

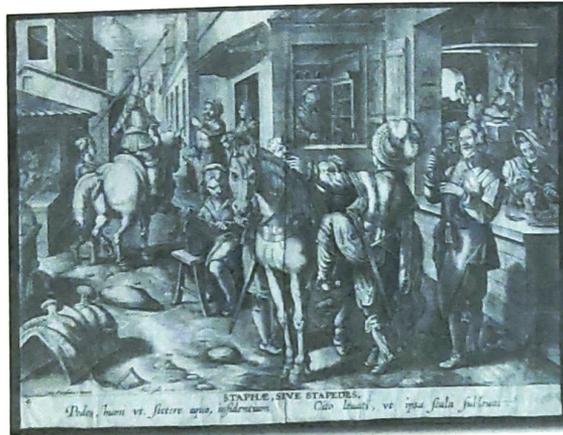
# MODERN or BAROQUE

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A discussion about the topic of baroque versus modern is inevitable when you are invited abroad to present an introduction about the breeding policies. So it happened on that Sunday when The Netherlands played Portugal for the world cup soccer. During a gathering in Verden in north Germany, the concern about the preservation of the baroque Friesian horse was shared. The same discussion was prominently shared by means of an internet questionnaire on the KFPS website. The central topic was the breeding goal of the studbook.



Etching based on Johann van der Straat

This questionnaire rendered useful information for the breeding council and inspection for the renewed formulation of the breeding goal. For some the change to the modern Friesian horse can't go fast enough. For others it's a ghastly image that is categorized with "black KWPN horses." It is, by the way, a misunderstanding that baroque or modern has anything to do with breed type. Breed type - characterized by front, shape of the neck, head, hair, and movement - is holy and has been virtually untouched in the past 25 years of the KFPS.

The discussion about modern or baroque has to do with build. The build needs to be functional, compared to the usage goal. It is logical that the build of the Friesian horse is/has been strongly subject to change. The baroquely built horse - heavier with shorter legs - was desired in the period that the horse was used as a draft horse. Now that the Friesian horse is more and more popular in sport, the modern build is popular. This is just like over one hundred years ago, which is often forgotten.

The current direction of the Friesian horse is clear. The request for sport horses requires a more modern (sport) horse. It is also clear that this requires more than a lighter and longer-legged horse. It especially requires more of the movement. Genetic trends show, however, that over the past ten years we made more progress in modernizing the Friesian horse where it

concerns movement. Just like putting the body of a Ferrari on top of the frame of a Volkswagen Beetle will not render a faster car, we will not just focus on build, but will prioritize movement as well (and the correct judging of it) in our striving for a more modern Friesian horse. This will, among other things, be expressed in the new formulation of the breeding goal and breeding policies. The new formulation, by the way, will not by definition bring bad news for the fans of the baroque Friesian horse, as was the concern recently in Verden for soccer fans.

A modern built horse is absolutely preferred, but a more baroque horse with good breed type and good basic gaits can also get the star predicate within the "new" breeding goal.



Etching published by Philips Galle, as part of a series (c 1580), entitled "Phryso." Etched by Hendrick Goltzius after Johann van der Straat.

