteiner was crossed with Cleveland Bay and thoroughbred blood in the 19th century for refinement—contributing to its jumping ability and talent for dressage.



Paul McEnroe rides warmbloods to round up cattle.



happen, like telepathy."

Now 23 years old, Monsieur is retired on a ranch overlooking Buellton. His pasture is closest to the house, and each time he hears his owner's voice he raises his head over the six-foot-tall hedge to greet her.

Bredahl-Baker has other horses on the verge of greatness. One is Windfall CB, a handsome black stallion—a Hanoverian warmblood. He was recently named Horse of the Year in the United States for Intermediate level one (two notches below Olympic level). Her goal is to attain that level again.

"Four years ago I went back to Denmark to buy a gelding," she says. "I wasn't looking for a stallion, but I saw Windfall and fell in love with him." Initially she bought him as a competition horse and wasn't worried about his bloodlines, fertility or off-

Pat Sullivan, seen here with one of her prize Trakehners, has been breeding warmbloods in the valley for over 30 years.



spring. Once she returned to the valley, she researched his bloodlines and discovered his superiority. It was then that she went back to Denmark and bought two of his offspring and now breeds him with two mares. "I'm getting excited about the breeding side of it," she says. "Windfall is doing so well and the babies are so nice."

## The Horses Speak

Walking in the shade of Pat Sullivan's half-moon-shaped stables, I'm greeted by her horses with a friendly sniff and a slight

toss of their heads. Some are creamy white—others jet black and ash gray—each display natural elegance.

Searching far and wide 30 years ago for a warmblood breed that suited her needs as a breeder and competitor, Sullivan eventually settled on Trakehners. She has 10 on her 37-acre High Meadow Ranch in the middle of the Santa Ynez Valley.

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### The Trakehner

The Trakehner was first developed by the Order of Teutonic Knights in East Prussia in the 13th century, using the hardy Schweike pony as the base. In 1732, King Friedrich Wilhelm I of Prussia—desiring a new type of cavalry mount for the Prussian army—selected choice horses from seven of his royal breeding farms. He moved them to the new royal stud at Trakehnen where the breed evolved. In the 19th century, English thoroughbred and Arabian stallions were added for size and stamina. The Trakehner is an excellent competitor in dressage, jumping, cross-country and endurance events.

Krusader, a Trakehner stallion owned by Pat Sullivan of High Meadow Ranch in Solvang.



### The Hanoverian

The Hanoverian warmblood first developed as a breed in 1735 by the state stud of Lower Saxony—the former kingdom of Hanover.



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Originally bred as cavalry mounts and farming animals, over time more breeds were introduced to refine the Hanoverian, creating an athletic riding horse. Detailed pedigrees have been kept since the 18th century. Excellent for jumping and dressage, this breed's gentle temperament also makes it well suited as a pleasure horse. It is an extremely popular breed in the United States.

Above, Windfall CB and Charlotte Bredahl-Baker in competition.

### The Danish Warmblood

The studbook for the Danish warmblood was not opened until the 1960s, making it one of the more recent selectively bred European competition horses. Breeders have succeeded in producing a more versatile horse than many other European breeds. This horse is based on a 14th-century breed, Denmark's Frederiksborg, crossed with the thoroughbred.

Subsequently, local mares were bred to Anglo-Norman (Selle Français), Trakehners and thoroughbreds. Absent the Hanoverian influence, this horse has a distinctive character when compared with other warmbloods. A handsome, sound horse, the Danish Warmblood is used in cross-country competitions and dressage.

Charlotte Bredahl-Baker with the now retired Monsieur.

