

The Establishment

In the latter half of the nineteenth century a robust middle class, with increasing leisure time and discretionary income, began to emerge in industrial nations such as Great Britain, Belgium, America and Germany. A consequence was an interest in new diversions and hobbies, and pastimes such as softball and bowling became popular recreational and social outlets. Many people became enthused with pet ownership and particularly participating in conformation exhibitions and competitive training.

As this brave new world of the purebred dog emerged there was increasing interest in banding together to discover natural populations of dogs with commonality of appearance and purpose to formalize as a breed. Each of these incipient breeds required organization in order to support a registry, establish conformation standards, appoint judges and conduct conformation exhibitions and sometimes working trials. Thus each incipient breed group tended to become formalized and establish a national breed club, and in time see the emergence of subsidiary regional and local clubs.

Organizational and management aspects of canine affairs required ongoing services such as the administration of registration records, trial results and working certificates which benefit enormously from the economies of scale; one national registry system is generally quite enough. For these reasons the foundation of the purebred dog world was from the beginning a national level kennel club such as the AKC or the Kennel Club in Britain. Each of these provided services and organization to the various affiliated national breed clubs. The focus was on conformation exhibition, validation of the purebred paradigm and promotion of companion dog ownership. Tension between the evolution and solidification of working functionality and consolidation of conformation type and structure was palpable from the beginning.

This breed creation process was not always harmonious and orderly, as there were sometimes several incipient clubs competing for affiliation. Although the AKC and British KC were predominant from their earliest existence, other nations have a long history of multiple national kennel clubs and ongoing conflict.¹ Belgium is an example, for after more than a century of conflict there are even today two still existent entities, that is St. Hubert and the NVBK. (And remnants of Kennel Club Belge, formerly robust and prominent.)

Comprehensive organizations provide critical economies of scale, long-term stability and reliability in maintaining important archival information – usually through the employment of a full time professional staff. Registries, originally based on massive paper and card file records and an army of clerks, today are generally in the form of a computer resident relational data base system.

Although a few of the more prominent breeds, such as the German Shepherd, run breed specific local, regional and national conformation shows, multi breed shows which can share a site, judging assignments, administration and record keeping are in general much more practical and efficient. Working trials, with the

¹ There are smaller, competing registries in the United States, such as the United Kennel Club (UKC), but they are not as strong and robust.

exception of regional or national championships, even when run by breed specific organizations, are generally open to all appropriate breeds.

Although von Stephanitz and his early associates, and others in each nation, were serious about function and character, in general there was never very much real concern for practical canine function, vigor and health. Competition for popularity tended to create selection for extreme physical features, and many breeds evolved into grotesque caricatures such as the English Bulldog, the reverse bite of the Boxer, the narrow Collie head or the extreme angulation of the German Shepherd.

In general the national and international canine establishment, that is primarily the FCI and affiliated national kennel clubs, have been focused on show and companion dog affairs to the exclusion of working functionality. This has led to the proliferation of breeding lines generally deficient in athleticism and character, especially appropriate aggression, for effective police and military service. Partially in response to this separate work oriented organizations such as the KNPV and the NVBK in Belgium have evolved in parallel. Working breeders existing within the FCI system tend to use the registration process but generally engage in passive resistance in order to maintain their lines and culture. The police and military people have not been alone in this, for the serious hunting dogs have also tended to flourish in their own separate organizations and cultures.

In 1873 the *Kennel Club* in England was founded as the first of its type. By 1900, when the SV was formed, there were breed and national clubs, often fiercely competing, over much of Europe. Although the Belgian Shepherd advocates were active from about 1890, the police breeds as a whole were late to this party. The German Shepherds and Dobermans became prominent and prosperous prior to WWI but most of the others – the Rottweiler, Bouvier des Flandres and Riesenschнауzer – did not have a serious presence until the 1920s, largely because of the disruption of the First World War.

These clubs were and are anything but egalitarian; although ordinary people can sometimes be voting members at a lower level, elaborate structures were established in the beginning to retain real power in elite hands. As an example, the *American Kennel Club* is made up of individual conformation and performance clubs, but only a very select few clubs have an actual vote, a say in AKC affairs. Most of the local or regional clubs are non-voting, have no input, influence or control. The continental breeds in general and the police breeds in particular, implicitly viewed as lower class, have always been systematically marginalized.

Although the emergence of national canine structures was often a competitive and adversarial process, Belgium led the way in terms of strife and intrigue, spawning intensely competing national organizations whose quarrels would spill over to most of a century. Conflicts often centered on superficial issues such as coat texture, length and color – as in the Belgian Shepherd, where an individual dog might be a candidate with one club but not another, with the requirements continually in flux in the formative years. Quite often the exclusion of a particular coat would result in the creation of an entirely new club to legitimize and promote it. This led to the concept of the variety within a breed, and inevitably increasingly complex regulations concerning what circumstances permitted intra variety breeding, and how the progeny were to be registered.

In contrast to the ongoing strife in Belgium – not fully resolved more than a century later – the German Shepherd prospered from the beginning under a single national club, the SV, with unified leadership, at times verging on dictatorship, a major factor in the ongoing prosperity. There is perhaps something to be said for strong, perhaps even dictatorial, leadership at the foundation of a breed. The

problem is that sooner rather than later you wind up with a grasping, venial dullard with a personal agenda; and they seem to live forever and leave power in like hands. The Martin boys might come to mind.

The driving force in the evolution of the purebred dog and the various kennel and breed clubs was the exciting newfound hobby of dog showing, where everybody with a little money and time could buy their way in and become instant players. The down side was that the pretty ribbons, tin cups and "wins" quickly emerged as ends in and of themselves, with any concern for functionality, longevity, vigor or health fading into the background. The dogs themselves tended to become an inconvenience in that they were useless outside the ring, you had to kennel and feed them during the dreary weeks between shows.

In America a whole class of professional handlers emerged, willing to purchase, manage, maintain and show a dog for you without the inconvenience of ever taking actual physical possession. Those of us actually involved in the breeding, training and use of dogs for practical purposes were less interested in clubs, meetings and politics, going about our business oblivious to the changes taking place. Control of the formal organizations was increasingly in the hands of the exhibitionists, and they had little interest beyond the trophies and personal illusions of relevance.

