

The Boerperd at SANESA

TEXT: DR PETRO GROVÉ
PHOTOGRAPHY: COURTESY OF THE SA
BOERPERD BREEDING ASSOCIATION

Dynamic breed, diverse success

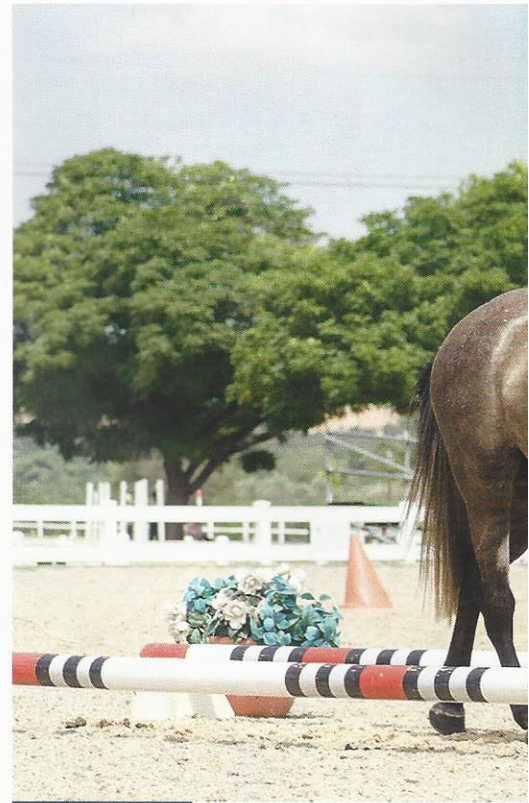
To be at the very spot where future champions are nurtured is a sheer privilege. All facets of tough competition, with the guts and glory involved, are evident – whether you're a parent, spectator, groom or rider in the SANESA (South African National Equestrian Schools Association) National Championships, you cannot keep from being deeply involved in equine sport. The mere fact of being able to compete on a national platform as large as this is remarkable. Starting off at the beginning of each year with approximately 10,000 horses and riders all over the country, the SANESA Nationals is a tough competition where only the best horses and riders have been selected on a provincial level to compete in teams as well as individually.

How SANESA works

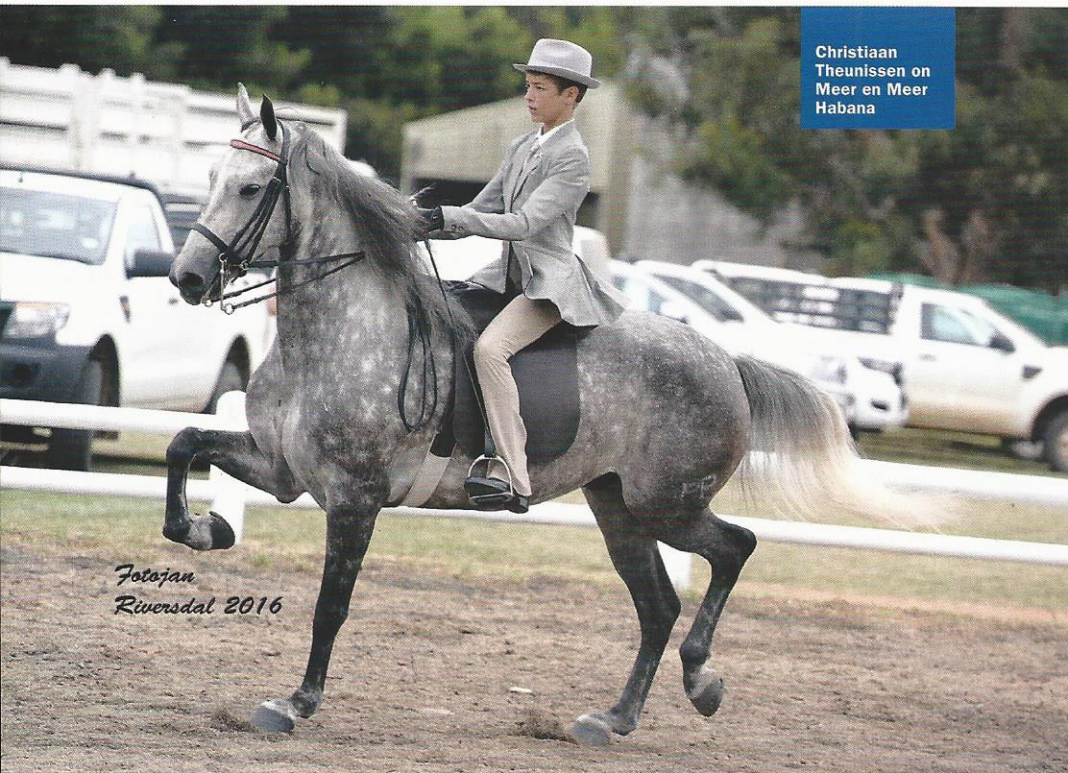
The founders of SANESA have succeeded in making the equine sport, on all levels, accessible to young riders in the form of a schools' league, where riders receive recognition for their accomplishments not only in the form of rosettes at shows, but also in their schools and among their peer groups.

