

El caballo Kalium, integrante del espectáculo de La Peña de Béjar.

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Kalium, from La Peña de Béjar.

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English - Spanish

A BOOK THAT DID NOT EXIST AND HAD TO BE WRITTEN

Rodrigo Nieto



It is an honor and a source of pride for me to present this fifth book of the collection on the Spanish Horse, released annually by Messidor Ediciones to the reader. It is an honor for two main reasons. On the one hand, the previous books were presented by important personalities of the horse world, such as Álvaro Domecq or Miguel Ángel Cárdenas, R.I.P. On the other hand, because this book did not exist and someone had to write it; just as the previous books offered by this collection on the Spanish Purebred Horse.

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I have to say that a lot has been written on our horse, especially lately, but what I find in nearly all of these books is that they are published with low-quality and a low-level of knowledge, or are presented as mere catalogs of photographs that scarcely grab the readers' attention unless they seek images of this or that horse. I would dare to say that there are few quality books, but among those few, I would highlight the following:

—Old books that are no longer in bookstores and whose merit is that they are from other eras. For example, the nineteenth-century editions of «Libros de hierros ganaderos».

—The irreplaceable historical work on the Spanish Horse by my great friend Juan Carlos Altamirano, R.I.P.

—Finally, the insuperable collection on the Spanish Horse led by my friend Eliseo Ferrer, who has offered us five fundamental books on the breed (Stallions, Breed, Culture, Champions and Bloodlines).

As I was saying about this last book (Spanish Horse Lineages), nothing like it has existed and it needed to be written. Someone had to embark on a long investigation to present us with the results in five hundred pages. The book uses two basic lineages for reference, which are that of the Carthusians and the Yeguada Militar. He meticulously presents these lines with the lines of Andalucía and Extremadura dating back to the nineteenth century and continuing into the sixties of the twentieth century (twenty-one in total), all of which are descendants of one or both of these basic lines. After such a dense contribution, the book ends with some interesting thoughts about the role of the Royal Spanish House in the creation of our horse and its maintenance across several centuries. It is important to say that this is a fundamental book for anyone who wants to know the Purebred Spanish Horse, as well as highly important to breeders who wish to see the genealogical trees of their horses illustrated with historical data.

This is a guide that simultaneously presents a story of the Spanish Horse presented through the families that were dedicated to their breeding in the last two centuries. This history affects all current breeders because we all feel linked to one line or the other, to one strain or another. My experience for example, as many already know, is linked with my origins in the Yeguada Militar; a line within which I have

worked on over several decades looking for an ideal horse based on the black coat. First, I worked on what I would call "purity of lineage," in what we know to be "closed," which has given me great satisfaction. For me, the line of Maluso, Agente and Lebrijano was an axis of continuous reference. It was to such an extent that over two decades my stud farm did not miss a single year at the auction held by the Yeguada Militar each year at the beginning of the Feria de Jerez. My friend Timoteo Prieto, owner of the Cortijo de Vicos stud farm, will bear testament that I am not being dishonest. There stallions like Boquete, Lunes, Danilo,



Letargo, etc. can be found, or mares like Melanina, Fenicia V and Efesia N (daughter of Oleaje), all of them children of excellent mares and extraordinary stallions from the Yeguada Militar.

For more than two decades I was faithful to the purity of this "basic line," according to our book of reference. However, a

surprising fact occurred in my life as I was given the opportunity to purchase practically the entire stock of Marquis de Velilla, after the Spanish justice system intervened in the so-called "Operation Malaya." As many know and remember, the Marqués de Velilla stud farm exclusively bred black-coated Spanish horses, just as mine did. That is, we were competitors in the international market offering a very similar product.

Well, the purchase of this stock gave me access to one of the most important stallions of the breed in addition to having a black coat. It turned out that, once tested on my stud farm; Favorito LXVIII was much more superior as a stallion than what I had imagined. He is so extraordinary and unusual that, apart from the quality he conveys with the mares from the Yeguada Militar, concerning his production of black coats, he allows us to carry an almost infallible statistic, whether he is bred with a black or chestnut mare.

