

AHHA Approves First Thoroughbred Outcross Sire

By Steven M. Passman, M.D.

At the annual meeting of the American Holsteiner Horse Association in Phoenix, in February, the breeding committee recommended, and the Board of Directors approved, that the stallion Coconut Grove would be accepted as the association's first Thoroughbred outcross sire. This is the culmination of what Tamara Smith, of Tamarack Stables in Salt Lake City, Utah, the owner of Coconut Grove, calls "a Cinderella story".

Ms. Smith used to own the Thoroughbred Grand Prix Jumper stallion Napur (by Damascus), who jumped successfully at the National and International level and was also a successful sire. He was a PCHA Futures Finals Champion and a two-time qualifier for the American Grand Prix Association Championships. He was also the sire of countless 'A' Circuit hunter, jumper and event horse champions. Damascus (career winnings of over \$1 million) was ranked number 16 of the top 100 best Thoroughbreds of the 20th century by seven well-known racing figures in a 1998 *The Blood-Horse* magazine. Napur died suddenly in 2001 and Ms. Smith looked for another Thoroughbred jumper replacement. The search for Coconut Grove was a two-year process -- a combination of intense research and good fortune. When she began her search, her minimum requirements included Grand Prix credentials, American Jockey Club papers and a solid performance pedigree. This kind of Thoroughbred is almost impossible to find in the United States as European breeders find them and buy them before most are ever aware of them.

Smith read about Coconut Grove doing well showing here and had looked for him in Columbia, his country of origin, with no success. She had seen him jump and found him to have a similar technique to her previous stallion, Napur. She also appreciated that their pedigrees were very similar, just upside-down. She was looking for a breeding horse and learned that Coconut Grove had been injured. She got in touch with AHHA board member Cheryl Frank, who happened to know he was in Florida. She found him stabled, under the direction of the self-trained Columbian rider German Camargo. He had already been vetted, x-rayed and proven reproductively sound and his purchase, by a Dutch breeder was virtually completed-but no money had yet changed hands. Smith regretfully thought, "there went the great one that I have been looking for." However, the next day, Paula Camargo, wife of German Camargo, called her back and said that she didn't want Coconut Grove to leave the country. Paula had found the stallion in 1993. He was originally raised to race but never did because the race-tracks in Columbia closed. A talented rider herself, she started the horse in show jumping before she turned the reins over to her husband. Coconut Grove provided the big international break for her husband, and Paula decided that the horse would be able to do more good for her in the United States, than in Europe. Soon, Coconut Grove was on a transport to Utah. Smith said, "We are fortunate to have

kept a stallion of this caliber in the United States. Typically, our best Thoroughbred jumper stallions are quickly sold to Europe. Europeans understand the strategic use and need of quality Thoroughbred blood in their pedigrees. To locate a Thoroughbred jumper stallion of this magnitude is nearly impossible."

Once the sale completed came the challenge of getting the stallion properly registered with the American Jockey Club. Normally, that task would be simple, but the Camargos had simply up and left Columbia without properly exporting the stallion. Even though Coconut Grove was Jockey Club registered in Columbia, he was a very expensive grade horse in the United States. The Jockey Club told Tamara that he had been in the U.S. too long and could not be registered. Persistence paid off. Tamara petitioned the American Jockey Club for Coconut Grove's acceptance into the registry. Fortunately, both his sire and dam had blood typing completed in the U.S., thus his parentage was verified by the Jockey Club's stringent standards. It was a six-month process, so Coconut Grove did not breed a mare in that season.



Why approve a Thoroughbred stallion? I refer you to an article by Hugh McMahon called "Stallions - The Leading Competition Sires of Great Britain" that you can find on the Internet at <http://www.sporhorse-breeder.com>. I will summarize and quote that article fairly completely here because I feel it explains rather nicely the reasons for the AHHA to approve Coconut Grove.

"Thoroughbred stallions who have competed internationally in showjumping over recent years include Ard Allez Cat (sire of the Young Irelander from his first crop), Urgele by Rapace, Mity Wind (American born from Washington State, now standing in Europe) who has two full brothers jumping in Germany and Hand and Glove by Best Turn ex Miss Betty by Buckpasser who also competed in Prix St Georges dressage. Amongst the thousands of stallions standing in Britain, not one Thoroughbred has more than two sons at stud that produce sport horses. This is partly because most

Thoroughbreds geared toward sport horse activities are gelded, and partly if a good Thoroughbred sport horse stallion is identified like *Garnered*, *Master Spiritus*, *Precipice Wood*, *Just a Monarch*, it takes so long that he is usually dead or too old to produce a stallion son.

