



In my childhood, I grew up with a black and tan dachshund and a Dutch Shepherd. When I left my parents' home and went to live with my later wife Edith, we were dogless for a short period. Because of our work, we had at first several rehomed dogs such as a Dalmatian, German Shepherd and Bouvier. From the age of eight until about the age of forty-five, horse riding (dressage) was my great passion. We have had several horses and also bred several foals. Currently we still have one elderly horse. In 2003, the first Ridgeback puppy Mexx came to live with us and, in retrospect, that has been a turning point. Looking back, there are two worlds for me, namely the horse world and the Ridgeback world. That is also what my kennel name Paerdecroon is based on. Paerd means horse and croon is of course derived from the ridge. The kennel name is just written in a little old Dutch/African style.

Mexx was meant to be our pet dog but on a junior day organised by the RRCN in 2004, the judge thought she was an outstanding Ridgeback and they encouraged me to enter a dog show one day. Because I was busy with the horses and riding I finally decided in 2006 to enter the RRCN Club match and that was actually the beginning of my Ridgeback adventure and the end of my horsemanship.

After much practise how to handle a dog, Mexx became Dutch and International Champion. She

had her first litter in 2007 and is therefore the founder of our kennel Paerdecroon. Till now we bred 18 litters. Because I always want to do everything perfectly, I started education courses from the Dutch Kennel Club during the years. This eventually resulted in being appointed as a judge for the Rhodesian Ridgeback in 2014 and for the Dalmatian in 2018. In 2023 I passed my examination for the Basset Hound and now I am studying for the Beagle. Since 2014, I have had the honour of judging Ridgebacks at great (club) shows in many European countries and also in Sydney, Australia. Because of the atmosphere and the many entries, Club matches and Specialties are still my preference to judge and to compete. In 2021 the Ridgeback and Dutch kennel club organised the next examination for the Ridgeback, in which I was an instructor and one of the two examiners. Since 2022, I am also one of the teachers for the education Exterior and Movement from the Dutch Kennel Club. This education is held once in a year and is the last in the serie studies to become an aspirant judge in the Netherlands. After reading this it may be clear that my cynological education and knowledge is in judging dogs and not in handlers or owners. Since 2004, I have owned 23 Ridgebacks and achieved many nice show results with our own-bred Ridgebacks at major international shows such as the WDS and Crufts. Currently we have 11 Ridgebacks in the house. The oldest is 9 years old and the youngest one from our latest litter is 4 months. Professionally I work as an asset manager. With three partners, we have our own business company.

I am really looking forward to judge at the Club show from the SKCHR. I never been in your nice country. Besides a good atmosphere on the showground, I hope to see a lot of nice Ridgebacks!

Met vriendelijke groet,
Henk Salm