

## HISTORY OF THE SELLE FRANCAIS

The Selle Français horse is an all-round athlete and this versatility has allowed riders of different nationalities to defend their country's colours at the highest level of competition across the world. In the show jumping arena especially, these horses have stamped their mark. In addition Selle Français horses are used by the French Garde Républicaine in Paris and the Sri Lankan Mounted Police. Thanks to a good temperament they are safe in the city as well as during parades and presidential escorts.



Correctly known as "Le Cheval de Selle Français" which translates as the French Saddle Horse, (not be confused with the gaited types of Saddle Horse from North America), the term Selle Français (CSF) was adopted to describe the breed in 1958, and the first stud book was published in 1965. As long ago as 1665, France established its first National Stud (Haras Nationaux) which is formed by a network of 23 state-run stud farms dedicated to improving the quality of performance horse breeding.

The most influential breed was the Anglo-Norman, developed in Normandy in the 19th century by crossing Norfolk Trotter, Thoroughbred, and Arabian stallions to refine the local mares (which themselves traced back to the medieval Norman war-horse). About 90 per cent of today's Selle Français trace back to this breed.

Thoroughbred stallions that influenced the breed are Orange Peel (pictured below left), Ibrahim, Furioso (pictured below right), Rantzau and Ulitimate and the names of these sires can be found in virtually every successful modern Selle Français horse. This blood is also available in New Zealand.



## SELLE FRANCAIS CONT...

Colour is predominantly chestnut, though there are no restrictions. Conformation is generally a refined head; long elegant neck; sloping shoulders; strong body with well-sprung ribs; broad powerful hindquarters.

There is no height restriction, though most horses tend to be over 16hh.

The success of the CSF owes much to the system of grading. For both mares and stallions, competition success and the success of offspring and other relatives all influence the grading of a horse, as well as the actual inspection criteria:

1. Inspection of jumping ability (30% of marks).
2. Inspection of conformation (40% of marks). The main aim is to determine whether a stallion has conformation that is likely to allow him to remain sound through a lifetime of competition.
3. Inspection of movement (30% of marks).

The pass mark is 75%.

Well known horses include:

- **Almé Z:** foaled in 1966, this show jumper has contributed a great amount to the breed. He sired Galoubet A, Jalisco B, I Love You, Herban, Jolly Good, and others (pictured below).



- **Galoubet A:** was foaled in 1972, and was champion French 5-year-old in 1977, and champion of France in 1979. He finished either first or second in 19 international Grand Prix show jumping events, and was on the French World Championship winning team in 1982 at Dublin. In 2002, he was the top money earning American-based sire of show jumpers. He sired two incredible, and very

## SELLE FRANCAIS CONT...

well-known, horses, Baloubet du Rouet and Quick Star. He also sired Irish bred Touchdown, who in turn sired 2002 World Equestrian Games in Show Jumping Individual Gold medallist Liscalegot.

- **Baloubet du Rouet:** was foaled in 1989, and won the World Cup of Show Jumping an unprecedented three years in a row (1998-2000). He was a member of the bronze-winning team at the 2000 Sydney Olympic Games (pictured below).



- **I Love You:** foaled in 1974, by Almé Z, he won the World Cup of Show Jumping at Vienna in 1983. That same year, he was named Horse of the Year in the United States, and has become an important sire of show jumpers.
- **Jappeloup:** Olympic Individual Gold medal winner Seoul 1988. Team Gold medal winner 1990 World Equestrian Games at Stockholm. 1986 World Championships 4th Individually.
- **Quito de Baussy:** foaled in 1982. Won six international medals in show jumping, including individual and team gold at the 1990 World Equestrian Games at Stockholm.
- **Quidam de Revel:** foaled in 1982, was a member of the bronze medal winning French team at the 1992 Barcelona Olympics where he finished fourth individually. Recognized world-wide as a sire of show jumpers.
- **Laudanum:** foaled in 1967, was an approved French Thoroughbred stallion. In 2001, was named leading sire of show jumpers by USA Equestrian. Oh Star, ridden by Todd Minikus, is the son of this stallion.

*[Source: Various Internet sites - Haras Nationaux, Equestrian Fed of France, SF of Great Britain and Ireland, Wikipedia]*