"Furioso by Precipitation, was a French Thoroughbred whose sons include Furioso II, Mexico, Brilloso, and amongst the competitors he was responsible for 10 Olympic show-jumpers. Four further French Thoroughbreds are very important, both as foundation sires for the Selle Francais and for their influence on German and Dutch breeding. These are Rantzau by Foxlight, Orange Peel by Jus d'Orange, Fra Diavolo by Black Devil and Ultimate by Umidwar.

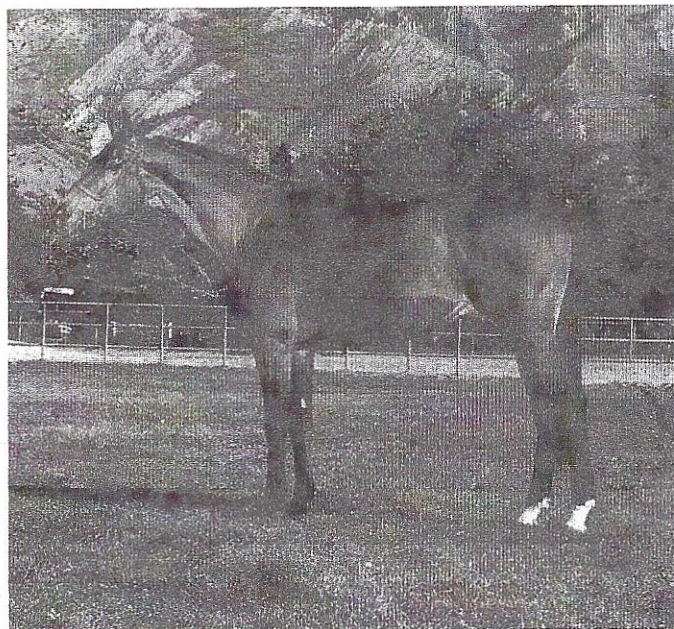
"In Germany important Thoroughbreds include Der Lowe by Wahnfried, Angelo by Oliveri, Marcio by Aventin, Abendfrieden and Anblick who were by Ferro, Ladykiller by Sailing Light, Cottage Son by Young Lover, and Manolete by Asterios. In the Netherlands some of the most important Thoroughbreds in the development of the Dutch Warmblood were Courville by Fair Trial, Abgar by Abermant, Uppercut by Fighting Don and most famous of all, Lucky Boy, by Compromise. Compromise was a son of Fair Trial, a son of Fairway, and Fairway together with (his full brother)...Pharos (sire of Nearco) are the stallions found in masses of sport horse stallion pedigrees. Admittedly they are getting rather far back... In Germany Fairway is in the pedigree of Ladykiller, Marlon and Papayer. In Holland, Lucky Boy's great grandfather was Pharos and Courville's grandfather was Fairway.

"Another Thoroughbred to appear in quite a few pedigrees of athletic, good moving Thoroughbreds is the American horse Buckpasser by Tom Fool. He is the grandsire of two promising stallions in Britain, State Diplomacy and Queen's Soldier and is damsire to Hand and Glove."

McMahan goes on to point out, that "in the absence of data about a Thoroughbred's ability to move and jump, breeders have used racecourse performance. In Germany and Holland for example, Thoroughbreds are only approved for warmblood breeding if they have high time-form ratings. There is no doubt that the number of races run and wins achieved give a useful indication of toughness, courage, and soundness, but these are of limited value in the selective breeding of sport horses. The great sire of modern times, Furioso, never won a race and Stunner Rascal who impressed with an enormous jump at his stallion grading, did not have a high enough time-form rating to remain on the continent. If Thoroughbreds are to be used for sport horse breeding, they are best tested in the fields for which they are producing. The most valuable test for any stallion is its progeny. On the continent it is notable that a relatively small number of Thoroughbreds dominate the pedigrees of their highly successful sport horses. They have identified the lines that produce sport horses as opposed to race-horses."

With that as background, let us look at the pedigree of Coconut Grove (see page 10).