Ultimately the conflicts come down to control of breeding requirements, that is, performance certifications, event and trail rules and the selection and assignment of judges. The show people in control minimize or ignore functional requirements, the result being that those primarily interested in working the dogs evolved their own organizations or opted out, essentially ignored formal structures entirely. The German Shepherd club in Germany, the SV, has tended to have relatively strict requirements on paper, but this is routinely subverted and diluted through the selection of corrupt judges and weak decoys for the show line dogs, allowing dogs to just walk on the field and be given a pass regardless of demonstrated character or merit. The heart of the breed, the real working Shepherd, is increasingly sustained by resilient, single-minded breeders and trainers outside the mainstream of breed clubs, conformation shows and political structures.

Although the closed studbook and emphasis on "pure" breeding was the foundation of this brave new show dog world, other, working oriented, organizations – such as the NVBK in Belgium and the KNPV in the Netherlands – created their own book of origins or required no registration at all, a dog in this environment being what he does on the field, not what is inscribed on a piece of paper. This has created practical problems: registration of an import in another nation can be difficult or impossible, and lack of easily verifiable papers creates the potential for fraud. Each KNPV certificate has a photo of the dog to help alleviate false identification problems – that is the dog sold based on a certificate actually earned by an entirely different dog. These have been difficult issues to deal with.

Although it has become the norm, an all-breed organization in each nation, with subsidiary national breed clubs, was not inevitable; some large and vigorous breeds at one time had the potential to go it alone. The German Shepherd was from the beginning enormously popular and influential, and the Germans never really wanted to play nice, always felt entitled to complete control but were never quite able to make it work internationally. Initiating two brutal military confrontations, especially the German invasions of Poland and France to begin WWII, did not especially engender confidence in German benevolence, and Adolph Hitler provided a compelling illustration of the likely nature of unfettered German domination. The German Shepherd world union (WUSV) was created for this purpose, and incessant German interference in American GSD affairs has created half a century of conflict and strife. As recently as the 1980s there was talk of the Germans establishing their

own standalone international German Shepherd organization, with a single unified studbook, but they never quite built up the courage to make the leap.

The driving force behind these kennel clubs and the conformation or beauty shows was the emerging middle class, with time and money on their hands, seeking hobbies and diversions. The dog show was perfect, for there was no standard, no real world requirements. They could create and define their breeds at will, and the authority resided in the pointed finger of the judge. And of course the best part was that they simply created these judges from among themselves, that it was a political, fashion and popularity process rather than having any basis in canine functionality, vigor or robust good health. Anybody could be a judge, all you needed to do was win some friends and influence some people, and if that did not work fast enough spreading a little money around was sure to do the trick.

There are a number of problems with this, including the arrogance of the inevitable entrenched bureaucracies and the evils of the show systems, which in practice seek as the ideal breeds consisting of ever more extreme clones, dogs virtually identical in structure and to a lesser extent character. The problem is that such populations are increasingly fragile in a genetic sense, and concentrate genetic deficiencies, processes which by their nature and founding principles the kennel clubs incessantly exacerbate. The kennel clubs were created to enable the formation and maintenance of the formal, modern breeds, which as closed and incessantly shrinking gene pools are the root of most of the evils of the modern canine world.

In 2008 the BBC broadcast a searing television series on purebred dogs, kennel clubs and dog shows entitled *Pedigree Dogs Exposed* providing graphic illustration of the consequences of long term close breeding focused on dog show winners and selecting for ever increasing extremes in type in breeding, such as the sloping back and extreme rear angulation of the show line German Shepherds, the grotesque reverse bite of the Bull dog and the extreme narrow head of the Collie. This was a necessary and long overdue public service, putting a spotlight on festering abuses most of us have long been aware of but unable to bring to public focus.

Over the past years, beginning roughly in the mid 1990's, the public has increasingly come to see through the kennel club propaganda and the fact that the AKC has been run by a self-serving elite and a bureaucracy devoted to their own power, financial benefit and security with little real concern for the vigor, functional excellence and welfare of the various breeds. Over a ten-year period, beginning in the middle 1990s, AKC registrations dropped by more than half, and the numbers continue to decline.

By 2008 the embarrassment had become so acute that the AKC bureaucrats were driven over the edge, became so hysterical and secretive that after more than a century they ceased the publication of yearly statistics by breed, revealing, reluctantly it would seem, only breed rank order; yet one more example of the old AKC head in the sand trick. These trends have also become increasingly evident in Europe, and have been especially pronounced among the larger breeds. German Shepherd registrations in Germany have dropped by more than half since the middle 1990s and are still plummeting.

Fédération Cynologique Internationale



Just as many services, such as registration and record keeping, are best rendered within a country by a national kennel club serving all breed clubs, there are international issues such as mutual recognition of registration, judging licenses and breed standards that ultimately require formal arrangements and organization.

As the various breeds and their associated national clubs were coming into prominence at the turn of the twentieth century, just after 1900, each nation essentially stood alone, making their own decisions, running their own shows, appointing judges and maintaining studbooks. Sometimes there were conflicting and competing national breed clubs, as in Belgium which in reality was two conflicting cultures, each with their own languages and heritage. Although the individual breeds were generally national in nature – that is, founded within a specific country such as Germany or France – many became popular abroad, presenting the problem of how internationally recognized standards were to be established and which studbooks were to be definitive.

One option would have been for the nation of origin to become the international authority for each breed, promulgating the standard, appointing and assigning judges and maintaining breeding records. An obvious problem with this was practical and administrative: communication and record keeping would have been difficult in an era where correspondence was via the post office, often with hand written letters and documents, in diverse European languages. An even more critical problem was that foreign enthusiasts would have had no meaningful voice in their own breed affairs, would have had an essentially colonial status, a practical matter of logistics as well as national pride. No sovereign nation wants its neighbors meddling in internal affairs – running shows, collecting registration fees, dictating judges and establishing regulations – even if the breed is of foreign origination. Mutual recognition of registration, and the ability to obtain registration in one's own country for an imported dog, was desirable and attractive from the beginning. The need for an international, Eurocentric, organization became increasingly urgent.

Although it was long delayed, this came to pass in the form of the FCI, the *Fédération Cynologique Internationale* founded May 22, 1911.² The FCI was eventually to become the Eurocentric, predominant worldwide organization of national kennel clubs. The founding nations were Belgium, France, Austria and the Netherlands. The Federation ceased to exist during WWI but was reestablished on April 10, 1921. Were it not for the fact that the major English speaking nations – England, Canada and the United States – stood aloof the FCI would have emerged as the predominant worldwide canine entity.

