

South African Judging Training Course.
Jo Jenkins-Hornets Herd.

Grading Piet Wannenburg's Property.

Well, where to start. What a trip, what an opportunity! I have competed and judged horses at top level including The Royal International Horse Show and The Horse of the Year Show, but I have never judged livestock. The invitation from Ian Johnson to join a group of fellow Boer Goat breeders on a visit to the HOME of the boer goat, South Africa, was too good to be missed. Our mentor was Kobus Senior Lotter who is a world-renowned expert on the boer Goat.



No gridlock traffic jams here!

Day 1 morning. We set off in high anticipation to the Lotter family farm, where in this area, Kobus Junior had his house. Some of the roads were tarmac, were only the width of a car and in the unlikely event of meeting traffic one had to pull off the road, onto the rough stone at the sides and hoped we didn't create a dust storm! We travelled off the tarmac road and on to rolled stone roads, which were rough, hoping we didn't get a puncture and have to fix it with all the snakes about.

Kobus Senior Lotter met us at the threshold, and we saw approx. 70 goats with their kids who had been gathered in off the veldt so that we could see how well they looked despite the rough sparse vegetation and the worst drought for 30 years. Some of the paddocks are irrigated to provide grazing and Lucerne is grown. Bore holes provided water which supplied many, many paddocks. These had high fences around them to deter the large variety of antelope from pinching the valuable green stuff! However, it didn't deter the monkeys of course of which there are a huge variety and evidently baboons are a real threat to the goat kids.

Kobus had open sided barns and holding pens where we were grateful to get out of the sun to start our Junior Course. We introduced ourselves and Kobus had some goats bought in so that he could explain the finer points of the boer goat and start to discover what we all knew of the Breed Standards.

He explained how the Breed Standard was relevant to the living, everyday goat not just show animals. He explained that he would like us to individually discuss each goat as it was bought in, start with the positives, the negatives and then which of the 3 sections available we would place them. Kobus would then question our reasoning or push for more information, he would either agree or just tell us we were plain wrong!



Grading at Piet Wannenburg's property.



All the studying paid off.