

MAY 2021

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WORLD BREEDING NEWS

for Sport Horses



BN #293

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GFE Candy de Nantuel: A rising star for Selle Français

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PHOTOGRAPHY: COURTESY GFE

Two years ago I wrote a report about the showjumping FEI-WBFSH World Breeding Championship for Young Horses. During this event Candy de Nantuel (Luidam - Thara Nantuel x Diamant de Semilly, bred by Claire Gouin) was the talk of a great many people. I wrote: "Also this SF-bred stallion had some very good performances during this championship.

His mother, Thara Nantuel, is jumping at 1m45 under the saddle of Arthur Deuquet and her full sister, Oceane de Nantuel, jumped 1m60 under the saddle of Michel Hecart and Alexandra Paillot. Eventually Candy's motherline traces back to a Thoroughbred mareline, TB-5. He is now nine and has moved to the stables of Pénélope Leprévost, but what is the story behind this rising-star stallion?

Thoroughbred mare family 5

The motherline of Candy de Nantuel descends from three generations of Selle Français registered Warmbloods. His fourth generation, Alikamé x (Alize x - Kambas xx x Basil xx, breeder: S.C.E.A. Du Bois du Cher) is Anglo Arab, while the fifth generation is Thoroughbred. According to the IFCE (French institute for horses and riding), Kambas xx (Basil xx - Kamakias xx x King Legend xx, bred by Mrs. I.M.A. Todd) was born in Ireland.

Alikamé is the full sister of the maternal grandmother of the excellent Tatchou AA (Faristan - Taizka de Jurigny X x Ela Aid X, bred by Peter Fehlmann), who has an outstanding evaluated index of ICC 183. Winner of the world championship for seven year olds at the eventing WBCYH in Le Lion d'Angers, Tatchou finished second in the CCI 5*-L in Pau in 2008 under the saddle of Nicolas Touzaint.

The foundation of Thoroughbred mareline 5 is also interesting. I quote from page 22 of the book *Genetic Heritage*, written by Ken McLean: "Massy's Black Barb mare, by Massy's Black Barb from an Arabian mare imported from Egypt, is believed to be almost pure Arabian and is sometimes referred to as the Massey Mare. She produced Old Ebony (by Bastro) which produced Ebony (by Flying Childers)." On the website *Thoroughbred Heritage* the line can be traced from the foundation mare up to the mare Trieste (Plum Pudding) born in 1868. Old Ebony was born in 1714, and is the foundation of Candy de Nantuel's mareline.

This line has a great many branches, but what we know is that the legendary Thoroughbred Djebel xx, bred by Marcel Boussac, also came from this family, just like Sadler's Wells xx, Seabiscuit xx, and Son-in-Law xx.

The breeder: Claire Gouin

Marie-Laure Deuquet, the daughter of Claire and Jacques Gouin, who lives on the family farm in Courquoy, bought Royaltie III (Kaolin de Lyre - Alikame X x Alize X) and recalls: "We bought Royaltie III as a three-year-old in 1986 to compete, but she had an accident and was never able to compete. She had her first foal at the age of four or five, not when she was nine, an 'A' who died at birth. Her second foal was Boston de Nantuel by Fury de la Cense, who was sold at six months to the rider Jacques Bourven. This horse had a good index in showjumping. Royaltie's third foal, Cachou de Nantuel, is also by Fury de la Cense. She then produced:

- Dandy de Nantuel (O'Malley) sold to Switzerland at the age of seven, and won the Swiss championship before he died;
- Esquisse de Nantuel (I Love You), well indicated, then produced several foals including Shiva de Nantuel (Baloubet du Rouet) who gave Boreal de Nantuel – whose name was changed to Oak Grove's Darshan – who jumped five-star Grand Prix and became an approved stallion;
- Funny de Nantuel (Lubumbashi), sold at the Poitiers sale and exported to Italy;
- Girandole de Nantuel (I Love You), who produced Rahmannshof's Cumana/ex Nature Menardiere, by Cumano, who jumped at 1m55 under the saddle of Sören von Rönne. She also gave Riga Menardiere (Quaprice du Bois Margot) who jumped at 1m55 under the saddle of Isabelle Robin;
- Hugo de Nantuel (Olisco), [five-year-old showjumping finalist in Fontainebleau (ISO 137)];
- Jiky de Nantuel (Papillon Rouge), [six-year-old showjumping finalist in Fontainebleau], a good winner of several six-bar classes, exported to the USA, then returned to France where he jumped at 1m50 level with various riders, and is an approved stallion for SF;
- Karma de Nantuel (Quidam de Revel), the dam of Thara Nantuel, a good showjumper. She competed in the European Junior Championship and jumped at 1m50 under the saddle of Emanuele Fiorelli. Karma was a very good showjumping winner, and we sold her to Italy. She produced Thara de Nantuel, Ophée de Nantuel – bought by the Haras

Nationaux at the age of three, and Océane de Nantuel, all by Diamant de Semilly, himself a good international winner.

