ON THE COVER

This horse is my first Arabian, but I can tell you, he won’t be my last!

Wings and Springs!
A modern day Pegasus takes the West Coast by a storm

As the old adage goes, you don’t know what you are capable of until you try. If you ask Poeme D’Amour, he’ll tell you nothing is impossible. The 10-year-old Anglo-Arabian gelding has a “cheeky, I can do anything” attitude, according to his owner Misti Cassar.

Born and bred in the Limousin area of France, a region considered the cradle of Anglo-Arabian horse breeding, at the well-respected Elevage De Buissy, Poeme came to the United States in 2009. He is a son of Ryon d’Anzex, who competed in the World Championships, and Jacinthe, a son of Ryon d’Anzex, who competed in France, a region considered the cradle of Anglo-Arabian horse breeding, at the well-respected Elevage De Buissy.

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From 4 to 6 years of age, he was competing in France under Cedric Hurel, one of the country’s top jumper riders. His 6-year-old season ended with an ISO (show jumping index) of 131, having qualified for the final in Fontainebleau, and competing twice with no faults at the Championships at the Lion d’Angers. Shortly thereafter, he was sold to Belgium, where his breeders lost touch with him.

Misti Cassar, an experienced jumper rider based in California, had competed on an international level for several years and was looking for a new horse in 2010 when a friend in France told her about Poeme. “How does a horse who has won only one jump down in 29 classes sound?” he asked Misti. She had no idea what an Anglo Arabian was, but his record spoke for itself.

Misti flew to Italy to try him, although she was about to go through a much-needed knee replacement after having fractured her knee in eleven places. She had been living in a lot of pain, although riding was much more comfortable than walking. Poeme was one of two horses she tried that day and there was no doubt in Misti’s mind that she wanted him. She sealed the deal from her hospital room the day of her surgery, despite knowing she wouldn’t be allowed to ride for another 9 months. She left him in Europe for 2 months before bringing him home.

So while Misti busted her butt in rehab – her physical therapist said she and a 3-time Iraqi veteran were her superstars – Poeme was being shown a little by John French in some 7 & 8 year old jumper classes, even winning a few.

In the spring of 2010, Misti took over the ride and had success in some high jumper classes and a few Grands Prix. Then she took Poeme back to Europe to show him there. “It is so much less expensive to show there. You only spend about 300 euros per week compared to $3,000 per week in the U.S.,” she explains.

It was back to California after a few months for family reasons, and into the jumper arena there with some prestigious placings in 1.3 and 1.4 meter classes for the pair.

But it was in the summer of 2012 when Misti and “Mister,” as she calls him (since everyone thinks he’s a mare) set the world on fire. They placed 10th in the $30,000 Pebble Beach Grand Prix. In September, the crowd cheered wildly when they won the $30,000 LA International Welcome Stake class and placed 3rd in the hotly contested $50,000 LA International Grand Prix.

A couple of weeks later, they were 3rd in the $35,000 Sacramento International Welcome Grand Prix (1.5 meters). Misti and Mister followed that up three weeks later at the National Preview Horse Show with two wins in the $30,000 Grand Prix and the $30,000 Grand Prix Championship!

They’ve been to a few shows so far this year, placing 5th in the $35,000 HITS Desert Classic, garnering a win in a 1.4 meter class and an 8th in the $15,000 HITS Desert Circuit Level 8 class.

“He is so brave, but sensible and really game. He would go through fire if I asked him,” says Misti of their connection. “He can just walk around these big courses and win as long as I don’t mess him up. He hates to touch a rail!” Their routine each day, after ring work consists of a 3 on 4 mile hack down the road. “There is no substitute for the time we spend together, we have a true bond. When he sees my car pull in each day, he whinnies more and more insistently the day of our ride.”

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That isn’t to say Mister is an easy ride. “Not everyone can get along with him, although he’s quiet enough for my daughter to ride. George Morris just loves him, I can’t get him off the horse!” Misti explains. She says that she’s always ridden the French horses with a lot of blood very well, which may explain the almost telepathic communication she has with Mister. “We have a warm up routine at the shows; we hack for about 25 minutes until he takes a deep breath and relaxes. Then he’s ready. Once on course, it is a very technical 90 second ride. The way he kicks up his hind end over the jumps comes naturally to him, but it also means I have to keep my eyes up on the backside of the jumps or else!”

Misti says she’s still learning about her boy, having just found a new bridle that gives her a “connection with impulsion, plus a meaningful half-halt. I can’t wait to try it again.”

Their long range plan includes the possibility of attending the 2014 World Equestrian Games in Normandy with syndication a probability to make that happen. Misti is also looking at a brother of Mister’s as a new mount. “This horse is my first Arabian, but I can tell you he won’t be my last!”

About the Breeder - Elevage de Buissy

The Elevage de Buissy is settled in an historical Anglo-Arabian breeding region, near Pompador, in the south west of France. It was created a decade ago by Cendrine Dutrait and Jean Bernard Anizan. Without any doubt there is no breeding operation in Europe with such a collection of quality Anglo-Arabian mares. The success of this stud is the result of a very selective breeding process. The quality of pedigrees and especially damelines is the key of any successful breeding, whether you breed thoroughbreds for flat races, chasers, sports horses or dairy cattle...

In addition the education, mating skills, feeding and preparation of young horses are very important and these elements are also mastered by the Elevage de Buissy crew.

Fleur d’Anis (born out of two parents that won at the Nations Cup level) produced Olala de Buissy (Cook du Midour AA x Laudanum TB x Arlequin AA) that won at the Nations Cup and 1m60 Grand Prix level last year with the French Equestrian Team. He’s an amazing jumper, with a lot of blood, very careful and a fantastic canter. The first offspring of this dark brown stallion are 3 years old now and they already have shown a lot of quality.

Jacinthe du Maury, from the famous dameline of Yasmine (mother or grand mother of a lot of Grand Prix Showjumpers in France), is really the foundation mare of the stud. Her first foal Fusain du Defey (co-bred by Jean Bernard Anizan) was born and raised at the Elevage de Buissy. He is now the father of international eventers and showjumpers after long sport career. Ridden by Michel Faumont he was really hard to beat at the 1m45/1m50 level and won prizes up to the 1m55 Grand Prix level. Jacinthe du Maury also produced two other international showjumpers: Poeme damour de Buissy and Illusion d’Amour. Nid d’Amour de Buissy, the full brother of Poemedamour de Buissy, is at stud in France as a stallion and his offspring is very promising. The Yasmine dam line also produced Printemps de Buissy (successful at the 1m30 level in Spain) and Shamdala de Buissy (winner at the 1m30 level in France).

Out of other mares (all selected in the best damelines of the French Stud-book), the Elevage de Buissy produced Quotkijet de Buissy (that was one of the best young eventers of France at 6 and 7 years old in France before being injured), Olympe de Buissy CCI2* in France, Rising de Buissy CCI in the USA, and the amazing Looping de Buissy that is already competitive at the CCI3* level and considered as one of the most promising eventers in France for the top level competitions. Fillies sold by the Elevage de Buissy to other breeders have already produced top jumpers like Quenelle du Py (competitive at the 1m50 level in France) or Rock’N Roll Animal (one the best French horse at 5 and 6 years old in showjumping).

The Elevage de Buissy is without any doubt one of the best Anglo-Arabian breeding operation in Europe. Competitive horse for showjumping and eventing are born there. They give a lot of satisfaction to their owners, even at the amateur level. A place where competitive and beautiful Anglo-Arabians have found their best promoter.