Today the FCI is headquartered in Thuin, Belgium and includes 84 member nations each with their own national organization and various subsidiary breed and performance clubs. The FCI is primarily an administrative body concerned with international affairs: it issues no pedigrees, licenses no judges and keeps no national records, leaving these matters as the responsibility of each sovereign national club. In order to foster international competition, the FCI does provide rules and regulations for a number of performance event venues such as IPO, although many nations also maintain their own sports, such as French Ring Sport. The FCI is – because of its size, seniority and the robust power of its various national kennel clubs – of enormous influence in the canine world.

The relationship between the AKC and the FCI, governed by formal letters of understanding and informal realpolitik considerations, is well defined, strong and

² In English this becomes *International Canine Federation*.

mutually beneficial. Neither side is likely to step on the toes of its partner in crime, as for instance accepting the registration papers of a competing, dissident registry or allowing dogs without the appropriate registration to compete in international events. It is a simple matter of routine paper work to obtain AKC registration for dogs with a valid FCI registration, and vice versa. Judges commonly serve in each other's domains, as in Germans coming to America to judge a class of German Shepherds. Similar mutual relationships exist with Canada and Britain. This means that for the European looking for an international reputation and clientele, that is with a desire for a piece of the lucrative American market, it was and is essential to have FCI registered dogs. Increasing economic prosperity in Europe has diminished this differential in recent years, but for most of the twentieth century American prosperity made our purchasing power very influential in Europe, and the export market remains lucrative.

In the early years there were sometimes several competing national or regional breed clubs in an individual nation. The advent of the FCI, with only one member club per nation, each in turn with only one national club for each breed, imposed order and stability. The down side was that the most politically agile people and clubs, which tended to be conformation oriented rather than focused on functional utility or work, generally became predominate. Like the dominoes falling power and control gravitated to the effete exhibitionists. Perhaps even in that era the serious trainers wanted to avoid politics and just train their dogs; but leaving politics to the politicians, people with an inclination and preference for intrigue and manipulation, seldom ends well. Quite simply, the exhibitionists were the more adapt and cunning, since their "sport" is primarily about political and social intrigue and manipulation, about arbitrarily ornamental dogs rather than the utility and intrinsic value of a breed as a whole.

Thus although the emergence of the FCI contributed to breeds with an international commonality of appearance, broadly based character standards and requirements were virtually impossible to enforce. Even if work requirements could be established within one nation, there was no mechanism for extending these requirements to other nations, which could produce any number of dogs of unproven character yet with valid international credentials, effectively subverting the character of the breed as a whole.

As Europe became more prosperous – and especially as improvements such as better roads and railroads and innovations such as the automobile, telephone and radio made international travel and communication more practical and convenient – there was increasing interest in international working programs rather than individual sports unique to specific nations or groups of nations. This has many advantages, including the possibility of international competition, a greatly expanded pool of judges and protection decoys and a common, well recognized means of evaluation and comparison of breeding stock working character.

Historically Schutzhund was a German created and administered program, with Germany sometimes reaching beyond her borders to run trials and support organizations in other nations. This led to issues of national sovereignty, resentment of German intrusion and interference, and as a result the desire for alternative programs not dominated and controlled by Germany.

The consequence of this was, beginning roughly in the 1970s, programs very similar to Schutzhund emerging in neighboring nations as increasing numbers of Belgian, Dutch and even French trainers embraced such sports in preference to their national suit oriented venue. This created a lot of confusion and conflict, was becoming the dog sport version of the Tower of Babel.

In response to this a very similar FCI program, IPO (Internationale Prüfungsordnung) emerged as the sleeve style international trial venue, under international auspices rather than any individual nation. This created a certain amount of confusion as often both programs – or similar programs in other nations – existed in an individual nation. Further confusion stemmed from the fact that rules of all of these programs were continually changing and evolving, varied over time.

Although there were ongoing differences between IPO and Schutzhund – and incessant tinkering with the rules and requirements – in later years these programs were increasingly similar to the point that a dog which could do one could easily do the other. In 2012 Schutzhund was finally folded into IPO, bringing unity and consistency, but at the lowest common denominator in terms of truly testing functional police potential and as a guide to breeding and service readiness.

The underlying down side of all of this was that in merging Schutzhund into IPO it was significantly emasculated both in the letter of the law and the underlying spirit, eliminating the vertical wall, the attack on the handler and the original courage test among other things. Many or most of these changes in Schutzhund came prior to the merger, and evolved as responses to incessant push to lower standards and pressure on the dog. I became involved in the late 1970s, and in no instance was the sport made more demanding, a greater test of the dogs – every change was a concession to the play sport persona. Taken as a whole, the changes in Schutzhund were a matter of gradually watering it down to make the last step of merger into IPO in 2012 more transparent.

But this was not the end of the emasculation. Early in 2014 there was a grand announcement from the FCI Utility Dog Commission, headed by Frans Janssen, that the stick hits would not be applied in the protection exercises of the FCI IPO championship in Sweden later that year, and that it was their intention to cave in to political correctness and eliminate the stick hits entirely. Although they backed down under intensive reaction, much of it from America, the vulnerability remains. The FCI is an organization by and for conformation and companion dog breeding with no real commitment to working character. The Utility Dog Commission is made up of national representatives appointed by the member nations national clubs such as the *Raad van Beheer* in the Netherlands or the VDH in Germany, themselves pet and play dog oriented. The fundamental problem is that working dog people have no real representation at all in the FCI scheme of things, no say in working dog affairs.

The aborted threat of elimination of the stick hits in 2014 as a precursor to an intended elimination by 2017 was a harbinger of things to come; further serious compromise and pussification is preordained. The Utility Dog Commission has declared that IPO is a sport rather than a legitimate breeding test, and given this mind set there can be little doubt that the gun sensitivity test and the courage test will be the next to go, for why should gun sureness or courage matter in a play sport?

The essential point here is that when Schutzhund was merged into IPO ultimate control of working dog affairs went from the hands of working dog people to the FCI, which at heart is a pet and show dog organization not only run by squeamish pet and play people, but susceptible to social and political pressure in an increasingly pacifist Europe. The Utility Dog Commission is appointed and under the control of conformation and companion breeders who have ultimate authority. Throwing the working dog heritage under the bus at the first bump in the road is always going to be the reflex action of the FCI to social and political pressure from the animal rights elements and the so called green political movement.

Although it is generally not of particular interest to Americans or working oriented people, an important issue in the FCI world is which working titles entitle a dog entry

to the working class at a conformation show. It is true that for most of us there should not be any adult conformation class except a working class, but in Europe this is a complex, political issue.