SANESA plays a large part in cultivating the love of horse sport in our youth, without prejudice. Currently, 15 diverse equine disciplines are available under this one umbrella organisation. Adhering to the requirements of structuring all school sports, schools are also rewarded for their riders' performance by means of a points system, therefore placing equestrian sport on the same level as rugby, cricket, hockey or any other school sport.

The classes in the whole spectrum of equine disciplines are structured according to levels in high and primary schools, respectively. The classes are adopted so as to include one rider at a time



Lana Pieterse and Amiratus Oester at Horse of the Year

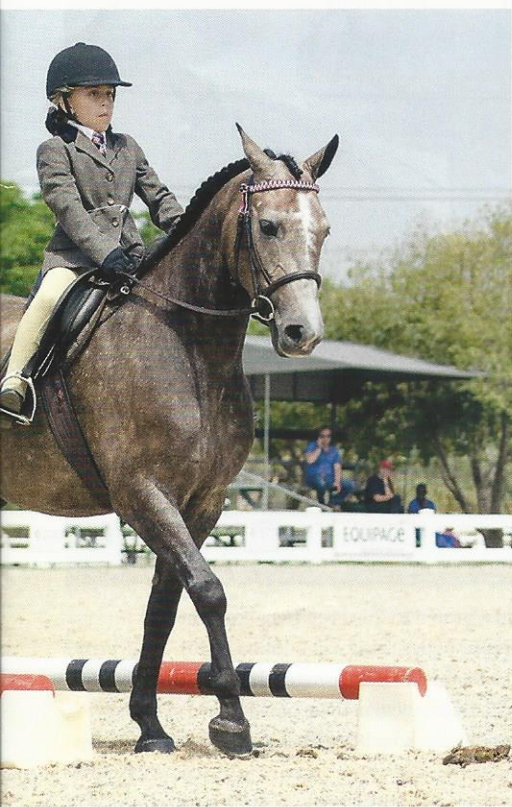


Christiaan Theunissen on Meer en Meer Habana

in the arena for safety. The youngest riders are six years old, while the oldest are 18-year-olds in Grade 12. For each class, every rider gets a report, with the exception of Level 7 classes, which are judged strictly according to the respective discipline rules and graded showing.

Grading points can also be earned through SANESA competitions, provided that the horse-rider combination is registered with the SAEF and the relevant disciplinary association. Levels are not linked to age or school grades, but to the level of difficulty that a horse-rider combination can handle best. To be able to move up a level acts as motivation to improve, and brings with it a feeling of progress and accomplishment to the rider.

The largest number of entries is in the Core League classes. At SANESA, the Core League disciplines are all divided into seven levels of grading. Once a horse-rider combination competes at a certain level, that particular horse-rider combination will not be allowed to enter at a lower level. However, there is no pressure on the horse-rider combination to progress to the next level, unless they want to.



Included disciplines

A few disciplines like Stadium Eventing and Extreme Equitation have been added and customised especially for the schools' league. The disciplines include the Core League classes, which are subdivided into the following:

- Performance Riding
- Showing
- Working Riding
- Working Hunter
- Showjumping (up to 1.30m)
- Dressage (up to Junior Advanced)
- Prix Caprilli (a variation of dressage with at least two jumps included)
- Equitation (up to 1.10m)
- In-hand Utility
- Eventing (three-phase competition)
- Endurance (up to 120km)
- Tent Pegging
- Western Riding and Cowboy Dressage
- Western Mounted Games
- English Mounted Games
- Extreme Trail and Obstacle Events (EETO)
- Saddle Seat
- Vaulting

Horses of all breeds and sizes are to be found at SANESA shows. No discrimination is made against any horse, therewith giving all young riders the opportunity to participate on an equal basis without necessarily spending a fortune on obtaining a suitable horse. SANESA's motto is, "Let our children ride!"

The Boerperd in the ring

Following the progress of the South African Boerperd specifically for the past years, it is clear that he is an all-rounder and a force to be reckoned with, not only in this league, but in all equine sporting areas, therefore making him the ideal companion for a lifetime involvement in competition.

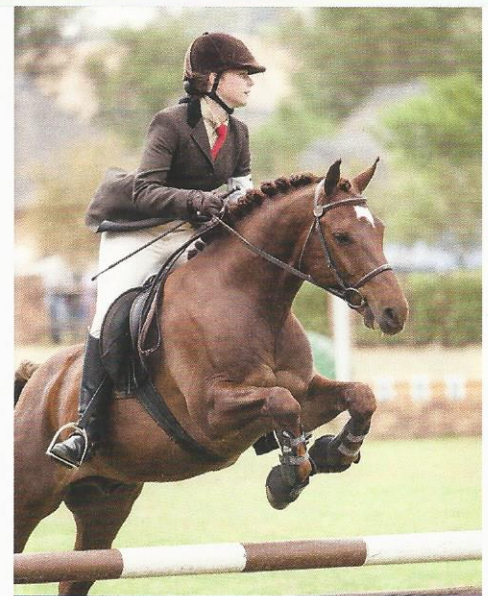
The Youth Action of the SA Boerperd Breeders' Society therefore encourage their youth to take part in the SANESA league. SA Boerperd riders from all over the country meet at the SANESA National Championships with at least one common denominator – a passion for the SA Boerperd.

