

Diamond beats half brothers

Josta 29 really had everything a good dairy cow should have

The story of Goolstar Diamond, the new chart-topper in the Dutch cattle breeding rankings, is an unusual one. Not the result of a deliberate cross by the breeders, his mother was a test bull's daughter and he even has a gap in his pedigree.

"We have never had a better cow than Josta 29," says breeder Frank van Gool, talking about the mother of Goolstar Diamond. "She was strong, sturdily built and had a superb udder, good legs and really high milk production. In her prime she produced more than 60kg of milk each day for three months. She lived for 10 years and, as far as I'm concerned, Josta 29 really had everything a good dairy cow should have."

A Jocko son, Goolstar Diamond was the highest new chart entry when the January ratings were published and immediately topped the list of all tested Holstein Friesian bulls in the Netherlands.

A few days after the new ratings came out, Frank van Gool and his wife Corien, were celebrating their success with cakes when a representative arrived with congratulations and a small gift.

Jocko progeny

Five years ago, the mother of Goolstar Diamond, Josta 29, had proved herself 'just' as an outstanding milk producer. In her best listing, at the age of four-and-a-half, she produced 14,816kg of milk in 305 days with 5.12% fat and 3.58% protein, giving her a lactation score of 141.

It was breeding technician Henk Buijs of CRV who discovered Josta 29. "At that time we had used 12 sons from sire Jocko Besne. When his daughters started milking, he began dominating the ratings – at that time there were few better sires, which is why the breeding council decided to use more Jocko sons. We went looking for Jocko progeny and I found the impressive milk producer Josta 29, a Veneriete Willis daughter from the test period.

"With a high protein rating and superb udder, Willis was an interesting specimen and the combination with the high-fertility, high-milk production genes of Jocko was a good one."

With a dairy herd of more than 70 head of cattle, Frank achieves a rolling annual average of 10,230kg of milk with 4.18% fat and 3.47% protein. "I set great store by cows that produce a lot of milk. For this reason, the genes for milk production, together with good udders and legs, have high priority on my list when it comes to breeding," he says.

Frank describes himself as a fanatical, all-round producer and a real 'do-it-yourself' enthusiast. "I want to be good at all aspects of farming. For example, I built our barn myself. I like being in control of things and the cows here definitely do well, but I am not a top breeder."

Before she went dry, Josta 29 was classified with a score of 88 points. "A few months later we had some bad luck and CRV had good luck – we had a bull calf," says Frank "We were enormously proud though. Why did I opt for Jocko at that time? He performed well for us, and as far as quality is concerned, our vote goes to Josta."

CRV subsequently arranged for the cow to be inseminated on a number of occasions, but with limited success.

Immediate nomination

Diamond has also been tested in the Czech Republic where, according to CRV, the figures obtained in the Netherlands were confirmed. Henk Buijs has now seen six of his Dutch daughters. "They are not the very milk type cows, nor are they large, but they are well-built and

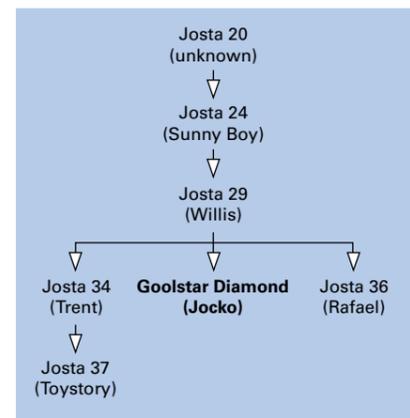


Frank van Gool: "We have never had a better cow than Josta 29"

broad in the forequarter. They have square udders and strong legs and they are sturdy. If you ask a producer about his heifers, he'll pick out the good-looking ones, but if you go and inspect them together and have a look at the production as well, the producer will come to the conclusion that the very best heifers are the unremarkable but reliable ones."

CRV has immediately named Goolstar Diamond as a sire in the breeding programme because he has performed so well, and combines good production and good appearance with good secondary characteristics. "Naturally we are concerned that we have used at least 10 sires who have Jocko as father or maternal grandfather. But according to the Dutch breeding ratings, Diamond is better than Jocko half-brothers Jardin and Roumare."

The pedigree of Diamond, as well as his mother Josta 29, also includes



grandmother Josta 24 (by Sunny Boy) and great-grandmother Josta 20, whose father is unknown. "In the past we have obtained bull calves for our own use from other breeders. Diamond's great-grandmother is from one of these bulls, whose pedigree is not registered," says Frank.

The popularity of Diamond seems justified by the figures. However, potential users will have to be patient. According to CRV, semen will not be available until April. "Initially the signs were good, but because this is a Jocko son, and there are so many of them at international level, there is no rush to start production immediately," explains Henk. "On average, his daughters have not been lactating for more than 150 days yet, so everything has moved very fast."

At home, Josta 36, a Rafael daughter out

of Josta 29, is continuing the family tradition of high production. In 305 days, the heifer produced 9,618kg of milk with 4.43% fat and 3.60% protein and a lactation score of 125. "From the point of view of external appearance, the progeny of Josta 29 cannot compete with her, so the family is not in demand with the breeders," says Frank. "But we have another full sister of Diamond coming into milk and in February a Toy Story daughter out of the Trent half-sister of the bull calved, and this is looking good as well."

Diamond does not produce champion cows, but unremarkable, normally developing animals who perform outstandingly well in the milking parlour. A high production PLI of £189 comes from +468kg of milk with +28kg, +0.13% of fat and +21.3kg, +0.08% of protein. With 97 points for fertility, he scores

Goolstar Diamond (Jocko x Willis)



Josta 29, mother of Diamond

Production Proof 127 daughters in 114 herds
(DairyCo breeding+, Interbull January 2009)

Kg M	% fat	% prot.	Kg fat	Kg prot.	PIN	PLI
+468	+0.13	+0.08	+28.0	+21.3	£46	£189
Longevity:		+425 days (exceptional)				
SCC:		-10 (very good)				
Calving ease:		105 (easy)				
Temperament:		101 (average)				
Milking speed:		102 (average)				
Type Merit:		+1.89				

well compared with other Jocko sons. Diamond also has outstanding credentials in terms of longevity (+425 days) and cell count (-10). Of note are his udder score of 110, feet and legs 109 and a final score of 111.

Florus Pellikaan



Josta 36,
Rafael sister of
Diamond