The evolution of the suit style protection sports has taken a much different course than what we have seen in Schutzhund and IPO. Although there has been an effort to create an international program in Mondio Ring, discussed below, it has gained very little real traction and instead national programs in the Netherlands, Belgium and France have continued to prosper to the exclusion of others.

There are important political and organizational distinctions among these suit sports. While they are under a separate organization in the Netherlands and mostly separate in Belgium through the NVBK– there is still a remnant of ring activity under *Societe Royale Saint-Hubert* auspices - the French Ring retains an official FCI link through *Societe Central Canine*, the French Kennel club equivalent. But French Ring is a national sport under indirect auspices rather than international venue under the FCI like IPO.

The NVBK in Belgium is a separate organization, for not only do they run their own Ring trials with their own rules, they have their own studbook and registration system. This came to pass because most of the Ring trainers broke away to set up their own organization in 1963, the NVBK, entirely separate from the FCI, in order to take control of their own affairs, to ensure that working trials, judges and integrity were under the control of the actual working people rather than conformation oriented bureaucrats and breeders. Since these dogs are not as readily adapted to direct entry into police and military service, and because the NVBK does not have the strong national police connections that KNPV does, exporting dogs has had some complications. Quasi-legal solutions to the registration problem have evolved, but this is an ongoing source of irritation and annoyance.

The French Ring Sport people do have some complicating issues and entanglements, for in order to participate in the trial a dog must have a valid FCI registration. This is the reason that although at one time a French Ring title would make a dog eligible for the working class at a CACIB international conformation show this is no longer true. This of course was heavy-duty canine politics at work, and how much the Germans were behind this is a matter of conjecture and speculation.

The KNPV trainers have been very much stand alone and aloof about: they have little interest in conformation events and a very strong market for their titled dogs in police and military service worldwide. Because of this, registration is more or less irrelevant to the KNPV trainer. The KNPV has always had some sort of relationship with the *Raad van Beheer*, the Dutch Kennel club, and historically the KNPV titles appeared on Dutch pedigrees. This has come to a stop as the *Raad van Beheer* have striven to become even more politically correct and more dominated by the pet and play people.

The general problem with these bite suit sports is that you cannot easily trial a dog or sell a dog for competition beyond your own nation, that is the Belgian Ring dog for instance would require extensive retraining for either French Ring or KNPV, with the other combinations being incompatible in a similar way. There have been efforts to bring each of these programs to America, but only French ring has had been able to persist, but has remained marginal relative to Schutzhund.

A general desire for an international suit style trial system sanctioned at the by the FCI led to the creation, in the 1980s, of an entirely new FCI program to be known as Mondio Ring. The concept of Mondio ring was to bring people from all of the protection suit sports together to synthesize from the best elements of each a new, universal sport, with the hope that it would become popular and the working dog world could achieve unity. Kind of like Esperanto, a completely new language

intended to be universal and allow all of mankind to communicate. Esperanto just never got off the ground, and English has become the international language, by circumstance more than any special qualities of the language, the English or the Americans. Creating Mondio ring was kind of like gathering delegates from the Pope, the highest-ranking Rabbi and the most senior Mullah to create a new, unifying religion, based on their common roots in the old testament as the children of Abraham, to put a final end to crusades, jihads and wars of liberation and revenge; a noble undertaking but not something the proposed participants were really ready to embrace.

As one would expect, committees tend to solve problems by discarding whatever generates complaints, so the result tends to become a diluted sport with no heritage, no judges in place and no serious people interested in giving up their national sport to play in a new, least common denominator program. The result is that each major European nation continues to emphasize its own national venue for the police style dogs, which is Schutzhund – rebranded and internationalized as IPO – in Germany, KNPV in the Netherlands and French and Belgian ring. Mondio ring has remained as a marginal program and there is little indication of it emerging as a predominant international sport; the traction just does not seem to be there.

What is really needed are two international programs, one sleeve oriented and one bite suit oriented, with absolute separation from the FCI, totally under the control of the people training, breeding and trialing their dogs. Such organizations would no doubt be subjected to reprisal from the FCI, its constituent national organizations and the breed organizations. Therefore, for real control, independent registration programs would likely be necessary. French Ring is still under the FCI thumb through its association with the French national organization, but KNPV or NVBK would be good models.



The American Kennel Club

The *American Kennel Club*, founded in 1884, is arguably the largest and most powerful canine organization in the world, with tight control of all aspects of American purebred dog breeding, registration and standards. Just as deBeers cornered the diamond market and convinced much of the world that love is measured by the size of a relatively common carbon crystal, the AKC has through clever public relations made their registration papers the hallmark of quality, even though they were always issued with no real verification of character, structure or even accuracy of the pedigree. These are two of the most incredible and profitable marketing schemes ever perpetrated, based on not a shred of objective reality.

Unlike national clubs in many European nations, the AKC does not derive power or authority from any government agency; other organizations are not legally excluded.³ The AKC is made up of individual breed and obedience clubs; no individual person has a voice in AKC affairs beyond his social position and influence in the various member clubs. The AKC is among the least democratic of our national institutions: for most of the first century women, black people, Jews and other minorities were systematically marginalized. This is not ancient history; women were formally excluded as delegates or officers until 1974.

All AKC power is in the hands of the member club delegates – the people who elect board members and otherwise make decisions affecting American canine affairs. In the early 1990s the delegates included thirteen representing Beagle clubs and exactly zero represented the Rottweiler, at that time one of the most popular breeds. Least you think that the German Shepherds or Dobermans had proportionate representation, they each had but a single vote, that of the respective national club, out of the then total of 462 member clubs.⁴ Beyond the elite 462 there were over 3000 "affiliated" clubs – read second class – with no representation, vote or power.

The disenfranchised affiliated clubs included all of the regional Bouvier, Rottweiler and German Shepherd clubs and the vast majority of obedience training clubs. The AKC has always been elitist and exclusive, and the working breeds were from the beginning systematically marginalized. It is relatively easy to gather some associates, form an organization and become an affiliated club and thus gain the privilege of sending a check to the bureaucrats every year; but it is virtually impossible for an outside group to gain acceptance as a member club and thus share power and influence.

By 2012 there were still less than 500 member clubs and approximately 5000 second class affiliated clubs; and the AKC has become increasingly secretive and reluctant to reveal detailed registration, financial or other information. Since the member clubs tend to be small, elite and exclusive even the ten to one ratio of non-voting to voting clubs seriously understates the disparity in representation.

