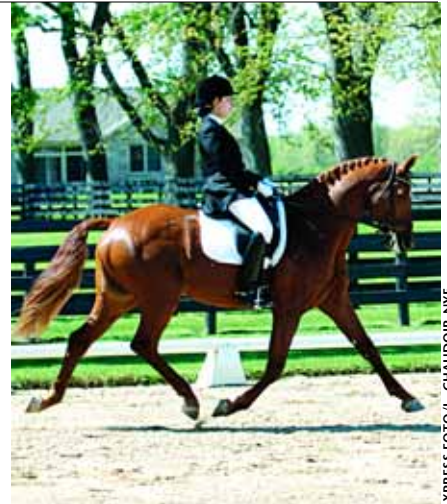


Phoenix

1997 chestnut 16.1-hand Dutch Warmblood gelding
SIRE: Flemmingh; **DAM:** Karola
BREEDER: B. Dijkstra
OWNER/RIDER: Kathryn Fleming-Kuhn, New Berlin, IL



XPRESS FOTO/L. CHAUDOIR-NYE

ADEQUAN/USDF HORSE OF THE YEAR

KATHRYN FLEMING AND HER then-fiancé (now husband), fellow USDF-certified instructor Martin Kuhn, were having a late dinner, planning to fly home from the 2005 USDF convention the following day, when her trainer, USDF certification examiner Gerhard Politz, joined them. Fleming (now Fleming-Kuhn) mentioned that a mutual friend's horse, Phoenix, was for sale.

"Gerhard knew I was looking for a horse, and he said, 'You have to go try him; he's fantastic.'" Fleming protested that she had an early flight the next morning. Unmoved, "Gerhard said, 'Well, you have to change the flight.' So Fleming and Kuhn called the owner, "changed our tickets in the middle of the night, and drove to see Phoenix in the morning."

Fleming found Phoenix "a phenomenal mover: light, forward-thinking, with really good gaits—the best-quality horse I'd ever ridden." The sale was made.

Fleming had planned to train in Germany last winter. She left on January 1, intending to bring her new horse over two weeks later, but decided to come back and train with Politz in California instead. Their work included making Phoenix "a little

quicker behind, and also stronger. And as he was able to come with a little more collection, all of the work got better."

At the end of February, horse and rider returned to Illinois and StarWest, the facility founded by Kuhn's mother, Alice Martin, where Fleming-Kuhn and her husband "both grew up and decided we wanted to be professionals."

Fleming-Kuhn brought her new horse out at Second Level last May, "and that was our lowest score of the year: a 66 percent. I think I was being overly cautious; Martin told me, 'You've got to go for it more.' Next day I did, and we got a 73.7. After that, we remained pretty consistently in that range for the rest of the season." Even so, she "didn't realize we were even in the running for USDF Horse of the Year until really late in the year. That was a good thing, because it let me ride Phoenix much more for myself than if I'd been thinking, 'We could win Horse of the Year, so I really have to make this perfect.'"

Reflecting on Phoenix's role in her life as a professional, Fleming-Kuhn says, "Right now I ride seven to ten horses a day, at various levels of quality and training. And whether I ride him at the start or the end

or the middle, he brightens that part of the day. Things that other horses have to work on, like throughness and impulsion, are much more natural for a horse like Phoenix. I've realized how, with a really top-quality horse, there are a lot of things you don't have to struggle with. My goal is to be able to keep horses like that in my life."

But that goal is for the future. As 2006 ended, Fleming-Kuhn decided to put Phoenix on the market. "It's always a tough decision to sell," and especially to sell a horse with whom she achieved "even more than I had hoped. But without serious financial backing, it's a decision professionals are sometimes forced to make.

"I don't know what the future will bring for Phoenix, but he's a fantastic horse. I think he'll have a great career. And he and I were able to have one fantastic show season."

— D.J. CAREY

SECOND LEVEL RESULTS

WINNER'S MEDIAN SCORE: 72.766%; NUMBER QUALIFIED: 252

1. PHOENIX (Dutch Warmblood) Kathryn Fleming-Kuhn, owner; Flemmingh, sire; Karola, dam; B. Dijkstra, breeder 72.766%
2. LEOPOLD Q (Hanoverian) Dianne Anderson, owner; Loerke, sire; Felicitous, dam; Suzanne Quarles, breeder 70.795%
3. NAVARRO (Dutch Warmblood) Allison Faso, owner; Jetset-D, sire; Irista, dam; C.A. Roersen, breeder 70.392%
4. ATTICUS (Dutch Warmblood) Jacquelyn Stapel, owner; Metall, sire; Meivrouwe, dam; H. Rootveld, breeder 70.000%
5. BEAR (Zweibrucker) Barbara Werhane, owner; Pats Spynx, sire; Step to the Right, dam 69.804%
6. DONATUS (Oldenburg) Melanie Pai, owner; Diamond Hit, sire; Grazienna, dam; Gerd Berges, breeder 69.412%
7. CHARISMA (Oldenburg) Elise Mann, owner; Celano, sire; Werdi, dam; Gestut Lewitz, breeder 69.342%
8. TIMBER (Friesian) Constance Sisler, owner; Anton 343, sire; Kira, dam; J. Bakker, breeder 69.085%
9. FABULANT (Hanoverian) Berit Long, owner; Fabiano, sire; Graefin, dam; J. Lemcke, breeder 68.685%
10. BRIGHELLA (Hanoverian) Courtney Fanara, owner; Brentano II, sire; Wellcome, dam; Juergen Siltmann, breeder 68.684%
11. LOPACA (Holsteiner) Emily Tears, owner; Lorentin I, sire; Wurania, dam; Maria Petzold, breeder 68.511%
12. ROSABELLA (Hanoverian) Rebecca Hopfner, owner; Rohdiamant, sire; Westminster, dam; Kerstin Ohlemeyer, breeder 68.421%
13. TJELLA S (Friesian) Endel Ots, owner; Ulke 338, sire; Valerj S, dam; Max Ots, breeder 68.235%
14. WEST ISLAND (Hanoverian) Field Pointe Farm, owner; Wenzel I, sire; Arabell, dam 68.073%
15. SIMON (Friesian) Juliet Chaves & Erik Chaves, owners; Lute, sire; Oukjes Pytsje, dam; H. Bos & W.S. Bos, breeders 67.892%
- 16 (T). MICIAH (Trakehner) Whit Watkins, owner; Leonidas, sire; Meriah, dam; Whit Watkins, breeder 67.841%
- 16 (T). UTMOST (Dutch Warmblood) Fumiko Yamazaki, owner; Junior, sire; Gisela, dam; Deborah Harrison, breeder 67.841%
18. AMIDALA (Hanoverian) Gabriele Heertje, owner; A Jungle Prince, sire; Waleska M, dam; Hans-Heinrich Mueller, breeder 67.660%
19. TSUNAMI (Dutch Warmblood) Wendy Luscombe, owner; Idocus, sire; Kitwell Countess, dam; Wendy Luscombe, breeder 67.451%
19. SACRAMENTO (Dutch Warmblood) Katie Foster, owner; Amsterdam, sire; Lente Vrouwe, dam; G. Hofstra, breeder 67.451%