Thara produced:

- Candy de Nantuel (Luidam), sold at the Fences sales at the age of three, bought by GFE;
- Cobalt de Nantuel (Tobago Chevrier), a good show jumping winner recently sold to Danielle Lambert, a Canadian rider based with Philippe Rozier;
- Gandy de Nantuel (Luidam) sold at Fences and exported to Belgium, then Switzerland to Martin Fuchs;
- Folie de Nantuel (Luidam) sold to Elevage de Kreisker and Marc Dilasser;
- Gaya de Nantuel (Luidam) is starting as a five-year-old with us. Gaya has given a filly by Chilli Willi.

“The mareline is Anglo-Arabic which comes from an old Limousin strain with a lot of blood. My father has always favored blood in his crosses and has always had great success with Quidam de Revel and his sons, which is why he has used him a lot. He wanted to bring strength back to his broodmares which were very close to the blood by choosing Diamant de Semilly. The Diamant de Semilly/Quidam de Revel cross has worked well at the Nantuel stud but also at other studs.

“Karma de Nantuel also proved to be an excellent broodmare. The dam of only three horses, all of them are by the legendary stallion Diamant de Semilly. These horses were born with the help of embryo transfer. Her daughter, Océane de Nantuel had an excellent career in sport. She was purchased as a two-year-old filly by the Hécart family who own the breeding and sport stable Haras de la Roque. She started her career under the saddle of Michel Hecart, and has since jumped 1m60 under the saddle of Conor Swail and Alexandre Paillot. She was an exceptional mare to jump at high level with different riders.

“As a broodmare she produced some very interesting offspring for Haras de la Roque. These include Uthope de la Roque who jumped at 1m50, Viceversa de la Roque who jumped at 1m60 under the saddle of Roberto Previtali, and Atlantic de la Roque who jumped at 1m45. Both Océane and

Thara de Nantuel were good mares in sport. They really got these characteristics from the motherline.

“Thara de Nantuel was a really good mare, who was excellent in jumping. She was very reactive and has a lot of energy. She did not have great scope, but a lot of energy. Candy de Nantuel is not as hot as his mother. His mother was always very hot when she entered the ring to start jumping. She competed at 1m40 with my husband Christophe, who passed away, and at 1m50 with my son Arthur. My father used Luidam (Guidam - Eljenhoeve x Akteur) because he is a son of Guidam who is again a son of Quidam de Revel. We'd already had very good results with Quidam de Revel blood.

“Candy de Nantuel is cooler and is also more flexible with his body. He has a very good character and a good canter that is also very supple. He is a very modern stallion. So far we are very happy with Candy de Nantuel's offspring, which look very promising.

“I think it is a good thing for Candy de Nantuel to continue his career under the saddle of Pénélope Leprévost. He will follow the footsteps from many of his family members who have jumped at high level, they are all good competitors.”

Candy de Nantuel: The sport horse and the sire

As a three-year-old Candy de Nantuel was discovered by GFE during the selection for the Fences auction, which started the next chapter in his life. According to Brice Elvezi: “We had a crush on Candy de Nantuel when we saw him for the first time. So we decided to try to buy him at the Fences auction. He was the first stallion we purchased who cost more than €100,000, but we had to do it because we really wanted to get him. However, with GFE we are eight people on the board, and usually we need to have the approval of everyone in order to buy a horse. Candy de Nantuel was one of the only stallions who made everybody on the board enthusiastic, saying ‘we want that horse’. We immediately made the decision to buy him, and in the end it was a bidding duel between a French, an Irish owner, and us, and finally we won.

