



The CODI/PCI Savannas

Terry Hankins ©2005

Dale Coody began selectively breeding Savannas in 2004 from nine of the original Savannas imported by Jurgen Schulz from the Cilliers family in South Africa. These Savanna does with one of the original import bucks was photographed at Coody's ranch in Lawton, Okla., in 2005.

Many breeders are familiar with the CODI/PCI Boer goats but few know that a small group of Savannas was on the same flight from South Africa

By Trevor Ballif

It is well known in the goat world on how coveted the CODI/PCI Boer goats have become. It's common to hear someone argue that these are the only "True" South African Boer goats, as they were live animals flown directly from Cape Town, South Africa, to the United States.

These bloodlines are highly sought after and heavily marketed by the few who possess them. These were, in fact, hand-picked by Jurgen Schulz and Tollie Jordaan for more than six months from farms throughout South Africa. The quality was so high they became famous very quickly, with sales over \$20,000 per animal regularly. But did you know that Jurgen Schulz also brought Savannas as well on the same leased DC-10?

As a Savanna goat breeder, I have had great interest in the history of the industry and I was surprised to find out how linked we are to the CODI/PCI Boer goat import. This curiosity led me to start research that culminated in recent conversations with the first men involved with breeding the Savanna goats in the United States: Tollie Jordaan and Mr. Jurgen Schulz himself.

In 1994, Jurgen Schulz was running the family exotic animal import business started by his grandparents in 1898. He had become well known for his extensive work with Mutual of Omaha's *Wild Kingdom* television show in the 1970s. The episodes filmed in South Africa were always with the assistance of Mr. Schulz and his team.

Jurgen became very close friends with the show's stars Marlin Perkins and Jim Fowler. "You know this was all staged," Jurgen told me. "Cameras would be placed in good spots and then we would recapture the animals for the TV program."

I had felt it was his fame and proven experience that helped facilitate the Boer goat import. Jurgen told me it was the fall of apartheid that was the key factor. Nelson Mandela came to power after years of pressure from around the world. The uncertainty of the future became reasons why documents were approved ... that, and U.S. cash.

Jurgen got the idea to bring the Boer goats into the United States because he had been bringing baby goats to the petting zoos in Europe. They were so popular that he felt they would be very desired here too. Jurgen's mom was living in South Africa at the time and found Tollie from a newspaper advertisement. Tollie's grandfather was one of the Boer goat breed developers. Tollie became Jurgen's partner in South Africa.

The strength of the U.S. dollar at the time gave Jurgen some additional leverage to talk goat ranchers into the sale of their top stock for his import herd. The men around the project have all said how picky he and Tollie were in the process. For half a year, he tried to visit every goat farm possible to view goats and make purchases.

Jurgen grew up in South Africa as a child so he spoke Afrikaans, the native language. During the negotiations, Jurgen wore fancy cowboy boots and a big hat, he would let Tollie speak to the ranchers. The ranchers would say, "I will take \$20; but will the American pay more?"

Jurgen would be able to know when he could make a better deal. Jurgen was able to acquire hundreds of goats using U.S. dollars at a time when the South African currency was in turmoil.

As he accumulated goats they were brought to Tollie Jordaan's South African ranch in the Swaershoek Valley on the Eastern Cape. This began the process of the first quarantine that lasted three months.

Each of the goats would be evaluated for its health before it would move forward in the long process.

According to Tollie, teams of veterinarians were used, because the herd size had grown to more than 900 goats. At the end of this first quarantine the goats that were cleared were moved to a Cape Town animal holding facility. This began the next 3-month quarantine and series of testing and customs inspections.

The South African-assigned veterinarians inspected each goat, its documentation and drew blood/saliva to test for 11 different diseases. There is a tick in South Africa whose bite causes a false positive to the Blue Tongue disease test. Any goats whose results were positive for any of the testing were removed from the import group and placed in other areas of the facility. This is why some versions of the import story that I have read say goats were divided into two groups.

Mr. Schulz was using his exporting company, C.O.D.I. (Camelids Of Delaware Inc.), to fly them directly back to the United States on a leased DC-10. He was a 50% owner of C.O.D.I., Tom and Brian Hunt each owned the other half. He contracted with Pet Center International (P.C.I.) to handle the customs process and permits. This is why these goats are referred to as the CODI/PCI imports. Each goat was identified with a yellow CODI/PCI ear tag.

I had read before that it was a great relief when the South African government released the quarantine and approved the transport. The herd was so large that it had to be divided in half, as the DC-10 flight was not large enough to handle a herd this size. It was 1995 when the first flight arrived in Key West, Fla. The plan was for the now off-loaded DC-10 to return that same week to South Africa and recover the remaining goats.