Looking at the paternal side of Coconut Grove we find his sire Dare to Pet, a 16.3 hand Columbian racehorse of large and substantial build, who is the son of Dare to Command by Bold Commander. Bold Commander was a track winner at 2, 3, and 4, and he was a fil in blood to Mighty Ruler, a member of the USET 1974 team, and a Grand Prix Winner. Bold Commander was by Bold Ruler, the second leading racehorse sire of the twentieth century. Bold Ruler is found in the pedigrees of such jumping greats as Allegro, who was a member of the wining Prix de Nations and Nations Cup Teams. Bold Ruler is also seen in the pedigree of Pressurized, a multiple Grand Prix winner. The dam's sire of



Dare to Command, Alibhai, sold for a world record price of \$500,000 in 1948 and was on the Top Ten Leading Sire List for nine consecutive years. The Alibhai line is found in Branch County (Individual Silver Medal '76) and Third Man (winner American Invitational '79). Alibhai is by the great Hyperion, 6 times leading sire in England and found in the lineage of such great jumpers as Second Balcony (winner of Invitational Jumping Derby '78, Cleveland GP and Upperville GP '79), Southside (winner American Invitation '76, Delta Airlines GP '77, Palm Beach GP '79, Mercedes Stakes-World Cup '80) and Night Murmur (winner Puissance 7' - Penn Nat'l '73)

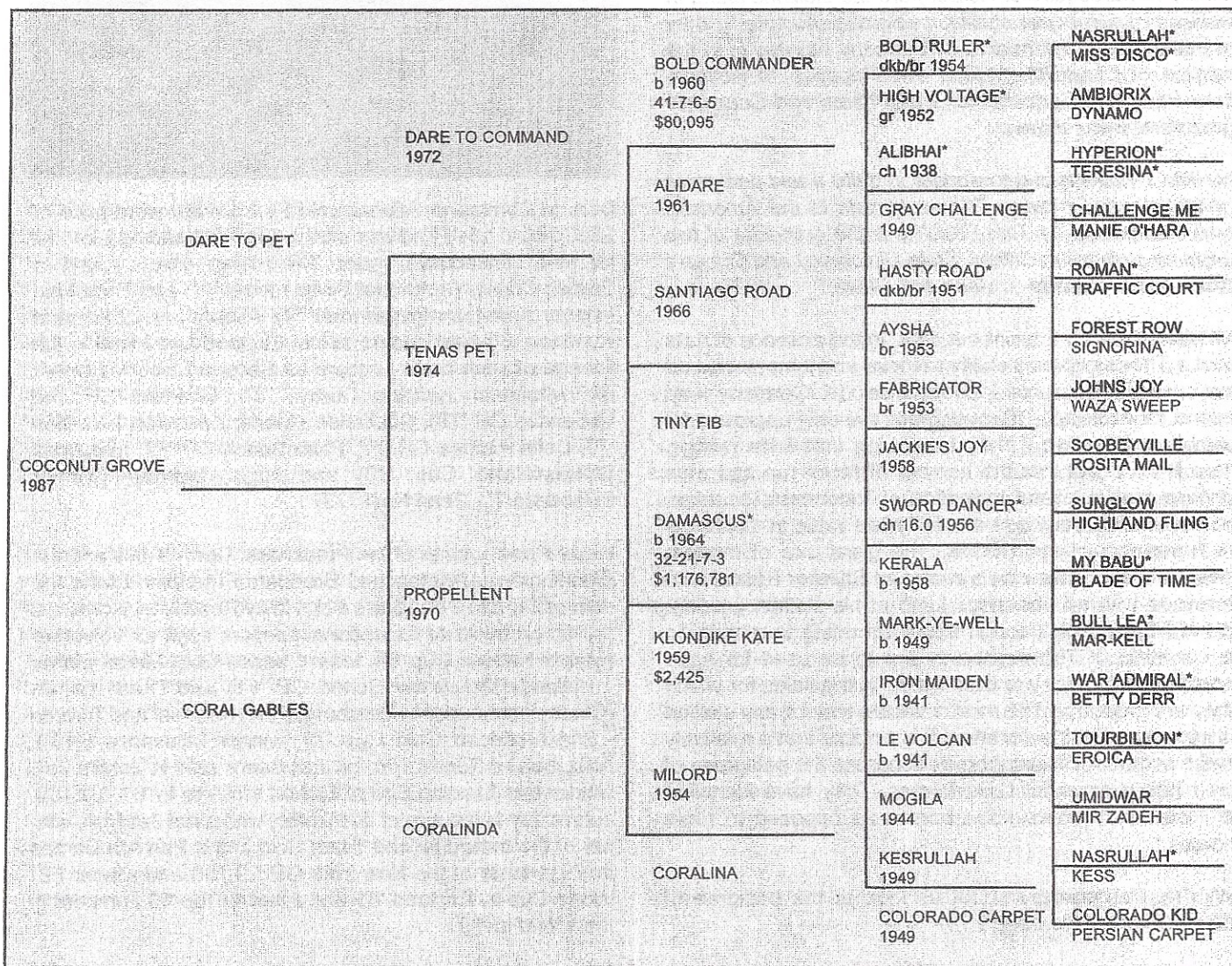
Hasty Road, winner of the Preakness, Derby Trials and the Washington, Arlington and Breeders Futurities, backs the dam of Dare to Pet, Tena's Pet. Hasty Road is by Roman, a prolific producer of exceptional jumpers such as Volunteer (winner Nations Cup '80, team Canada Gold Medal winner - Holland '80, winner Bolton GP '81) and Dutch Crown (Champion Jumper - Harrisburg, Penn National and Toronto - 2nd American Gold Cup '79, winner Puissance 6'10"). Also, behind Tena's Pet, on her dam's side is John's Joy, winner and Leading Sire of Stakes Winners in '61, '62, '63. John's Joy is the sire of Jet Traffic, who sired Jet Run, winner of the Individual and Team Gold at the Pan Am Games in '79, winner of the New York GP '79, '80 and winner FEI World Cup in England '81 and listed in Top 10 Jumpers in the World in '79.