Hence why above I said that I "was" faithful to the purity of the Yeguada Militar since the quality of this black-coated stallion, one of the best of the breed, led me to a change of opinion and focus, without a doubt, on his quality as a reproducer and unsurpassed genetics (Azulón, Duende, Zingaro and Exclusivo are some of his children). It is surprising, in this sense, that in Favorito's genealogical tree, there are no specimens of the Carthusian lineage in the first four generations, except for two ancestors of the «hierro del carazón». However, it is true that Romero Benítez's line of Regidor VIII and Garboso XX, as father and grandfather respectively of Tejedor V, Granda, are in turn father of our stallion. The rest of the components of the four generations are stallions and mares that are also from Granda and Romero Benítez, as well as from the Yeguada Militar.

Based on experience, my conclusion is that it is very important to know the lineages of our horse, but this knowledge should serve to reinforce and improve the quality of our production, and not to become representative of one particular house or another. We all know what happened to many stud farms before the crisis, whose house brand, line or lineage was more important than the quality of their products. It is necessary to know what each of the lines presented in this book offers us, but from the point of view of a breeder. I insist that the final objective of the PRE horse is to surpass and improve upon all of their ancestors. To remain stuck to one house or one line will never allow us to reach our goal. □

C **CONTENIDO / CONTENTS** / English - Spanish

.....

PATROCINIO / SPONSOR	10
PRESENTACIÓN / RODRIGO NIETO / PRESENTATION	14
NOTA DEL EDITOR / ELISEO FERRER / EDITOR'S NOTE	19
EN PRINERA PERSONA / CARLOS CONESA / IN FIRST PERSON	21

.....

ESTIRPES BÁSICAS DEL CABALLO ESPAÑOL **BASIC LINEAGES OF THE PUREBRED SPANISH HORSE**

ESTIRPE CARTUJANA / CARTHUSIAN LINEAGE	61
<i>La Versión Tradicional / Traditional Version</i>	63
<i>La Revisión Histórica / Historical Revision</i>	79
<i>Osborne y Terry: La Expansión / Osborne and Terry: The Expansion</i>	89
YEGUADA MILITAR / MILITARY STUD FARM	97
<i>LA Refundación de la Raza / Refoundation of the Breed</i>	99
<i>La Rama de Agente (Maluso) / The Agente Branch (Maluso)</i>	109
<i>La Rama de César (Maluso) / The César Branch (Maluso)</i>	119
<i>Evento. Semental de Elite / Evento. Elite Stallion.</i>	128
<i>Continuadores: Yeguada R. Nieto / Followers: R. Nieto Stud Farm</i>	134

.....

LÍNEAS ANDALUZAS DEL CABALLO ESPAÑOL **ANDALUSIAN BLOODLINES OF THE SPANISH HORSE**

BAONES	145
BOHÓRQUEZ RUIZ	155
CAMACHO BENÍTEZ	167
CANDAU	189
CÁRDENAS	203
ESCALERA	229
GUARDIOLA	255
LOVERA	275
MARÍN GARCÍA	287
MARTÍNEZ BOLOIX	301
MIURA	317
MORENO DE LA COVA	335
PALLARÉS	347
ROMERO BENÍTEZ	359

.....

C ONTENIDO / CONTENTS

LÍNEAS EXTREMEÑAS DEL CABALLO ESPAÑOL EXTREMADURA BLOODLINES OF THE SPANISH HORSE

VIZCONDE DE LA MONTESINA	381
DEOGRACIAS BLASCO	393
FERNÁNDEZ DAZA	403
CONDE CAMPOS DE ORELLANA - GRANDA	415
MARQUÉS DE BORJA	427
NOBLEZA DEL GUADIANA	439
RAFAEL CONDE GALLARDO	457

OTRAS LÍNEAS DEL CABALLO ESPAÑOL OTHER LINES OF THE SPANISH HORSE

CAPAS DILUIDAS (MARTÍ - ANTARES) DILUTED COATS	469
--	-----

LOS CABALLOS DE LA MONARQUÍA HISPÁNICA HORSES OF THE SPANISH MONARCHY

ENTRE CÓRDOBA Y ARANJUEZ / BETWEEN CÓRDOBA AND ARANJUEZ	487
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SEMENTALES / STALLIONS

SEMENTALES DE ELEITE / ELITE STALLIONS

EVENTO (YEGUADA MILITAR)	128
IMPACIENTE II (CAMACHO BENÍTEZ)	182
ERMITAÑO III (ESCALERA)	246

OTROS SEMENTALES / OTHER STALLIONS

EDUCADO X (GUARDIOLA)	270
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