



PRESS RELEASE

European State Studs Association e.V. (ESSA)

ESSA Driving Cup: State Studs start series in international driving sport

Marbach (March 11th, 2015, alo). The international driving calendar 2015 will be enriched by one more attraction. Five partner studs of the European State Studs Association (ESSA) organise a joint series, the *ESSA Driving Cup*, to point out the significance of the state studs for the breeding of horses especially suitable for driving, as centres of education and as places of top sport in the special atmosphere of the historic stud premises.

“Driving is the only discipline in horse sport that involves different horse types and breeds up to international championship level. This aspect needs to be recognised and supported, with regard to tradition, the diversity of breeds and the development of modern driving sport”, says ESSA President Dr. Astrid von Velsen-Zerweck. Vice-President Dr. Maximilian Dobretsberger, who is an active driver and sport leader of the series, adds „The national studs contribute significantly to the preservation of breed and type diversity and can give important impulses. Breeding institutions which since many generations breed horses especially for driving purposes are able to present horses successfully on top level and thus combine cultural heritage and world class sport”.

Thus, it is not surprising, that some national studs have become centres of international driving sport and organise first class competitions. The series will be integrated in the CAI3* competitions for pairs at the driving events of the partner studs. To participate in the series, pairs need to have successfully completed at least three of the five competitions. The three best final results of all competitors of the individual competitions will be added. In connection with the final prize giving ceremony at the CAI Piber on August 9th, 2015 the three pairs with the best total result will be honoured. The winning pair will receive the *ESSA Driving Cup 2015*.

Events of the series:

- 16.04. - 19.04.2015: National Stud Kladruby nad Labem, Czech Republic
- 29.05. - 31.05.2015: National Stud Topolčianky, Slovakia
- 02.07. – 05.07.2015: National Stud Lipica, Slovenia
- 16.07. – 19.07.2015: National Stud Mezöhegyes, Hungary
- 06.08. – 09.08.2015: Bundesgestüt Piber, Austria

Contact person and coordinator of the *ESSA Driving Cup* is Alexandra Lotz, Head of the ESSA office.



Lipizzaner pair of Topol'čianky at the CAI Piber 2014

Photo: Alexandra Lotz

Background

The European State Studs derive from a time, when the horses' hoof beat gave rhythm to agriculture, transport, war and courtly representation. After the motorization during the 20th century the amount of horses and with them the number of breeding institutions declined. Many have been dissolved, some are still under the authority of the state, some have been turned into foundations or run as private enterprises. Today, the remaining state studs are changing under the pressure either of the horse sector or of their political authorities. Since horse breeding has lost its importance for modern societies, the historic breeding institutions are in a period of new orientation and restructuring. They need to shift their focus and develop new business areas preparing them for the future. Many of them are located in rural regions with little economic power. Especially in such locations the studs can have an enormous impact on local development, when they operate successfully.

ESSA campaigns for the preservation of European stud culture. More than 30 of the most prestigious traditional horse breeding institutions of 16 countries are connected in the network. They cooperate in the fields of education and training, research, marketing, tourism and European law. They also exchange breeding material, especially in the field of sport horses and endangered breeds. The directors of the partner institutions meet once a year in a conference to exchange experiences and discuss common issues. With joint performances at events ESSA tries to raise awareness for the significance and the needs of the state studs.



Friends of European Stud Culture are invited to join ESSA as supporting members. Donations are also welcome. The ESSA office at Marbach State Stud is at disposal for questions by phone +49 (0)7385-965717, or e-mail info@europeanstatestuds.org.

For further information about the European State Studs Association, its partner institutions and activities see www.europeanstatestuds.org.