

# HUNT SEAT NEWS

Dedicated to Hunt Seat Enthusiasts

June 2002 Update

~DeGraff Stables~

Stallion Owner, Farm Manager, Broodmare Manager, Stallion Manager, Breeding Manager... a jack of all trades and a master of all. Personal time and commitment along with her own personal touch leaves you feeling completely satiated after your experience with Robin DeGraff. One example of Robin's commitment to mare owners is the fact that on many occasions she personally makes the trips to the airport (many of which can be 4 hour trips) to ship semen to ensure correct flights and times are met and shipping methods continue to run smoothly. The goal of DeGraff Stables is have mares leave their facility pregnant and in as good or better condition than they arrived. "Get'em pregnant and get'em home!" Robin and her competent staff pride themselves on the personal attention each horse and owner receive during their visit not to mention a personal visit with the big guy himself, Indian Artifacts (aka Chief).



Robin and her staff have collectively completed more than 400 hours of specialized equine reproductive and shipped semen classes at college-accredited facilities. Also adding to the educational background is a 2-year degree at Meredith Manor and a 2-year degree at Findley College. Breeding management is not a new career for Robin. After graduating from Meredith Manor, Robin worked as a breeding manager at a gaited horse farm managing 13 stallions. DeGraff Stables also hosted a 16-hour on site weekend seminar with Karen Berk (renowned breeder, trainer, judge, clinician and author) and plans to host a similar seminar 4th quarter of 2002 geared toward mare owner and stallion management.

Broodmare and foal accommodations are first class. Mares are referred to on a first name basis therefore ID collars are not necessary. Stalls are oversized for larger mares or mares with babies and are equipped with lights, fans, infrared heaters and automatic fly spray system in addition to being cleaned daily. All babies are hand-led for safety and making them more manageable when they return home. All mares and foals are turned out daily in one of the 12 outside pastures, paddocks or round pen where they can enjoy the summer breezes off Lake Erie and the Sandusky Bay. All pastures and paddocks are double fenced for additional safety. During inclement weather, daily exercise can be enjoyed in the new indoor arena equipped with automatic water sprinkling system. Mares coming to the farm to foal out are kept in one of the 8 foaling stalls equipped with infrared lights and cameras with volume.



Cameras are also mounted in each barn. Monitors reside in the barn office and living room and bedroom of Robin's personal residence. Only top quality grains and hay is used as feed. Horses are fed three times a day and each horse's particular diet can be accommodated.

Chief is currently being collected on Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday's as needed. The brand new state of the art breeding room is equipped with an adjustable equimount, palpation chute which opens from all directions for added safety which also has an attached playpen for foals, non slip rubber mats, cushion brick and a constant climate control device. The attached lab is also equipped with state of the art equipment - ARS Densimeter with corresponding microscope that is hooked up to a VCR tape to record each semen collection for motility. The Densimeter also counts sperm concentration for the cooled semen transport sheet.



The lab is also equipped with a slide warmer, water bath, centrifuge and incubator. The entire lab has the air filtered through a hepa filter system to remove any airborne dust or contaminants. The farm vet has regularly scheduled visits on collection days and is available on off days as needed. A pool of recipient mares is available for embryo transfer. Teasing program consists of daily teasing with 'Tam', tease stallion, who is housed in the same barn as mares he is teasing.

Competent courteous staff, first class accommodations, mares and babies on first name basis, state of the art equipment... what else could you expect? Mare owners can also expect periodic updates via telephone or e-mail... pictures can sometimes be expected to be attached to e-mails. Skilled communicator can also be added to the list of 'trades'. All these things rolled up equal healthy happy mares and foals. The only thing Robin leaves for the mare owner to do is count down the days until their little bundle of Chief arrives.