CANDY DE NANTUEL	LUIDAM KWPN (1993)	GUIDAM SF (1988)	QUIDAM DE REVEL (SF/1982)	JALISCO B (SF/1975) DIRKA (SF/1969)	ALMÉ (SF) - TANAGRA (SF) NANKIN (SF) - ONDINE DE BAUGY (SF)
			FOUGERE (SF/1971)	VENUTARD (SF/1965) BAGATELLE (SF/1967)	RANTZAU XX - ROSEE (SF) SAID PACHA (SF) - FICKMA (SF)
		ELJENHOVE KWPN (1986)	AKTEUR (NWP/1964)	AMOR (HOLST/1959) JONKVROUW (NWP/1959)	HERRSCHER (SWB) - BARBA (HOLST) SINAEDA (NWP) - RITTA (NWP)
			POLINE (KWPN/1974)	LUCKY BOY XX (1966) KOLINE (KWPN/1969)	COMPROMISE XX - SEJANE XX LE FAQUIN XX - WOLINE
	THARA NANTUEL SF (2007)	DIAMANT DE SEMILLY SF (1991)	LE TOT DE SEMILLY (SF/1977)	GRAND VENEUR (SF/1972) VENUE DU THOT (SF/1965)	AMOUR DU BOIS (SF) - TANAGRA G (SF) JURISTE (SF) - RELIQUE (SF)
			VENISE DES CRESLES (SF/1987)	ELF III (SF/1970) MISS DES CRESLES (SF/1978)	IBRAHIM (SF) - OSYRIS (SF) AMARPOUR XX - URLRETTE (SF)
		KARMA DE NANTUEL SF (1998)	QUIDAM DE REVEL (SF/1982)	JALISCO B (SF/1975) DIRKA (SF/1969)	ALMÉ (SF) - TANAGRA (SF) NANKIN (SF) - ONDINE DE BAUGY (SF)
			ROYALTIE III (SF/1983)	KAOLIN DE LYRE (SF/1976) ALIKAME X (AA/1971)	NIGHT AND DAY XX - URGANDE DE LYRE (SF) ALIZE X (AA) - KAMBAS XX



Candy de Nantuel jumping in Lanaken under the saddle of Thomas Rousseau (FRA)

“Candy de Nantuel was very interesting for us, in the first place because of his pedigree; we really liked Luidam – Guidam. It was in a way new blood, but also not so new. He is a good grandson of Quidam de Revel but it is a change in blood from what we have in France. On the damside we also had different blood, coming from another part of France and coming from a Thoroughbred line. We knew that the mix between Quidam de Revel and that line was working very well because the cross between Quidam de Revel and those kind of mares was well known. The family has proven itself in producing top jumpers.

“Secondly Candy de Nantuel convinced us completely. It is really rare to see a horse so elastic; really supple in his body, and so elastic in his hindquarters. Candy de Nantuel is a really modern type of stallion, uses his hindleg very well in movement, and has a lot of elasticity in his topline. When we are looking for a stallion we look for no major conformation faults but one who has strong qualities. An average horse or a good sport horse doesn’t mean he will be a good horse for breeding. A top horse for breeding needs strong characteristics and verification that his pedigree has these strong characteristics, which is exactly what Candy de Nantuel has.

“During his stallion approvals he received the best notes for being presented under saddle, reaching more than 17 points. When he did his first competition in Saint Lô he was very hot and jumped unbelievably well. He was so proud of himself.

“His oldest offspring are four now. He started to breed when he was four years old and he is now nine. He covered over 200 mares the first year and always around 200 since then. For the last two years Mylord Carthago has covered the most mares in France, and Candy de Nantuel was last year the runner-up.

“It is really a crazy story, and we think we have a really special stallion with Candy de Nantuel. It normally takes a long time to see how the offspring are, and to check them when they are a bit older. When his offspring were two years old they already showed really good quality, at three they

showed that again, and now they are starting in competition. We need to wait because four-year-olds will only do a few shows, but for now we can observe that he is passing on all his jumping qualities. All of them are good jumpers, looking like they have a good canter with good balance and a really good hindleg. Plus his also passes his elasticity to his offspring. They have blood, but not too much, so he suits different types of mare. He is not producing heavy but also not small. So far his four-year-old offspring look easy to ride.

“Candy de Nantuel has had 10 offspring at different auctions, like Fences and NASH, but selling for crazy prices, but a good average of €32,000. We have never seen that because the offspring of Diamant de Semilly, Kannan, Mylord Carthago, and other good stallions from Belgium or Germany have not reached this same success.

