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## **Benicio: Striking in every respect**

### **Hanoverian Stallion of the Year 2025**

**Verden. The name of the Hanoverian Stallion of the Year 2025 is Benicio. He passes on type, stability and rideability to his offspring with reliable consistency. Iris Borchers, daughter of the late breeder Wilhelm Stadtlander, accepted the award: an oil painting by the artist Manfred Busemann and a generous cheque. Together with R+V/Vereinigte Tierversicherung, the Hanoverian Society has been honouring an important Hanoverian stallion for over 30 years.**

Benicio by Belissimo M/Velten Third was bred and raised by Wilhelm Stadtlander at Veltenhof in Lilienthal. His dam, St.Pr.St. Valencia, was a multiple winning mare at the mare shows in Lilienthal, received an Ib prize at the 2002 Ratje-Niebuhr Show in Verden and represented the colours of the Hanoverian Society in the same year at the last Federal Mare Show in Neustadt/Dosse.

Benicio was licensed in Verden in 2007 and went to Ian Callander in South Africa via the stallion sales. However, he did not leave Germany without first serving a short breeding period at Veltenhof. In 2009, Benicio's first four offspring were born in Germany. At the age of six, the ever-eager stallion returned to Germany and impressed with his tournament performances with Anna-Sophie Fiebelkorn in the saddle, culminating in the Bundeschampionat title. At the time, he received a 10 for his trot and walk and a 9 for his canter. In terms of heredity, the canter later proved to be his strongest gait. Hans-Heinrich Meyer zu Strohen, member of the licensing committee had taken over the training of the liver chestnut at that time and, on the occasion of the Bundeschampionat success, stated: "The movement mechanics were already incredibly impressive at the time of licensing. As a two-year-old, however, he was not yet able to

develop the carrying power and uphill tendency that he shows today. This horse has exceptional concentration and is extremely rideable."

Until then, breeding was still not a priority. But the championship title aroused interest, and Benico completed his entry in the Stallion Book I with his victory in the 30-day test in Schlieckau. With a dressage-focused final score of 9.88, he was very close to perfection, and he confirmed his HLP breeding value of 167 at the time with his hereditary traits. The following year, he was stationed at Gestüt Famos, making him available to a larger group of Hanoverian breeders for the first time. It was only then that his extraordinary career as a sire began. At Gestüt Famos, he was ridden by Jessica Lynn Thomas, who trained him up to Grand Prix level.

Benicio is a special stallion personality. He is active in all German and neighbouring foreign dressage horse breeds and, with more than 2,000 offspring, currently has a major influence on breeding. This influence is enhanced by his influential stallion sons and grandsons. Bon Vivaldi NRW (dam's sire Vivaldi) was third in the Bundeschampionat for riding horses and has now reached Prix Saint Georges level. Beck's FRH (dam's sire Desperados, breeder: Christian Thelker, Venne) won the bronze medal at the FEI/WBFS Dressage World Breeding Championships and, at the age of seven, has already placed at S level. Be Sure FRH (dam's sire Scuderia, breeder: Ludwig Fuchs, Meinerzhagen) was also the six-year-old Bundeschampion and is now, at only seven years of age, on his way to the final of the Nuremberg Burg Cup 2025.

Benicio is spending his twilight years at Matthieu Beckmann's stallion station in Wettringen. He is one of the very few dressage stallions who, even at an advanced age, still enjoys great popularity among breeders. With his hereditary strengths in conformation, correctness and structure, this is good news in today's world.

**Caption: Hanoverian Stallion of the Year: Benicio by Belissmo M/Velten Third  
(Photo: Hanoverian Society)**

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