The perception that SA Boerperds are farm horses has long been wrong on so many levels. Standing at heights ranging from 13.3hh to 16hh, and sometimes even higher, the Boerperd is the ideal horse for children and adults alike. Loved



Adri Kritzinger
on Goudhoek
Hartjie

Marnise Labrechts on Goudhoek Willem competing in eventing



Mia Joubert won the Victrix Ludorum (2013 and 2014) on Rooigras Style

and admired for his even temperament and exceptionally strong constitution, the SA Boerperd is becoming an increasingly popular breed in the SANESA league. The breed is also extremely versatile, making Boerperds successful across most disciplines. The same horse who participates in the Core League can compete in eventing and Western Riding with ease.

Get to know the breed

The SA Boerperd is currently the only fully developed South African breed, and is becoming increasingly popular as a stud horse in neighbouring countries. Being a local breed with breeders countrywide, Boerperds are relatively much more affordable than their imported competitors. The SA Boerperd rightfully belongs in competitive horse sport and is not a farm horse. True SA Boerperds are recognised by their distinctive branding: a **β** embedded on the horse on the right thigh. If the horse is not branded, he may not be a true-bred SA Boerperd.

SA Boerperds are especially suited to the South African market and the SANESA rider because of the following:

- They are available in a variety of sizes.
- They are well known for their even temperaments.
- They are hardened and not prone to illness, therefore easy to keep.
- They are versatile, sporty and intelligent.
- They make excellent companions.
- There is a network of breeders across the country who are easy to find.
- They are relatively affordable.
- They are proudly and uniquely South African.

Winning ways

Winners of the SANESA Victor/Victrix Ludorum trophies, as well as the riders on the annual top 20 list, are determined by means of a subjective points system. Each rider earns points for themselves as well as for their school, region and province through this system. The horse-rider combination with the most points earned across all disciplines together is the winner of the Victor/Victrix Ludorum on a provincial or national level, and after that, the placings of the top 20 horse-rider combinations are calculated.

In order to feature on this list, horse-rider combinations have to compete in a variety of disciplines, and therefore the horse must be versatile. During the past four years, SA Boerperd horse-rider combinations have won many National Victrix Ludorum trophies at SANESA.

Mia Joubert won with Rooigras Style in 2013 and 2014. She is currently the elected SA Boerperd Youth Head Girl for 2017. Surika Struwig won with HAT Swenk in 2014 as well. In 2016 Kristen Joubert won with Rooigras Gina. However, she was also runner-up in the top 20 horse-rider combination list with Rooigras Syfer and won the award for Top Grade 12 Rider for 2016. Over the past two years, she was elected Head Girl on the SA Boerperd Youth Board and proved to be a leading example – what a brilliant way to end a school career!

Apart from the above accomplishments, it is safe to say SA Boerperd horse-rider combinations nabbed approximately 25% of the overall top

20 rider places during the past four years. These numbers do not include the multiple class winners or placings under the top 10 or even top five riders in their classes, the classes being as large as 50 riders per class. Of participating SA Boerperds, 80% are participating in the Core League, while approximately 50% of the participating SA Boerperds end up being placed under the top 10 in their respective classes. Of the SA Boerperd riders participating in Performance Riding, 70% end up in the top 10 placings in their class. A staggering 87% of the SA Boerperds who participated in eventing, EETO, Western Riding and Western Mounted Games ended in the top 10 of their classes!

Today

The SA Boerperd competes regularly in inter-breed competitions such as Horse of the Year, Easter Festival, Autumn Festival and South African Derby. The SA Boerperd breed shows also include classes for adults, juniors and children. An added aspect these shows have to offer is that children, juniors

Olga Sfigakis
on Pandan
Elodie



Lisa Gouws on
Jurust Danger



The versatility
of the breed
has allowed
it to succeed
across various
disciplines

and adults are allowed to compete against one another in specific Riding Horse classes, thereby raising the bar for all competitors, and placing all horses of the breed on the same platform.

The classes offered at SA Boerperd breed shows include South African Showing Association-type classes, as well as dressage, showjumping and show classes. There truly is a riding style and class that will be suited to every rider, regardless of age and level. Veteran classes for riders older than 65 years, as well as development and disabled classes, are also included.

Beyond the ring

Apart from formal competition, the SA Boerperd is also great for riding out, as these horses are quite as comfortable in the open veld as in a formal quadrille. The Youth Action have youth clubs along with adult provincial clubs in various provinces with the aim to provide 'infotainment' to all the young riders – indeed a nurturing community. The SA Boerperd Youth are committed to their sport and determined to make a difference. 🐾