But prior to departure it needed an inspection required of commercial aircraft called a 100-hour. This inspection led to some needed maintenance and a parts arrival delay. This inspection and maintenance delay caused the loss of the remaining goat import. The approval for travel paperwork for the goats had a set time limit. This time limit expired before the next trip could occur. The repeated attempts to secure new travel approval were denied.

According to Schulz, that's not what happened.

"Haha, I heard that version of the story too," said Jurgen. "There was never a second flight planned — I left the goats that did not pass the testing ... I am not sure what happened to them, maybe Tollie kept them."

On an island farm in Key West, the United States customs process began. The teams of U.S. inspectors started their task. Again, each goat was identified, matched to customs documents and re-tested for disease.

These goats would now face hot, humid weather in crowded conditions in southern Florida. The goats would remain in this quarantine farm for another three months until Jurgen could secure ap-

proval for transport to his Lampasas, Texas, farm.

On arrival to Texas, the quarantine process would begin again. The state of Texas inspectors and veterinarians began testing the final quarantine for the weary South African travelers and a few of their new offspring. These goats would be the most documented, disease tested and government supervised since they were direct imports from South Africa.

The CODI/PCI goats would stay at Jurgen's farm until his Kifaru Exotics sale on June 1, 1996. Ranchers from all over the country traveled to Texas to make purchases and begin breed improvement projects in the United States. Champion Boer sires like Kaptein, DSM Kala, 519, 555, PBL JR, Tsjaka, CODI Queen, Lobola, are all progeny from the Jurgen Schulz import. This month marks the 20th year anniversary of the dispersion sale.

The rest of the story ...

But tucked into this story is a handful of Savanna goats and Dorper sheep. Just a small number made the trip from Cape Town to Texas on the same plane, and they are just as coveted to Savanna breeders as the CODI/PCI Boers.

Our pedigrees use the farm Identifier as "JCS" for the Jurgen Schulz Savannas. In retrospect, I think we should have called them CODI/PCI as our Boer colleagues do. Jurgen did not sell the Savannas at the 1996 Boer dispersion sale, but kept and bred them himself for several years. This makes Jurgen Schulz the first Savanna breeder in the United States.

I asked him why he kept them. "People had never heard of them, I didn't think they would sell," he said.

Over the next two years Boer breeders visiting his farm would view his Savannas and asked him to sell some. On Dec. 6, 1998, the Savanna dispersion sale took place with 32 Savannas for sale. Each of the animals were sold with a goat certificate letter listing the goats JCS tag #, the date of birth, and the sire and dam, and ID from the Dubbe Cillier's farm in S.A. where Jurgen purchased the goats.

Jurgen removed the CODI/PCI tags and replaced them with a dark JCS tag. A master list of each goat and its buyer with addresses was also created for the breeders if they wanted to form a registry of these goats. Like their Boer flightmates, these too could be argued as the only "True" South African Savannas in the United States. These will continue to be the only Savannas to date that were imported as live animals directly from South Africa to the United States. With the fear of hand, foot and mouth disease, its unlikely any live animal import from South Africa will take place again.

The purchase of the Savanna goats was mostly by Boer goat ranchers. They would purchase them as a novelty or for crossbreeding projects. Albert "Bill" Ryals, a well-known and respected Boer breeder in Mississippi, was quick to return to Texas with his son and purchase Savannas. He had been there two years earlier purchasing Boer stock. His Rocking R farm (RRD) will be one of the first Savanna breeders to enter the herd book and his buck "RRD Mr. N9X", out of his JCS stock, will be known as one of the best Savanna bucks.

Early Savanna breeders such as Claire Powell, Jerry Webb (NJW), Mike Browning and Carl Langle (DLR) helped create the beginning of our breed. Carl also was instrumental in the formation of a Savanna herd book at Pedigree International to register these animals. To this day, Carl and Jerry are still breeding Savannas.

Dale Coody (4C Farm) was very impressed when he saw the Savannas. He decided to travel the country and buy Savannas from the breeders who were at the Kifaru sale. The Ty Williamson and Boney Winkler partnership (WW) and Wilson Brothers (SP75) sold their Savanna herds to Mr. Coody. Dale continued to acquire as many



Exotic animal exporter Jurgen Schulz used his connections in South Africa to gather up the first Boers and Savannas that were shipped to the United States.

as he could and eventually grew the largest herd of Savannas in the country.

Some say the most important thing Mr. Coody did for this industry was to collect semen from the original CODI/PCI “JCS” import bucks and their top progeny to help preserve base stock of genetic material for the future. Some of our Savanna industry champion bucks, according to Dale, are JCS 35, JCS/DLR 20, RRD Mr. N9X, WWE05, NJW green 36 and SP75 1097 “Savi”.



