

# The dream BEGINS

**To buy in to some of the best German bloodlines – or even an Arc winner – the place to head to is Baden-Baden**

Words **Tina Rau** • Photos **Frank Sorge and Marc Rühl**

**G**erman breeding and racing is enjoying a purple patch and German bloodstock has become a much sought-after commodity in recent years, with the likes of international champions Shirocco, Stacelita and even Sea The Stars carrying German blood in their veins. Then of course there's the rags-to-riches story of Danedream,

culminating in a record-breaking Arc de Triomphe win last year – followed by a great start to the 2012 season with Feuerblitz triumphant in the Derby Italiano, while the stalwart Monsun provided not one but two winners at Royal Ascot.

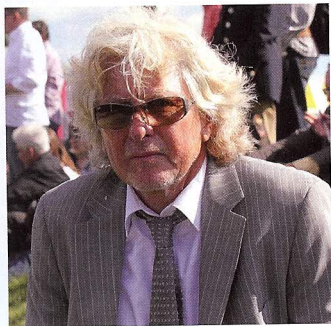
The horses mentioned above, as well as a host of other top-class performers, have passed

through the BBAG ring in Iffezheim just next to the picturesque town of Baden-Baden – and most of them could have been snapped up for what is considered 'value for money' anywhere else in the world.

Little surprise then, that more and more international agents, trainers and owners will make their way to the BBAG sales complex for >>



Gestüt Park Wiedingen sold recent Derby Italiano winner Feuerblitz for just €3,000 in the BBAG sales ring in 2010



**Helmut von Finck**



**Gregor and Julia Baum, breeders of Danedream**

>> Friday, August 31, when roughly 260 yearlings will come under the hammer.

Top international sires like Dalakhani, Dansili, Dubawi, Montjeu, New Approach, Shamardal and Teofilo are represented, while the home team has the likes of Monsun and his sons such as Samum, Shirocco and Manduro, as well as Sholokhov and Big Shuffle's heir apparent Areion, young gun Lord Of England and first-season sensation Soldier Hollow.

In general, German breeding is still synonymous with a healthy element of stamina, huge potential for out-crossing and zero medication. If you're coming to Baden-Baden you're mostly looking at yearlings from old, carefully developed families and even though there is that good international mix of sires it is fair to expect some sort of a staying element in most of the dam lines. Since the German race programme for two-year-olds is relatively limited, there has never been a need to produce hugely precocious animals and the focus has always been on horses with quality who, admittedly, might take a little more time to come to hand.

The above, paired with generally much more of an owner/breeder's approach to selling and prepping yearlings than would be taken by most international consignors, may mean that the yearlings at BBAG seem a little 'weedy' at first sight when compared to some of the muscle balls and ready-made miniature racehorses presented elsewhere. However, the somewhat more natural approach seems to stand the yearlings in good stead and statistics regarding stakes winners to horses offered stand up extremely well when compared to other international sales.

And it's not just the international bench of buyers who have cottoned on to the opportunities at this sale – there are also some new high-profile vendors to be found on the list who will be presenting their charges at Baden-Baden this year.

Most notable of these is Gestüt Schlenderhan. Home to champion sire Monsun and a continuous source of high-class performers, the stud is generally known to race homebreds and rarely parts with a yearling. However, in the BBAG catalogue, lots 66 and 191, two well-bred daughters of their flagship stallion, will be for sale through the Ronald Rauscher consignment.

Another name which doesn't habitually appear on the vendors' column and is better known as a buyer of yearlings is Team Valor, which offers lot 74, a French-bred Montjeu brother to Group 1 Premio Lydia Tesio heroine Turfroze.

Jamie Railton is making a first venture into the German sales ground and offers an eight-strong team of yearlings, including lot 195, a son of Dubawi, as well as lot 205, a three-parts brother to the talented multiple Listed-placed Lyssio, by Montjeu.

Another new overseas consignor is Haras de Saint Arnoult, a relatively young French operation which tasted sales glory earlier this year when consigning the top lot at the Osarus breeze-up sale.

The home team is well represented, too, with Gregor and Julia Baum's Gestüt Brümmerhof – no less than the breeder (and vendor) of

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Danedream – taking a small but select group of yearlings to this sale, including lot 70, a Monsun colt from a very successful Aga Khan family and out of a half-sister to Group 1-winning Shamdala.

The team at Gestüt Etzean, which has long forged a reputation for its horsemanship and presents an impeccable draft year after year, offer a number of yearlings by the their own sire Lord Of England, as well as Sholokhov, whom they have recently sold to Glenview Stud in Ireland. The pick of their bunch might well be lot 170, a Sholokhov colt out of the Group 1-placed Monsun daughter Dominante.

Gestüt Fährhof, as always, is taking a quality consignment of yearlings to the sales ground, including lot 197, a Dansili full-sister to the Listed-placed La Dawa, out of a half-sister to

Lomitas and from one of the stud's founding families. She is the sale's only offering by the sire, while other members of the Fährhof team include a couple of yearlings by Mount Nelson, who is standing at Newsells Park Stud (the Jacobs family's English breeding operation), as well as two yearlings by Shamardal, a sire who has done incredibly well in Germany over the past year.

Gestüt Görldorf has mainly 'homegrown' yearlings this year, offering a number of the stud's late signature-sire Sternkonig, while Gestüt Karshof's star lot on paper is 189, a Dubawi full-sister to the Group 3-winning, Group 1-placed Kapitale and half-sister to Group 1 victor and sire Kamsin.

Helmut von Finck not only owns Gestüt Park Wiedingen, with its band of well-bred mares, but also young stallion Soldier Hollow, who sired this year's German Derby winner Pastorius in his first crop. The former and latter combined give you lot 59, Quintessenz, a daughter of Soldier Hollow from a top-class female family – making this filly one of the best bred in the sale.

Ronald Rauscher is back in full force, consigning for clients from all over Europe, with yearlings by New Approach, Authorized, Dalakhani, High Chaparral and Dubawi, and one of presumably very few Rock Hard Ten yearlings for sale at a European venue.

Michael Andree's Gestüt Römerhof will be represented by a nice mix of international and domestic sires and pedigrees, while Gestüt Röttgen will be offering a quartet of yearlings, amongst them three colts from their prolific D-family which keeps churning out the black-type performers year in, year out.

Stephen Eversfield's Gestüt am Schlossgarten presents a select draft of colts – amongst them yearlings by Marju and Rock Of Gibraltar, who, if they match their pages physically, could be interesting for Asia.

Stauffenberg Bloodstock have celebrated some major international successes both on the track and in the sales rings, and are taking a dozen yearlings to BBAG, among them four by Shirocco and one, lot 49, by Monsun out of the Listed Galileo mare Namibia.

Gestüt Westerberg, a relatively new but professionally-run operation, has an eye-catcher in lot 168, a colt by New Approach out of champion two-year-old Boccassini.

Last but not least, the ever successful Gestüt Wittekindshof offers an array of future performers from some very nicely bred mares crossed with some top sires: the stud has an astonishing percentage of black-type horses to runners and generally it's hard to pick just one – though in this instant it might have to be lot 174, by a champion (New Approach) out of a champion (Elle Danzig).

On that note, you might just buy a champion at Baden-Baden. Viel Glück!

**The BBAG Yearling Sale takes place on August 31 at Iffezheim. ■**