The International Kennel Club of Chicago, as an example, is a member club and one of the best known and most powerful and influential organizations in the show

³ There is in fact a smaller and less prestigious United Kennel Club based in Michigan which does register most breeds. The roots of the UKC were in our American hunting breeds, such as the Blue Tick Coonhounds, whose interests were, in the eyes of their advocates, ignored or subverted by the high and mighty of the AKC.

⁴ All statistics cited from the Member Club list in the January 1990 edition of the AKC Gazette.

This table summarizes AKC revenues comparing the years 2008 and 2009. Registration fees, the bulk of the revenue, saw a drop of \$425 million or 13.3%. All of this has been going on for fifteen years and more, the people are voting with their feet.

All figures in **thousands of dollars.**

AKC Income	2009	2008
Registration fees	\$27,743	\$31,933
Recording and event fees	10,031	10,162
Fees and certified pedigrees	6,990	7,951
Royalty and sponsorship income	6,258	6,815
Contributed airtime and print space	4,939	2,776
DNA and other product services	4,670	4,912
Enrollment fees and microchip sales	3,931	3,992
Publications	2,915	3,345
Other income	966	581
Interest and dividends	224	245
Contributions	5	252
Net assets released from restrictions	316	27
TOTAL REVENUES	\$68,988	\$72,991

dog world, running among the largest and most prestigious shows of international interest. What is much less well known is that this is actually a private, for profit entity with closely guarded membership and no financial transparency. No one outside the inner circle can fill out an application and join, or even have access to the lucrative financial records.

The reality is that a controlling majority of the voting AKC member clubs are small, elite eastern clubs in the hands of socially correct people. Many of these clubs are exclusive, for profit and with fewer

than ten members, sometimes all related. Elitism and corruption in the AKC is deep, old and well entrenched and fundamentally hostile to working dogs of all varieties but especially those of the protective heritage.

The primary function of the AKC has been record keeping; that is, maintaining breeding, studbook and litter records. They also license conformation and obedience judges, specify the rules under which conformation shows and working trials are run and record the results so as to issue the appropriate certificates and publish an announcement when a championship or obedience title is earned.

But their real agenda has been to turn every breed into show dogs where the original functionality – be it hunting or police style protection – is irrelevant or even to be purposely subverted where it conflicts with the belief of our betters of how things are and should be in America.

Most, but not all, breeds are represented by a national parent club. If this were a matter of one breed, one vote it would still approximate a democratic process. But the influence of the breed clubs is swamped by the other member clubs, some with only a handful of members. As an example, the *First Company Governor's Foot Guard Athletic Association* of Connecticut is a member club, and its membership has as much representation in AKC affairs as the entire Bouvier or Doberman Pincher communities! Clearly this club serves no other purpose than helping to insure control of the AKC to the sterile, effete eastern elite, one of the last vestiges of the once predominant American eastern upper class, Protestant social structure.

The real power is in the hands of local member clubs, often legally for profit corporations, sometimes with fewer than ten members. Although these clubs typically do nothing more than hold one or two conformation shows per year, they wield immense aggregate power in that they control the selection of judges for their

shows and send a voting delegate to AKC meetings. To the best of my knowledge, the size and legal status of these clubs is not publicly available.

In addition to the disproportionate power in the hands of small, private, exclusive local clubs, representation is heavily biased in several other ways. The east coast clubs far outnumber other regions. Only a handful of obedience clubs (41, less than 10%) are represented.

The heaviest bias is against the continental protective heritage breeds, that is, the German Shepherd, the Doberman, the Rottweiler, the Bouvier and the Belgian herding breeds. In spite of fact that the AKC member club roster is full of local terrier and hunting dog clubs (each with a vote) there are no – zero – local or regional member clubs for these protective breeds. The Beagle, on the other hand, is represented by twelve separate clubs, in addition to the national club. This is not a matter of a lack of interest, for many of these breeds have a network of strong clubs, every single one locked out of representation or power.

Although they have become less robust in recent years, the German Shepherds have a large and active network of regional and local clubs, so predominant that over many years it was difficult or impossible to find major points offered at an all-breed show; to become an AKC German Shepherd conformation champion it was necessary to compete and win at the specialty shows on this circuit. The Doberman club was almost as strong and independent, and some of the regional Rottweiler clubs have upwards of a thousand members and rosters indicating a legitimate national scope. Locked out of AKC power and influence, the enthusiasts for these breeds have built their own stand-alone structures.

The mechanism of this discrimination is based in the fact that most member clubs were established before these breeds became popular, and thus represent east coast interests and the breeds which were well established by the early years of the twentieth century. In every other area of American life the newcomers – the Irish, Polish, Germans and African Americans – have gradually been able to share power because of their access to the vote. The AKC establishment has neatly side stepped this processes by allowing virtually no one outside of the old boy network to participate.

This has enabled the AKC elite, the exhibitionists, to hold tight rein on real power, leaving only token representation and pretense of power to the breed clubs. The most important aspect of this is the appointment of judges, which is totally under AKC control. This and the fact that the vast majority of judges for conformation shows are selected by local all-breed kennel clubs means that the national and regional breed clubs have little influence or control over who is given a license or receives judging assignments. (The exception is the German Shepherd clubs, for the reasons explained above.)

The most detrimental aspect of this process is the emasculation of the national breed clubs. Although they supposedly have influence on the standard for their breed, they cannot impose their own championship requirements, such as a working test, or exert any control over who serves as judge and designates champions. This has led to a system of generic breeds all judged more or less the same way, by the same people.

In spite of all of this, in some ways the power of the AKC is fragile. Until a few years ago one had to have a license to be a professional handler, and more than one breeder was harassed for handling dogs out of his own lines. This came apart when one pro, upon having his license suspended, replied by in effect saying "Hell no, not only do I refuse to accept your suspension, I withdraw your right to license handlers. Shall we discuss this in court?" The AKC immediately backed down and gave up the handler licensing system. Although the bureaucracy historically took in staggering

amounts of cash, and even today continues to wield immense power over the American canine scene with no real mandate from the people who actually breed and train dogs, its deep pockets and secretive ways created an immense fear of the courtroom.

The American dog fancy, reflecting British roots, has always been about passive companion dogs serving as surrogate family members, animated teddy bears. The dog is expected to be cute, subservient and entertaining, the playful friend of the children. Support of real functionality has been at best ambivalent and at worst overtly hostile, for instance banning any sort of association with training or practical breeding selection for police or military service. (They are always prepared to glamorize and associate with such service as promotional ploys, but seem oblivious to where such things actually come from, like believing that babies are delivered by a stork rather than originating in sex acts.)

