



Photo courtesy of Scott Trees.

Tim was the Grand Champion Stallion at the 1999 Keuring. He has participated in stallion quadrilles at Dressage at Devon. He is owned by Royal Palm Friesians.

sensitive horses who respond to every command.

"The Spanish were ruthless in culling. If there was a horse with a bad temperament, it was gone; [the genes] were not passed on," she says.

Garrett was converted to the Andalusian from Quarter Horses and Paints. "I still have a fondness for a good bull dog type Quarter Horse, but whenever I saw an Andalusian in a movie, the horse would take my breath away. After years of coveting a long haired Spanish beauty for myself, I finally took the plunge and bought a gorgeous mare." It wasn't long before Garrett and her Grand Prix Andalusians was chosen as the retirement home for Temerario VII, a champion grand prix dressage stallion and former star of Medieval Times Dinner Theater in

California. Now a thriving breeding program keeps Garret busy.

Thurston also was converted to the joy of the Spanish horse after years of working with other breeds. "They have an inherent connection to people and easily pick up on the horse/human relationship," she says.

Fans of the Friesian horse have also found that these powerful, impressive horses not only have the athletic ability for the show ring, but an eager to please temperament. "He's not what anybody expects him to be," says Paula Marsh of her Wyn de Plumm, a 1999 Friesian stallion. Wyn was the 2003 Keuring Reserve Champion Young Stallion in the United States and in 2004 he passed his stallion performance test, earning 10s for character and temperament as well as high performance scores, including a



Photo courtesy of Gordy Diers.

### Wyn de Plumm and Grant Schneidman

9.5 for jumping and an 8.5 for canter.

Wyn is now in dressage training with Grant Schneidman of Westmanton Stables and the pair has already taken home several USDF All Breeds Awards. "We were just pleasure riders looking for a trail horse," explains Marsh of her accidental discovery of the Friesian. It was not just the breed's good looks, but its fantastic temperament that encouraged her to not only stand Wyn de Plumm at stud, but also to purchase three Model mares to begin their own breeding program at Wyning Edge Friesians.

#### Challenging the Warmbloods

For the rider who wants both a friend and a competitive, athletic partner, the Baroque horse is often the right match. The Spanish horses are known for their ability to collect, rock back on their

quarters, and stay light in front, making them ideally suited for the movements of dressage. However, some dressage competitors have criticized the conformation that suits collection.

"Many people say the downfall is that [the horses] collect well, but they don't extend well. I think it's a matter of complete and balanced training," says Thurston. "You can get [Andalusians and Lipizzaners] to use their shoulders as long as their shoulders are free. If you collect them too soon in their training, you will lose the extension, just like any horse."

There are several international riders that have discovered how to bring out the best in their Spanish-bred horses. Rafael Soto and his Andalusian stallion, Invasor, have earned top scores at some of the most prestigious competitions