Dale Coody

Today, we have more than 130 active Savanna breeders and the future looks very bright.

I told Jurgen about the huge growth of the Savannas in the United States.

He told me, “The Savannas are supposed to have four teats!”

Err ... Umm ... What? I said.

“Yes, the Savanna is a tough field goat,” Jurgen said. “The South African breeders selected for four working teats to handle a larger kidding.”

This is where an uncomfortable silence took place.

“Jurgen,” I said, “I have been selecting for 1x1 teats for six years. It’s been real hard.”

“Yes, Americans do strange things,” he said.

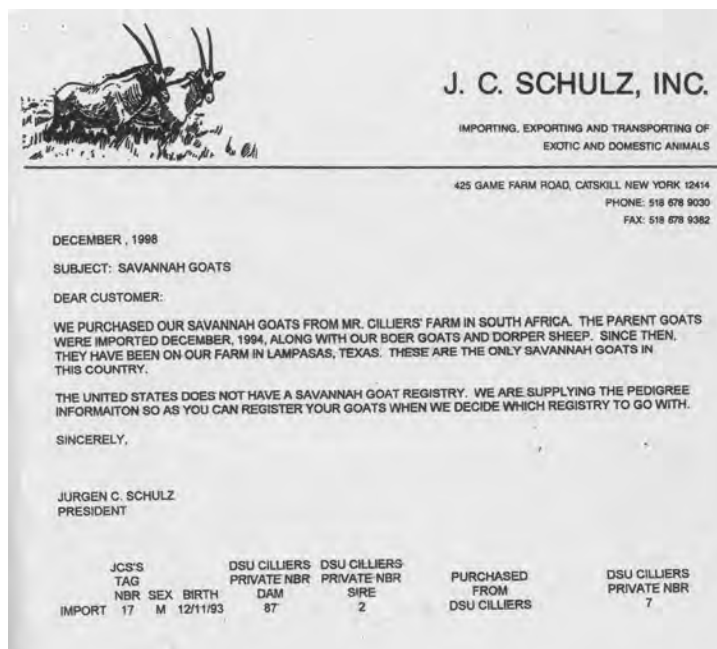
My mind would not stop churning after my conversation with Jurgen; I had to call Dale Coody.

“Dale, Jurgen said Savannas are supposed to have four teats!”

“Yup,” said Dale. “I have been trying to tell people that for years.”

I am now getting good at uncomfortable silence ... The rest of that story is for another day.

The long planning, rugged travel, hand-picked selection process, combined with lots of luck, led to the fruition of Jurgen Schulz’s Boer goat project. Thankfully, a few hitchhiking Savanna goats were along for the ride. The Savanna and Boer goat breeders



Courtesy Jurgen Schulz Archives

This letter accompanied each goat sold at the Savanna dispersion sale.

owe a great deal of thanks to visionaries like Jurgen Schulz and Tollie Jordaan on this 20th year anniversary of the dispersion sale.

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Special thanks for additional contribution of research to this article from Jon Giezentanner, Carl Langle, Dale Coody, Jerry and Carol Webb, Bill Ryals and John D. Smith. It was the meticulous records of Mr. Jurgen Schulz’s secretary, Ms. Joanne F. LaTart, that provided USDA records, a complete list of each animal, and everyone who purchased them at the dispersion sale; she was invaluable to my research. She retired several years ago after 33 years of service with Jurgen.

(Trevor Ballif and his wife, Jamie Ryan Ballif, are Savanna goat breeders in Virginia. Visit www.sleepyhollowsavannas.com. Trevor is the editor of the online newsletter savannagoatnews.com.)

From the reporter’s notebook . . .

By Trevor Ballif

Jurgen Schulz owns car dealerships in Lampasas, Texas, but is still importing animals with Kifaru. He travels out of the country frequently and was in Costa Rica during my first interview with him. He was in Texas during my May 2016 interview. He shared many stories and anecdotes that are too numerous for this article including a \$600,000 sale of a 14-year-old Alpaca. Yes, he was the importer of those too. He also was the importer of the Boers from New Zealand years before the CODI/PCI sale. I hope to be able to share some of these stories in the future with *Goat Rancher*.

The Afrikaans spell Savanna without the “h”. The European English spelling is with the “h”. This is similar to spelling of



Jurgen Schulz’s facility in Lampasas, Texas, where the CODI/PCI Boers — and eventually Savannas — were auctioned.

the word color as “colour” and flavor as “flavour”. Americans have adapted the Afrikaans spelling of Savanna.

Tollie Jordaan sold all his goats and sheep and bought a helicopter about a year ago. He now guides hunts for wealthy Americans in South Africa. He was in the bush on a hunt during my interview. ■