This has always been the essence of the AKC persona and propaganda, where more active working roles are persistently marginalized. Dogs kept primarily for specific utilitarian functions, such as the functional hunting dogs, have largely evolved separate cultures and organizations. For these reasons the police breed affairs have been in conflict on multiple levels throughout their American experience.

The underlying appeal of the police dog has always been the aggressive persona, the aura of Rin Tin Tin and Strongheart on the movie screen, the tough dog for real men. The German Shepherd or Doberman was a statement, a projection of a perceived place in the world. This has been in conflict with the broader canine community, which has tended to portray the nice dog image, emphasized that these were family dogs, the friends of the children, that things are different in America. The clubs and breeders incessantly marginalized the working culture and bred ever softer, more compliant dogs, police dog replicas for all practical purposes.

Although the attitude of the AKC establishment toward the police breeds has been generally condescending and negative, it has varied according to circumstance and events. While there was some early toleration toward Schutzhund, perhaps benign neglect, involvement was eventually slapped down.

On June 18th, 1990 a formal edict banning any member club from sponsoring Schutzhund and other serious tests for our protective heritage breeds, largely in response to events in the Doberman world, that is to stop the increasing involvement of the national Doberman club in Schutzhund activities. The wording could have easily been interpreted to also prohibit the ATTS temperament test and precludes any club from supporting police service dogs.

The AKC has always been conflicted in this area, for this edict went out when Louis Auslander was both AKC president and board chairman. Only four years earlier, at Mr. Auslander's personal invitation as President of the International Kennel Club of Chicago, one of our Bouviers des Flandres and an excellent Rottweiler had done a well-received Schutzhund demonstration as a highlight at the 1987 International Kennel Club show in Chicago, one of the largest benched shows in America, second only to Westminster in prestige.

AKC policy concerning work tends to be sporadic and event driven, for a little over a decade later, there was an abrupt change in direction. In May of 2006, after a number of years of internal bickering, the AKC Board of Directors approved a new *AKC WDS Working Dog Sport*, on a provisional basis, open only to four breeds. The program itself was an emasculated version of Schutzhund. Never mind that there were no judges, no base of knowledge and no real credibility, and they were certainly not going to let anything like this become a breeding requirement and interfere with the flow of puppy registration money.

In reality this program was a much-reduced version of an all-breed program which had been promoted for several years but rejected by the delegates two years previously. What this really illustrates is that at its core the AKC has no real principles or values, little real interest in the breeding of better dogs, but rather is dedicated to the interests of the insiders.

AKC registrations peaked in 1992 at roughly 1.5 million, falling precipitously to a total of 563,611 registrations in 2010. That is a whopping 63% decrease, and a huge vote of no confidence. This in spite of the fact that moving from a policy of painting commercial breeding operations as "puppy mills" they now active encourage and cooperate with these same operations in a desperate effort to somehow sustain the revenue flow. Beginning in 2008 the AKC ceased publication of annual registration statistics on a breed by breed basis, thereafter only rank ordering based on popularity.

Based on published figures of very roughly sixty or seventy million dogs existing in American homes and average lifespan is six or seven years, only about five percent of American dogs are actually AKC registered. The AKC response has been to stick their heads in the sand, that is, cease to publish any registration data, apparently in the hope that it is all a bad dream that will end when the people wake up and resume sending in more and more money for phony registration papers that mean absolutely nothing. The value of the AKC brand is rapidly approaching zero.

GSDCA

The *German Shepherd Dog Club of America*, the GSDCA, came into existence early, in 1913, in an American cultural environment unaware of and vaguely hostile to civilian police style breeding and training. It was thus conflicted from the beginning, attempting to serve, placate and manipulate two masters, the German breed founders, at that time serious about work, and an elitist *American Kennel Club* regarding working dogs in general as lower class and unsympathetic to public manifestation of aggression. The consequence has been an organization historically conflicted about the essence of the breed, gravitating to the abstract police dog persona but denying and distancing itself from the practical realities and necessities of breeding and maintaining sufficient aggression for this function. The GSDCA was for the better part of the twentieth century disengaged from the European establishment, breeding increasingly soft, spooky dogs with grotesque physique, that is with extreme angulation and slopping top line, to the point where these American Shepherds became virtually another breed.

Surging in popularity as the troops returned from WW I, American enthusiasts built their own infrastructure, with the GSDCA providing national leadership and services, with strong regional and local clubs, mostly conformation oriented but many specifically obedience focused. Although increasingly struggling in recent years, historically the GSDCA was robust, independent, and politically astute; maintaining distance from the AKC, putting out an elaborate magazine and conducting extravagant national and regional specialty shows. In their heyday, the 1950s through the middle 1990s, regional clubs were strong and aloof, holding their own specialty shows rather than supporting the larger all breed AKC shows. Even the obedience people tended to congregate together in their own clubs, with their own judges, trainers and events. Yet even within this community the underlying tension was palpable, these were people in denial, drawn to the protective heritage yet deeply ambivalent about canine aggression. Over the first seventy years of the American experience the Schutzhund trial, the defining ritual of the German Shepherd in the homelands, was ignored, treated as a slightly embarrassing family secret.

Although the GSDCA, and all of its regional and local clubs, are AKC affiliated and work within the system in terms of the formalities of registration, conformation standard, judge accreditation the dog show process, it has from the beginning stood apart as much as possible, with emphasis on their own magazines, exclusive specialty shows and European connections. Over most of this history the GSD show world was an annual circuit of specialty shows with its own set of judges, professional handlers and participating dogs and owners. Only specialty judges are selected and, because of the point system, for many years it was difficult to find a major and thus become a champion at an all-breed show.⁵ This has meant that to gain the championship a dog usually had to win at the specialty shows.

While yearning for independence, or at least the illusion thereof, the GSDCA was always an extension of the domestic AKC canine culture, with emphasis on the conformation winners as the driving force of the breeding process. Over the twentieth century there was only transient and informal interest in Schutzhund, and the lip service to performance competition consisted mostly of insipid obedience trials as obscure side shows for those lacking the resources to aspire to show ring

⁵ The AKC conformation show offers championship points for each sex in each breed according to the number of dogs or bitches entered. In order to become a champion, a dog must win two 'majors,' that is shows with a minimum number present in the particular sex. The number of points for a major win – 3, 4 or 5 points – varies regionally according to entries in recent shows.

prominence. The most important yearly event is the national specialty, where a Grand Victor, Grand Victrix and an elite group of select dogs are designated, with obedience and other casual entertainment events off to the side for the lesser people. The dream of every Shepherd enthusiast was to breed or own a select dog or even a Grand Victor, and thus become an established part of the elite. The club magazine and web sites are primarily media to glorify these show dogs, and the ROM or Record of Merit program maintains an elaborate point system to record and venerate each winner according to the show ring success of their progeny, with minor consideration of other factors such as obedience titles, so that each owner, and their envious friends, can know exactly how they stack up, how important they really are.

