

KNN's extension into Great Britain after Brexit

History of the Knabstrupper breed and association

The Knabstrupper is an old Danish cultural breed that has its origin at Knabstrup Manor in the village Knabstrup located near Mørkøv in northwest of Zealand island. The ancestress, called Flæbehoppen (the Flæbe mare) or Flæbe I, was a mare that the Spanish troops brought to Denmark during the Napoleonic Wars. The first Knabstrupper foal was born in 1813, and the stallion Thor born in 1847 is considered the actual progenitor of the breed.

Knabstrupperhestevlsforeningen for Holbæk Amt was founded November 21st 1947, and on March 20th 1971 the association became nationwide under the name Knabstrupperforeningen for Danmark – often referred to as KNN.

KNN is recognized worldwide as the mother association for the Knabstrupper breed, and is EU approved to maintain the studbook of the origin of the breed. KNN is nonprofit and the purpose of the association is to preserve and promote the spotted Knabstrupper and to protect the breed from extinction.

Preservation of an endangered breed and international work

It is crucial for the survival of the Knabstrupper breed that all breeding stock is available for the population, and that the gene pool represents the widest possible genetic variation within the breed. This is also why KNN at the beginning of the millennium undertook the task of making inspections available wherever in the world there were Knabstrupper who could otherwise not be entered into a recognized Knabstrupper studbook.

KNN will keep working to ensure that all Knabstrupper have the opportunity to be inspected and can be part of and available for the same population.

Great Britain

Though KNN has graded horses in UK pretty much on a yearly basis since 2005, it has proven very difficult to obtain a permission to continue operating in UK after Brexit.

There are a significant amount of Knabstrupper in Great Britain that are valuable for the Knabstrupper gene pool. If these Knabstrupper are not kept within the population this can prove to be a severe blow to the preservation work of the Knabstrupper breed.

The good news is that KNN has been informed by DEFRA that The UK Competent Authority has approved KNN's extension into Great Britain for the Breeding Programs of

- Purebred Knabstrupper Horse of Classic type
- Knabstrupper Horse of Classic type

KNN is of course happy for this initial result; but as the Knabstrupper Breeding Programs are so closely intertwined in each other, it will make more sense if KNN is also approved for the breeding programs Purebred Knabstrupper Sports Horse, Knabstrupper Sports Horse, Purebred Knabstrupper Pony and Knabstrupper Pony.

History of the Knabstrupper Breeding Program

The Association was founded in 1947 and the breeding program Knabstrupper Sports Horse is the original standard. All other Knabstrupper Breeding Programs originate from here. In 1972 the size division into Knabstrupper Horse and Knabstrupper Pony was adopted. In 1992, an actual standard for the Knabstrupper pony was adopted. In 2005 the standard for the Knabstrupper of Classic Type was approved.

There was only one Knabstrupper Breeding Program containing the 4 different standards and the rules for pure breeding until 2017, where EU imposed on KNN to divide the original Breeding Program into different Breeding Programs for each standard. The result is 8 different breeding programs:

- Purebred Knabstrupper Sports Horse
- Knabstrupper Sports Horse
- Purebred Knabstrupper of Classic Type
- Knabstrupper of Classic Type
- Purebred Knabstrupper Pony
- Knabstrupper Pony
- Purebred Knabstrupper Miniature Pony
- Knabstrupper Miniature Pony

For the two latter there has never been any interest in UK, and KNN's Board has decided not pursue an approval for these any further.

Mobility between the Breeding Programs

As for the breeding programs for 'Purebred Knabstrupper Sports Horse, Knabstrupper Sports Horse, Purebred Knabstrupper of Classic Type, Knabstrupper of Classic Type, Purebred Knabstrupper Pony and Knabstrupper Pony' horses can to a large extent pass quite unhindered from one breeding program to another - of course within specified rules. The exchange between the breeding programs is, besides being historically founded in the fact they all originate from one and the same Breeding program, important to further breeding of desired traits, introducing new blood lines and avoiding interbreeding. In other words, it does not make sense for one of KNN's breeding programs to stand alone. As the Knabstrupper is an endangered breed, a totally closed division in breeding programs will split the Knabstrupper into several, small, separate breeds with devastating consequences.

Future

KNN is determined to preserve the Knabstrupper breed for the future, and to keep supporting Knabstrupper breeders all over the world where the need is.

KNN will continue working to find a solution for the Knabstrupper Sports Horse and the Knabstrupper Pony (purebred as well as not purebred) in Great Britain.

In this process we are hoping for the understanding, support, help and patience from the British Knabstrupper breeders.