

Nosbisch Holsteins - The breeding barn with the widest base in Europe

The flourishing cattle dealing company European Livestock Service, the German Masters Sale, the young and closely watched breeding company Bullseye Genetics, positive sires like the new Dutch Nr.1 Mitch, the world record sire Aristocrat and the red and white conformation star Solito-Red as well as successful show cows like Germany's National Champion Alessja or our photo model on this page, NH DG Arvis Silky-Red. This are all things that are tied to the name of Nosbisch in Germany and represent just the tip of a unique iceberg. Come along to Nosbisch Holsteins and visit one of the best and most widely established herds in Europe.

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Already before our visit it was clear that we will be meeting with a professional. We made an appointment with Nici Nosbisch to complete this report for our October issue of HI. And we had enough reasons for this article. With the August breeding evaluations, NH Sunview Mitch, a Kerrigan out of NH-HS Balisto Marilyn Monroe VG-86, made it to Nr.1 on the daughter-proven top-list in the Netherlands. Also in August, with William, Smokie-Red and Dallas-P, there were three sires from Bullseye Genetics, the young breeding program in which Nici is active, in their respective top-5 rankings in Germany. We also wanted to learn more about the families of several interesting young bull dams as well as several other interesting sires at various AI studs across Europe, and of course, we wanted to see some of the breeding and show cows like Marilyn Monroe or the Reserve Junior National Champion Silky-Red in person. Normally, a large portion of the

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time that we spend at a farm is focused on the data of individual cows, the farm, and naturally the breeding successes. Without having asked for it, a memo reached us before our visit with all the information that we normally would ask about. Indeed, Nici Nosbisch, despite his relative youth of 31 years, already knows what it comes down to in order to be successful in the

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breeding business. That he doesn't like leaving anything to chance was clear by the time we received his memo. But it saved us a lot of time and allowed more flexibility than normal to philosophize about his ideas and to study his herd more exactly.

TALENT

So, we made our way to the Eifel region, a low mountain range in mid-west Germany neighbouring Luxembourg. Already from the valley, the farm that was newly built 10 years ago could be seen on a hill above the historic town of Niderweis with its population of 250. It is an impressive picture, the modern barns and slightly above them the house where Nici lives with his parents Matthias and Jutta slightly. While Jutta is responsible for the administration of the various operational branches, Matthias, who was celebrated many big breeding successes himself, manages the roughly

A deep family that goes back to Planet Silk, high numbers, a son at an AI stud and lots of conformation. NH DG Silky-Red VG-89, of which one half was sold to Rene Azzopardi from Malta, is the perfect example to describe the philosophy of Nosbisch Holsteins.



A coordinated team: Matthias, Jutta and Nici Nosbisch.



Nosbisch Holsteins in Germany

- Farm in Niederweis, 2 hours by car south of Cologne
- Owners: the Nosbisch family
- 150ha: 60ha grassland, 15ha alfalfa, 45ha corn, 30ha cereals
- 120 dairy cows, 220 heifers, 10 elite sires, 50 herd sires
- Production: 11,497kg 4.08% 3.55%
- Conformation: 13xEX, 88xVG, 14xGP
- Feeding: 26kg haylage, 13kg corn, 10kg alfalfa, 7kg sugar beets, 3kg protein concentrate, 2.5kg corn meal, 2kg cereals, 1kg hay, mineral supplement and yeast (Hokovit Dairy Protect)
- Sire use: 75% genomic young sires like William, Smookie-Red, Attention, AltaZazzle, Arrow, Foreman, Lambeau, Spirit-Red; 25% daughter-proven bulls like Chief, Delta Lambada, Mitch, Mitchell



120 Holsteins that are milked by two robots and the crops. 'It is good,' he says, 'when someone can concentrate on the breeding and make the decisions. Today, breeding is such a complex and fast-moving business that it is hard to stay on the ball.' The "someone" that Matthias is referring to, is, for Nosbisch Holsteins, his son Nici. Nici is not only the brain behind projects like European Livestock with its now 4,000 breeding animals handled worldwide every year or the one behind the very successful German Masters Sale, which will take place on October 22nd for the 8th time, or behind Bullseye Genetics. Nici, who is also a popular auctioneer and judge, can surely be counted as one of the most renowned marketers and dealers of breeding cows in all of Europe. The fact that he is so successful at it is primarily due to his breeding talents. And, as in all areas of business in which he is active, he has also built himself a broad base in this branch.

DOZENS OF FAMILIES

The wealth of information that Nici shared with us prior to our visit gave us lots of time to study the herd cow by cow. On our walk along the feedbunk, we pass by the group of young donors that is responsible for the bulk of the roughly 50 ET flushes that are carried out yearly. Among them is a polled 2621 gTPI and 3.71 gPTAT Mirand-PP from a King Doc out of Al-Lew Monterey Ashley EX-92, the dam of Aristocrat

and the popular Arrow. No less interesting are NH-GL Soraya-Red, a 2689 gTPI Ronald-Apprentice-Delta from Sympatico Sofia-Red, or Suami, a Subzero with 2978 gTPI out of the Laurie Sheiks. And as we said, those are only examples for more than a dozen high-testing heifers from the best families in the world that are currently being used in breeding program by Nici. And that brings us to our next point: the remarkably high number of international top families which are worked with at Nosbisch. To count them all is almost impossible. Of note is the variety of the pedigrees that we come across. Nosbischs are not only milking the offspring of the hottest index families in the breed at the moment, but also from the established families like the Roxys, Barbies, Lead Maes, Zitas and the Laurie Sheiks, as well as from the show stars of the scene like the Apples, Ilmas, Galys Vrays, O'Kalibras and the Atlees. And, of course, there are reasons that the herd as such a wide base. 'Regardless of what families we invest in, the marketing potential later on is always at the forefront,' explains Nici, as he brings around Marilyn Monroe, the work horse in the herd. She is a successful bull dam, a successful show cow and one of the best production cows in Germany. 'Our goal,' Nici continues, 'was never to select only for index or show type. We are always trying to breed the complete package of breeding values, conformation and pedigree and to be able to offer

this to the buyers who come every year to buy around 30 elite females, 50 commercial fresh heifers, 10 AI bulls and 50 herd sires. Our breeding goal is not only an economical cow, but also a cow that we want to milk. The cows that we like to milk are also the easiest to market.'

TOP LEVEL

However, the astonishing thing about the Nosbisch herd is not the variety of pedigrees, but the unbelievable uniformity among the animals. And this observation is not only true of the uniformly high breeding values, but also of the conformation and the production. The variability among the cows with an average production of 11,500kg 4.08% 3.55% is just as small at the milking robot as it is as classification time. Of the 120 cows, 13 are EX and 88 are VG. And, of course, Nici has an explanation for this as well: 'We don't concentrate on a very specific goal, be it index or conformation. I have a lot of trust in genomic breeding values and use at least 75% genomic young sires. But the fact is that I only use a reliability of 70% when using genomic young sires. For me, traits like deep pedigrees and high classifications are important not simply because I like them, but they help me to balance the remaining 30% for reliability. At the end of the day, I want a sure thing. One that I would like to milk myself and one that can be marketed!'