Farther back in the pedigree of Dare to Pet you see Blenheim x 2, Rock Sand x 4, Teddy x 3, Nearco, the all-important Dark Ronald, and an interesting reference to "French Gray", upon which pedigree expert Cheryl Frank of the AHHA and USAEq comments, "it is my understanding that his 'French Gray' sire line does not descend from a horse by that name, but just a sire line that originated in France and carries the gray gene. It is probably, but I can't remember exactly, the line from Le Sancy, which split in two through Le Samaritain and Saint Saulge. One became the Ramzes line through Rittersporn and the other is the Bonne Nuit line in the U.S from which Gem Twist originated."

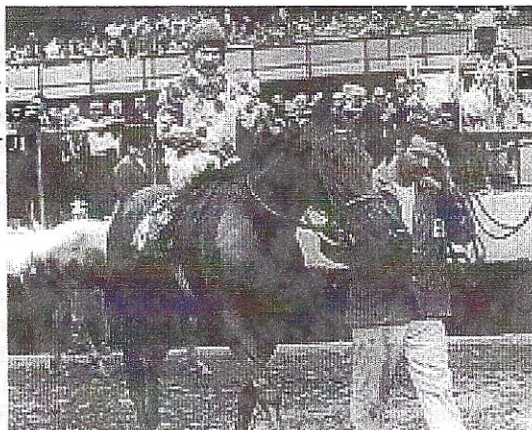
The distaff side of Coconut Grove's pedigree is equally distinguished to the paternal side of the pedigree, containing three crosses to Blenheim, three to French Grey, five to both Rock Sand and Teddy, two for Nearco, two for Marco and French Dollar and also one to Blue Larkspur. Significantly, there are two more crosses to Dark Ronald and actually four additional crosses to Dark Ronald's sire, Bay Ronald, two through the mare Rondeau and two through his good producing stallion son, Bayardo, winner of 22 of 25 races and a good runner from 6 furlongs to 2 fi miles

The dam of Coconut Grove is Coral Gables, a 16.1 hand

mare who is also the dam of Satra, a member of the winning National Show Jumping Team of Columbia and also a Champion Jumper. Cora Gables is a granddaughter of the legendary racehorse sire, Damascus, winner of over \$1 million on the track, 1967 Horse of the Year and Champion Three Year Old and Champion Handicap Horse. He is the producer of 415 winners, with total winnings of \$26 million. Damascus produced the jumper sire Napur, also owned by Tamarack Farms, who was Best American Horse at the World Cup in 1987, and the stallion Mokheiba, sire of the internationally ranked event horse Hazmat, and second leading sire of Point to Point Winners in steeplechase winners, which has often been a good predictor of success in Showjumping, as in Cottage Son. Damascus' dam's sire is My Babu, a very successful sire of sport horses such as the Thoroughbred Jumper sire The Hammer, who produced Sympatico (Leading Grad Prix Horse '72-'75), Golden Gavel (USET member) and Jackson County, a leading jumper in '79. Teddy, one of the most influential hunter/jumper sires, is seen five times throughout the pedigree. The blood of Tourbillon, another dominant jumper sire, is seen on the sire line of Coral Gables' mother, Coralinda. And finally, Nasrullah, son of another great Tesio product, Nearco, who goes back to the ultimately successful Phalaris line, is seen



Right:
Damascus,
ridden by
Willie
Shoemaker



on the mother's side, as well as being duplicated in Dare to Pet's sire line. Nasrullah was a leading racehorse sire and Sire of the Century and he is the progenitor of such Grand Prix jumpers as Chase the Clouds (Grand Prix winner and Top 10 Jumper in the World '79), Leapy Lad (7th American Grand Prix Association Horse of the Year), Lucky Boy (World Cup Winner and American Grand Prix Association's All Time Money Winner, Top Jumping Horse Sire '82) and Johnny's Pocket (USET team member '79 and '80).

