

Gold Rush

Bob and I met Gold Rush when he was a five year old, he was an amazing liver chestnut stallion with the most incredible jump, he was in Belgium at Lieven's yard and we were very impressed, but at the time we were looking for older, more experienced horses.

In 2005 Shaun went to Europe to represent South Africa on the European Young Rider circuit. He took his Stallion, Ulano van Lobos and Jasper. While in quarantine in Mauritius, Ulano jumped out of his paddock and cracked his hoof very badly and this caused him to get Laminitis and was very unsound. Jasper was being returned to Lieven who had agreed to replace Jasper because he was not suited to Shaun.

Upon arriving in Belgium with one lame horse and one not ideally suited to Shaun, we were faced with a dilemma. Shaun was part of the South African Young Rider Team of which there were only 3 riders, and he needed a horse urgently.

Bob asked Lieven if he could track down that amazing liver chestnut stallion, Gold Rush, Lieven said that he had been sold to USA but he would find out. After a couple of days making phone calls Lieven tracked down Gold Rush, he was in Germany, and the USA deal had fallen through. So Bob and Lieven took Shaun to try him. Needless to say Shaun loved him so Lieven said that we could have Gold Rush as the replacement for Jasper. Lieven is an incredible person and very honourable, we could not believe our good fortune as many previous dealings with horse dealers both locally in SA and internationally have been scary experiences!

Gold Rush was then transported directly to Arezzo, Italy for the Nations Cup. Shaun was placed 13th in Grand Prix and our team came 4th in the Nations Cup Team Competition with only the 3 riders. That was the start of an amazing relationship between Shaun and Gold. He went to other shows in Europe and was always very brave if not very schooled. Shaun moved to Kent, England to David McPherson where they trained, one competition that comes to mind is he took Gold Rush to a Puissance in London and came 2nd clearing 2.10 metres.

In the latter part of 2005, Shaun brought Gold Rush and Ulano home to SA. As you are aware Shaun's background was Dressage so all his horses are beautifully schooled, once Gold was home in Shaun's system his basic schooling and flatwork improved dramatically. Gold Rush is the envy of many Dressage riders as his Dressage is fantastic, he can do canter pirouettes, half passes and tempi changes with such elasticity and balance and has an amazing trot.

Shaun started competing Gold Rush here in SA and has always caused a stir with his phenomenal jump, he has won and been placed in almost every competition he has competed in. There are pages of results!

Here are a few...

2007, 2008 and 2009 – SANEF Showjumping Horse of the Year

2007 and 2008 South African Show Jumping Champion

2007 SA Ultimate Show Jumping Champion

2008 SA Outdoor Grand Prix Champion

2007 and 2009 World Cup Qualifier Series winner

2009 SA Show jumper of the year

2007 - 2nd SA Avis Derby, 2008 - 3rd SA Avis Derby, 2009 - 4th SA Avis Derby

Lieven kept asking if we would consider selling Gold Rush and we have always said NO!!!

So after yet another brilliant show in Cape Town, where Gold Rush and Shaun were on form winning the WCQ and another 150 class and coming 2nd and 4th in the 2 other 150 competitions they were the 150 Victor Ludorum. Lieven had come to watch and support, and again broached the subject of selling Gold Rush. Shaun jokingly said to Lieven that if he received an offer he could not refuse maybe he would consider selling Gold.

So everything happened very quickly, early January someone came over to try Gold Rush and made an offer which Shaun accepted. Gold Rush went to Cape Town, to quarantine, KQS and Shaun will fly with him to Europe on the 20th March 2010. I think that with everything falling into place so fast, it was meant to be.

Shaun said that he believes that Gold Rush is a World Class Championship horse and it will be great to see the horse, he had produced, on the World Stage. Shaun never wanted to take the risk of quarantine and travel to Europe to compete his horses internationally again, and has always been reluctant to take them back to Europe.

He says that riding is not his entire life. He loves his work and living in SA and enjoys riding as a hobby and loves competing here in South Africa.

He does not want to live in Europe again to be able to compete. He says he would love to compete at that level but only if he can fly his horses directly to a show and return directly home without the quarantine restraints we are faced with in South Africa.

These restraints put our horses and riders at a very unfair disadvantage to the rest of the world. It is very costly and very risky, and makes it almost impossible to compete fairly with other countries.

So although it is very sad to see him leave, it will be exciting to follow his future and he is going to a wonderful new owner who loves his horses and treats them like royalty his facility and stable yard is Five Star and each horse has a stable like a palace and 2 grooms to fuss over each horse. So Gold Rush will be even more spoiled!!!