

'BUDDY'

GCH ++*B des Ruhigestelle Equus, aka 'Buddy', earned a lot of awards-FS91 EEE, '94 ADGA National Show Premier Sire, and 4 (or is it 5?) times USDA #1 sire. He sired several GCH, FS90 and Top Ten daughters. Goats that can do it all, REAL Saanens. Equus was a buck that was bred to do a job- and he did that job and a whole lot more.

Buddy's story is really the story of our Saanens. It begins with our first Saanen, his great-great granddam, a doe named Bonzi's Hazel *M. She was a decrepit old doe that Fern rescued. I was about 10 years old, and remember bringing home a filthy, lice infested, emaciated doe in the back seat of the family car. I spent the ride home trying to hold her without actually *touching* her, thinking Mom was nuts to buy her. As usual, Fern knew more than I did, and was using her uncanny ability to sense quality. She saw Hazel's will to live and indomitable spirit, and was repaid for her belief in the doe and her breeding. Hazel was inbred to Del Rogue's Pride, a choice that would stamp our Saanens with a characteristic style for generations. She produced three offspring for us, GCH++B des Ruhigestelle Jury Duty and GCH des Ruhigestelle Desiderata 2*M in 1972, and GCH des Ruhigestelle Puppis 2*M in 1973. Puppis went on to be the 1978 National Champion and Best Udder, scored FS91 VEEE, and was undefeated in 14 consecutive shows. Desiderata was a close rival, but always managed to be out of condition for Nationals or scoring. She was the 1976 Northwest Saanen Specialty GCH over Puppis. Unfortunately, these were the days before pasteurization and CAE control, and most of the direct descendents of the does were lost to CAE. Jury Duty was sold as a kid, then bought back in December 1977 when his sisters were doing so well. He was a medium sized buck, very correct and balanced. He quickly finished his championship, ending with a GCH win at the 1978 Northwest Saanen Specialty, where Puppis was also GCH senior doe. He was a very consistent sire, producing stylish, level does with long, flat lactation curves. He bred des Ruhigestelle Constellation 2*M on his first day home. Connie had been undefeated as a kid and milking yearling, and earned two GCH legs as a 2 year old. The breeding produced a late born doe kid, ConJurEo. Unfortunately, Constellation was also lost to CAE shortly thereafter.

ConJurEo started life as a runty little thing with a big personality. We took all our goats to the fairs in those days, and she was impossible to keep contained. "That littlest one is out again" became just "Littlest is in the cow barn ... showing...etc" as she found her way fearlessly around fairgrounds, and became something of a spoiled mascot. Littlest did eventually grow up. She became the 1980 National Champion and Best Udder and scored FS93 EEEE as a 2 year old. We began CAE control in 1983, and in 1984 she had triplet does sired by ++*B Snowbird New Star. Two were just like her- medium sized, stylish and pretty. One was different- long, awkward, and polled; just plain homely. The pretty ones became CH des Ruhigestelle Ea and CH des Ruhigestelle Eocene, finishing their CHs in their first shows as 2 year olds. The third doe became "Horsie," and our Saanens again took a dramatic change.

Horsie, eventually registered as Eta, continued to grow and developed a tremendous frame- tall, long, and level, yet extremely flat-boned and dairy. I remember clipping her legs as a 2 year old, and thinking she had twice the surface area of a normal goat (okay, I hated clipping legs). When her sisters freshened with gorgeous udders, Horsie freshened with a ton of milk, and a less than attractive udder. She had a soft, rather shapeless udder with a short foreudder and deep medial cleft. It was very capacious and had a high wide rear udder, so we waited to see what would happen.

While her fancy sisters went to the shows, Horsie stayed home and milked, more every day. Eventually, that capacious udder filled and took shape. Her sisters were finished, it was her turn. She took a first in a large class of 2 year olds in her first show, nice, but not dramatic. I was in vet school and always needing tuition, so we decided to sell two of the triplets. We couldn't make up our minds which two. When Dar Glasgow called and wanted "the big one," my first reaction was "not Horsie!" I called Fern, she also immediately said "not the tall one." So, against common sense, we sold the "best" one, Ea, to Dar, and soon sold Eocene as well. Dar generously took all three to the 1986 Nationals in Dallas. They won first place Produce for ConJurEo. While there, Dar saw the ++*B Companeros Voice of Reason daughters, and came back with glowing reports of big, productive Saanens.