The focus on independent American lines, breeding and judges began in the 1960's, with the anointing of Lance of Fran-Jo as Grand Victor in 1967, in retrospect an important demarcation point. Lance and a few related dogs came to dominate the show ring through intense inbreeding, creating the extreme side gait and rear angulation defining the ongoing American lines and the waning of German influence. German judges, historically brought over to judge at major shows, disappeared entirely, along with the import. The period of predominant conformation oriented German imports, such as Troll vom Richterbach, in the later 1950s and early 1960s came to an abrupt end, as the American conformation community increasingly looked inward.

The relationship between the American GSDCA and the German mother club, the SV, evolved as one of convenience, canine politics and advantage rather than legitimate commitment to breed heritage and founding philosophy. Over much of the twentieth century the relatively robust economy made the American market a predominant international factor; there have been three to four Shepherds bred in America for each one in Germany and a very lucrative export market. Starting in the twenties many of the Siegers, male winners of the SV national conformation championship, have come to America because we were a nation on the rise, relatively prosperous, and times were very hard in a defeated Germany. During the Second World War contact abated and it was the early fifties before the Germans began to reestablish their international prestige and influence. By this time the Americans were beginning to have ideas of their own and were blending in the imports rather than just emulating German trends. Beginning in the 1960s the American GSDCA show community was going its own way, virtually creating their own breed. While the rest of the world was to some extent gaining unity of type and culture through the world union, the WUSV, the GSDCA was for practical purposes a member in name only.

Historically the GSDCA had looked to Germany for dogs, guidance and approval, but this was one dimensional, seeking the appearance and macho aura of the police dog but eschewing any involvement in the actual training or practical application. In spite of this philosophical disconnect, over the years the GSDCA maintained ties to the international Shepherd community, becoming a charter member of the WUSV. By 1970 they had for all practical purposes gone their own way, and there was very little international influence: few imports, little use of German judges and no returning to the motherland to compete in either conformation or working events.

The SV Empire

In the great nineteenth century colonial empire building era Germany, which emerged as a major European power only with the Franco-Prussian War of 1870, was aggressively expansionist, relentlessly building military potential and seeking colonial territory on a par with the French and British empires. Wilhelm the Second and Adolph Hitler, prime movers in this expansionist zeal, have passed into ignoble history, and post WWII Germany has played nice on the international scene, achieving European dominance through hard work, economic productivity and prosperity rather than war. Germany was aggressive and on the move, but distance, culture and war delayed direct entanglement in American canine affairs through much of the twentieth century.

In the early years, through the 1970s, German influence was driven by American solicitation, that is Americans taking advantage of relative prosperity to purchase and import innumerable German Shepherds for breeding and exhibition purposes, often among the best dogs in Germany. Occasional German judges were also invited to serve at conformation shows, but there was little overt attempt to directly influence American affairs.

Beginning in the 1980s, the SV⁶ gradually sought increasing influence in the affairs of other nations in furtherance of their own agenda. The primary impediment to SV expansion in America was and is fear of AKC retaliation, which in the most serious form would involve restrictions on registering imported German Shepherds. SV interests have focused on control of the American market, the evolution of the breed in terms of character and structure and the money involved in dog sales and registrations. This is, however, a struggle over an ever shrinking world, as annual GSD registrations have been falling precipitously in both nations for twenty years.

The greatest German dream, and the worst AKC nightmare, would be direct worldwide SV registration of all of these dogs, and the lucrative registration fees, and revenue from conformation and working events, flowing into Germany, bypassing the grasping AKC bureaucrats. Since AKC registrations have been three or more times those in Germany, total SV control over American GSD affairs would effectively quadruple their size and power. The fact that the AKC is not an FCI member nation gives the Germans a freer hand, but fear of AKC reprisals in the form of restrictions on registration of imports, when AKC registration remains as the standard of quality in the public mind, for the moment limits overt German interference.

Although losing two catastrophic wars and persistent push back from the FCI and their affiliated national clubs has thwarted SV ambitions in Europe as well as America, they have always believed themselves entitled to control of German Shepherd affairs, and had the desire to operate colonial offices – national distribution subsidiaries – responsible directly to Germany, in all other lands. This was the primary reason for the WUSV,⁷ which emerged in this time period.

Through the latter 1970s the American working dog movement had been perceived by the establishment, that is, the bureaucrats and conformation people at the AKC, the American German Shepherd community and the Europeans with dogs to sell, as essentially harmless, irrelevant and impotent. Prior attempts to establish a working culture had consisted of a group of quaint Americans at NASA with their own rules and self-appointed judges or groups subservient to the Europeans such as the DVG. This perception was largely on target; on one occasion a NASA judge allowed a handler to put down a blanket for her Doberman on the long down in obedience so

⁶ *Verein für Deutsche Schäferhunde*, the German Shepherd Club in Germany.

⁷ World Union of German Shepherd Clubs

she would not get cold, or miss her blanket, and that was generally characteristic of the organization.

By early 1979 the fledgling American Schutzhund movement was in shambles. The AKC had just slapped the GSDCA down hard for their tentative involvement in Schutzhund, forbidding all future association, like you would chastise a child for using naughty words. The American based DVG activity was awash in confusion, recrimination and power struggles and NASA was increasingly perceived as lame and irrelevant.

At this point the movement was on the brink of failure, well could have floundered and passed into oblivion. Instead there were a series of meetings in California leading to the foundation of the *United Schutzhund Clubs of America* (USCA) in the fall of 1979. In a move of great consequence, foreseen and unforeseen, they sought and obtained affiliation with the SV in Germany. This provided the immediate perception of legitimacy, international recognition of titles and access to German judges both as teachers and to conduct trials. Thus from its inception Schutzhund USA was a German Shepherd club, and there never was any secret, for it was spelled out in the constitution from the beginning.