Showjumping Accomplishments

Coconut Grove began showing with the Columbian rider German Camargo in 1996 and at that time started wining in Grand Prix competition. In 1997 he was champion in the Bolivarianos Games in Lima, Peru and he was Year End

National Champion Jumper of Columbia. In 1998 he was champion and then again reserve champion of a World Cup Qualifier in Caracas, Venezuela. In 1999 he was a member of the Columbian National Show Jumping Team, competed successfully in World Cup Qualifiers in Canada and also qualified for the World Cup in Gottenburg, Sweden. He was the best South American horse at the Pan American Games in Winnipeg, Canada. In 2000, he was third in the \$100,000 US Open Grand Prix in Miami, Florida and fifth in the \$25,000 WEF Grand Prix in Tampa, Florida. Also in that year he qualified for the Olympics in Sydney, Australia but his country did not have the money to send him. In 2000 he also qualified for the American Grand Prix Association Championships and was ranked in the FEI standings based on only six shows. In 2001, he was 5th in the \$25,000 Wellington Grand Prix but suffered his second major injury- this time ending his show jumping career

How athletic is Coconut Grove? Nancy Jaffer, a writer for Horse International Magazine called Coconut Grove "explosive, a Thoroughbred who seems to be able to take off from anywhere." Another equine sports writer, Marty Bauman, describes Coconut Grove as "spirited". In a March 10th, 2000, issue of Chronicle of the Horse another writer says, "When German Camargo, of Bogota, Colombia, rode in, most spectators didn't know what to expect. Although the 35 year-old rider had an impressive resume announced as his introduction-including a berth at the 1999 Pan Am Games in

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Winnipeg, Manitoba -- he was certainly an underdog in this company. Nevertheless, he and Coconut Grove, a 13-year-old Colombian-bred Thoroughbred, were amazing...the stallion's efforts to jump clean were nothing short of miraculous." This was Coconut Grove's first time jumping indoors, ever.


I, personally, am not a knowledgeable judge of jumpers but I have spent some time watching footage of Coconut Grove jumping and this enthusiast can heartily say that he is a very exciting horse to watch. He literally does seem to be able to launch himself from almost anywhere in front of the fence and get over it. Even more impressive, in some jumps where the rider rode him too deep into the first jump of a double or a triple he was able to compensate for the second and third jump and get over those clear, as well. He does have the characteristic of a good jumper to be able and willing to open up his hind legs and throw them out, going over a big jump. Tom Reed of Morningside Stud in Ireland commenting on jumping technique in general says, "A super horse may not do this every time because it is not needed. He has the scope to do the job over small courses, but he will do it when he has to, to get the job done over big courses. The less talented horse never opens up and always tucks his hind legs. This is probably because he cannot use his back and hind legs appropriately, which is a lot of what makes him less tal-



Napur

ented as a jumper. This is particularly important for international Grand Prix classes. For speed classes (1.35 - 1.45 m.) and small GP classes, tucking versus opening up the hind legs may be less important." My impression of Coconut Grove is that he seems to have unlimited ability. He can literally jump from anywhere and clear fences. He has spring, scope and unbelievable desire to jump his best, a wonderful combination of "heart" and talent.

Tamara Smith claims that Grand Prix superstar Napur was the only other Thoroughbred stallion to have extreme success at the Grand Prix level of showjumping in the USA. Not coincidentally, strong similarities link the pedigrees of her two stallions. Napur is Damascus over Bold Ruler and Coconut Grove is Bold Ruler over Damascus. Smith thinks that Coconut Grove is "better than Napur" as Napur always had a top rider and never achieved the same scope as Coconut Grove. "Coconut Grove can jump from any angle and distance. He's quick with his knees and clever with an uncanny ability to get his body out of the way. Even at a bad distance to the fence he can get out of it," says Smith.

Smith says she continues to get inquiries from European breeders trying to buy him. Having entered the US on an international passport, he has now been issued American Jockey Club papers. Last year he had just a couple of babies because of the delay getting his Jockey Club papers. He is now approved by the AHHA to be used on selected Holsteiner mares. Mares must be pre-approved by a selection committee that has been charged with assuring that he is bred only to mares of appropriate conformation and with at least half Holsteiner blood. Smith says, "I love Holsteiners and I love the way that they move and jump. I am delighted and honored that the AHHA has chosen Coconut Grove as its first Thoroughbred outcross stallion for American Holsteiners." 

Many thanks to Tamara Smith, Wendy Webster, and Cheryl Frank.