When the end of vet school was finally in sight, we needed to make some decisions about where to go with the Saanens. ++*B Snowbird New Star was proving to be an incredible sire for udders and production, but dangerous to handle. I made a commitment to breed for strength and production, and although Horsie was purebred, I bought some Reason semen.

Horsie kidded with her Reason twins, a buck and a doe, in 1989 as a 5 year old. College was finally done, I was back home with the goats. We began DHIR again, and Horsie milked 4-11 305 4640 158, placing second in Top Ten. She eventually milked over 20,000 lbs on test, starting *after* she turned 5! She finished her GCH that year and then won Reserve National Champion in Gillette, WY as a 7 year old in 1991. She was appraised for the first time at 10 years old, scoring FS91 EEEE. She continued showing and winning until she was 11 years old, placing 9th at the 1995 Nationals and winning the high lifetime production awards. Formally retired at 12 years, Horsie lived in a place of honor roaming the property until she was 14. I sometimes still imagine that intelligent, homely face peering around a stack of hay or mischievously tipping over empty grain barrels.

Like Horsie, the Reason twins were different right from the start. Big and fast growing, with endless appetites, they were notably mellow, happy kids, especially when they had enough food. Although the names Equus and Eden were selected before birth, they quickly became Buddy and Bucknose. (Eden had a roman nose.) Buddy was the more attractive of the two, being sharper, more stylish and correct. He combined the style of ConJurEo with Horsie's frame and Reason's strength. Bucknose was simply huge.

Buddy grew to be one of the largest bucks I have ever seen. He was long and deep, with solid, correct legs and feet. His muzzle wouldn't fit into my hand, and he could look me in the eye while standing normally. Exhibitors and farm visitors, even some appraisers and judges, simply stopped and stared when he came out. He finished his GCH in two weekends, ending with a BIS at the 1994 Northwest Saanen Specialty. He was affectionate and gentle, with a majestic bearing. Like his dam, he abhorred fighting, and would simply stand between fighting animals like a school principal. He was trustworthy with two- and four-legged kids, it wasn't unusual to see him lying with 5 or 6 buck kids tucked in around him. He even allowed one favorite to chew off his entire beard. Genetically, he fulfilled our commitment to the breed, siring solid, high producing does, "total" Saanens that could effortlessly maintain their high production and stay sound. Like Horsie, they were often slow to mature. I honestly don't know how many Top Ten, FS90 or GCH does he sired. GCH des Ruhigestelle Equifaire 6*M did all three, with a score of FS90 VEEE, and three Top Ten records. Other Top Ten does include dR Winifred 2*M, dR Lea 3*M, dR Eleventhirty *M, dR Esse 3*M and GCH Willow-Lane Equus Ellenore 5*M. Some of his excellent and GCH progeny were GCH dR Equality 3*M, GCH dR Elsa, GCH ++*B dR Gen E Leah, GCH dR Lorealeah 3*M, and GCH dR Sun Princess 7*M. His sister Eden ("Bucknose") became the 1992 All-Breed Leader with 2-10 305 5259 165 146, her granddaughter, dR Elowah 7*M, FS90 VEVE, repeated the honor in 2001 with 3-00 305 5450 216 159. Of course other Reason daughters have set their own legacy with National Champions and Breed Leaders as well.

Who, or what, was Equus? Above and beyond all else, he was not simply an accident or a lucky draw. He wasn't just the son of a hot doe or a famous buck. Instead his genetics were focused on consistency and prepotency. He was that once in a lifetime combination of everything we bred him to be, although in his case, his whole was even greater than the sum of his parts.

Still proud and regal, Buddy was euthanized at 9 years old when a spinal tumor paralyzed his hindquarters. Although his place may never again be filled, I see his influence every day as his daughters, granddaughters, nieces and cousins file through the milking parlor, living our commitment to the Saanen breed.





Photos-

Top- Equus, age 2 years

Middle- Equus, age 5 years

Bottom- Equus & sons