“There were four offspring of Candy de Nantuel doing the stallion performance test for the Selle Français Studbook, and three of them belonged to the top 10 of three-year-old stallions. Then this year the champion was again by Candy de Nantuel. So yes, he is a really special stallion that we have here in France.

“The plan with Pénélope Leprévost is to see what level they can reach together. He is really popular so everybody has an opinion about what he can do. He has already done the four-, the five-, the six-year-old championships, and was a finalist in Lanaken at the age of seven, when people – Norbert Boley, for example, from the Holsteiner Verband – started to come to me and say that we have a very good horse. His bloodlines and his way of jumping are very appreciated outside France, with Henk Nijhof using Candy de Nantuel two years ago, Hubert Hamerlinck used him for some of his mares, Tom de Craene (Van de Bisschop) has used him, and VDL Stud has started with Candy de Nantuel this year. So the best breeders are starting to use him.

“His first generation came from good average-quality mares, but the mares going to a four-year-old stallion are different to the ones who are going to a top stallion who is 20 with a proven record. I am proud to now see his first foal



Hot Savoie (2017: Candy de Nantuel - Rafale Savoie x C-Indoctro II)

crop under saddle, and we are starting to see he is also getting the best mares, for example Mic Mac du Tillard. For BWP he's already produced this year the approved stallion Casper du Cache Pot Z. Egbert Schep has a son who was invited to the stallion performance test of the KWPN stud-book, but was injured so couldn't go.

"When he was four he was available with fresh semen, but after that we've always offered him frozen and that works very well. We really would like to see what he can achieve in sport, but it's hard for stallions to do breeding and sport. With Pénélope they did a few classes at a show in Spain earlier this year, but a rhino [EHV-1] broke out. Eventually he came home and now they are starting again and were immediately double clear in their first 1m45 Grand Prix. We will see how things go as the breeding life and a sporting career are very different from each other. But we know already from his breeding life that he is something special."

Arnaud Evain talks about Candy de Nantuel

"He has a tremendous looseness in himself. His first crop is now four years old and it looks very much like he passes on his elasticity and looseness. He needs mares that are not too short in the topline. Candy de Nantuel has special qualities that are useful for sport which he passes to his progeny – the special qualities that are already helping him in sport. It is a sort of combination between elasticity and electricity in the air. He is very very supple in all his movements and has this ability to use his back in an outstanding way over the jump. It seems that he is passing this energy and elasticity on to his progeny, including his balance. His offspring have been well marked in free-jumping competitions and also in sales because of that. This makes him very special in our expectations, because he is passing his qualities on. Candy de Nantuel appears to be cool in his mind."



Itoki de Riverland (2018: Candy de Nantuel - Dirka de Riverland x Action Breaker)

"I think that the strength of his bloodline is the classical foundation of the Anglo Normand horse. He has Diamant de Semilly and two times Quidam de Revel combined with an Anglo Arab damline. His line has already produced a lot of good jumpers. There are a few combinations where you find an old Anglo Arab damline combined with Warmblood. For example the family of Mylord Carthago with Morgat and Nifrane and all those lines in combination you see the Thoroughbred, and with Candy de Nantuel you have the Anglo Arab. You see also Anglo Arab in the motherline of Jus de Pomme. I think the combination of Anglo Normand and Anglo Arab is very good working combination."

"If we look at the sireline of Luidam I can see that I remember Guidam very well because I sold him as a yearling to Jan Greve. So it's really come full circle for me getting Candy de Nantuel back in our breeding. Guidam has elasticity and passed this elasticity to his offspring, plus Luidam also has this elasticity in the gaits. Luidam hasn't been used that much in France as he was KWPN-bred and stood in Ireland, so I don't have much background information for Luidam offspring in combination with French mares, although he's now becoming better known in France. Guidam served his whole career outside France, even though he was Selle Français, so he wasn't well known in France. I truly believe that the electric part of Candy de Nantuel comes from his Anglo Arab heritage."

"There are two things I would like to say to breeders. First we hope he is starting a new chapter under the saddle of Pénélope Leprévost and I think she agrees with me that he can do great things in the future. Furthermore, Candy de Nantuel comes out of the generation of young stallions of GFE where we only sell breedings. The breeder needs to pay when the mare is in foal. No one else can claim that they own one single straw of Candy de Nantuel. So be careful if someone is offering you a straw of Candy de Nantuel, it is a stolen straw." ■



Heltic de Bethune (Candy de Nantuel - Narmia x Cassini I)