As so often happens, significant historical movements emerge from the confluence of seemingly unrelated trends and social imperatives. The AKC and GSDCA had for many years been predominant in canine affairs, effectively buffering German influence. By the 1970s Americans were breeding their own German Shepherds, and German imports and influence had dried up, was at low ebb. But new currents were flowing, and American police canine activity was stirring and emerging just as burgeoning Schutzhund interest put the focus on German imports emphasizing working character rather than show credentials. This unexpectedly gave the Germans a powerful new mechanism for extending influence in American affairs. For the next several decades, it would be German Schutzhund judges and working line breeders that would come to have influence in America, changing the dynamics of the American community in unforeseen ways. The GSDCA may have turned their back on Germany, but in the end the Germans would regain influence through newly found friends and advocates in the Schutzhund movement, outside of the GSDCA show community.

In retrospect the emergence of USCA was a watershed event, for they were destined to become much more than a dog training organization. It would emerge as substantially larger, much more relevant and much more resonant with the heritage of the breed than the GSDCA, or the SV for that matter, and was to threaten the AKC in the only way they can ever really understand, money. It would enmesh the SV in a perpetual international political morass. The third of the USCA membership with other breeds were convenient and useful because the primary need was increased participation to achieve economy of scale, to grow the organization in terms of building local clubs and thus minimizing travel distance and expense.

The fact that the words "German Shepherd" do not appear in the name has had ongoing ramifications. In a certain sense, there was an element of deception: there was the tendency to project the big tent, that building the American dog training culture was the important goal, that we were all in this together, that this was the home for everyone who just wanted to train their dogs. Those were the days of camaraderie, of everybody working together to build our own culture and traditions.

While the USCA leadership never quite overtly obscured the German Shepherd affiliation, many local clubs were explicitly promoted as all breed oriented, and in spirit generally were. This sometimes generated animosity and confusion, as people who were drawn into an apparently all breed local club sometimes felt betrayed when they eventually came to perceive that they were members of a national

German Shepherd breed club, that in reality they were welcome as long as useful and needed, but expendable when expedient in terms of German Shepherd politics. The perception of USCA as the big tent, the long-term home for all trainers, was never a realistic expectation but only temporary expediency, and the perceptive among us always knew this. This was one of the primary reasons I and others eventually created the AWDF.

The emergence of USCA had immediate repercussions. The AKC affiliated national club, the GSDCA, became severely insecure and threatened, and under the guidance of George Collins shortly thereafter, in 1982, spawned an affiliated *Working Dog Association* (WDA), in order to compete with USCA. The primary GSDCA-WDA leverage was the WUSV membership, the formal relationship with Germany. This led to a bizarre duel universe where the same set of people with one hat on continued to hold AKC conformation shows for the old American lines, which never used German judges, and then with a WDA hat run an entirely separate set of shows, which virtually always use SV judges.

WDA commitment to work was never real or sincere, was superficial at best, with member clubs running very few Schutzhund trials, some going years without holding one. The primary motivation for the GSDCA in forming the WDA was to project dominance, gain control of USCA, force them into subservience, force them to go through GSDCA officers in dealing with the Germans, ultimately bringing them ultimately under the edicts of the AKC. This set the stage for decades of strife and conflict. The GSDCA thus became the proverbial dog in the manger: although they were not in resonance with the spirit of von Stephanitz, spiritually not really a German Shepherd club, for reasons of politics, profit and individual aggrandizement they clung tenaciously to their WUSV seat.

During its first quarter century USCA was essentially what its name said it is, an organization devoted to training for and competing in Schutzhund trials. In this era, although USCA was technically a German Shepherd organization, in practical reality other breeds, about a third of the dogs being trained, were equally comfortable and well served.⁸ But in 2011 USCA repudiated the rest of their membership when they ceased issuing score books for other breeds. (Adding insult to injury, they were quite willing to issue a book without indicating a breed, essentially a book for mongrels or cross breeds.)

This was a turning point, for USCA was in reality being transformed from a working dog organization into little more than a marketing agency for the SV show dog cabal, in effect *SV Show Dog Distribution America, GmbH*. More and more emphasis on German style conformation shows, and ever more embarrassing performances by the show dogs in the protection tests prior to these shows, as seen widely on the internet, eroded credibility. Routine pathetic performances of show line German Shepherds with Schutzhund titles made it abundantly clear that these titles are fraudulent, there is simply no other word, and the fact that USCA leadership in the Lyle Roetemeyer era increasingly condoned and participated in this eroded credibility as a working dog organization.

This was a difficult period, for although there had been rough patches in the middle 1990s, the word crisis would not be inappropriate, and then later the Roetemeyer tenure, for many years the leadership was generally admirable in terms of honesty, diligence and enthusiasm, and tended to resist the corrupting influence of the SV. The USCA judges program in particular was of real value, bringing honesty, competence and a sportsman like attitude to the trial fields of America, something often not true of the German SV judges in all three areas. Beginning

⁸ I was a USCA member for thirty years, and only gave up membership in 2011 when they ceased issuing score books for the other breeds.

about 2008 this began to erode as the leadership became more elitist and entrenched, more responsive to the SV than the membership and gave ever-increasing priority to the promotion of the emasculated show lines, betraying the original working culture.

When this all began, in the early 1980s, the expectation had been that, since USCA was a working trial organization, much more serious about character than the GSDCA, the Germans would use this as a lever to enhance working character as the expectation in America, promote German Shepherds as actual police service capable dogs rather than play dogs for pet homes. This expectation turned out to be unfounded: our perception of the SV had been an illusion, based on naiveté and wishful thinking, for by this time SV commitment to every German Shepherd being a serious police candidate had long since eroded, primarily because the money and fantasy prestige were in the show and companion dogs. When all of the posturing and propaganda are stripped away, the SV and the GSDCA were then and are today birds of a feather, both show and companion dog driven, using the police dog persona as a promotional facade without any real commitment to the working heritage.

Interestingly enough, when you take a long look back, it was the incipient American Schutzhund movement which provided the wedge for SV intrusion into American canine affairs. As USCA gained momentum and prospered into the 1990s, the WDA languished as an irrelevant backwater. USCA was emerging as the largest, most active and most prestigious German Shepherd advocate in America, putting the hypocrisy of both the GSDCA and the SV in the spotlight. Over time these organizations gradually came to perceive USCA as both an evolving threat and an opportunity; so these strange new bedfellows, the SV opportunists and the old line AKC establishment, were feeling increasingly threatened and impotent.

Thus there was a relatively quiet period until the middle 1990s, when the emergence of the Internet and more affordable international travel began to create renewed interest in the German show lines. In Germany the SV elite, under the Martin boys, became more overtly commercial and much less committed to work and character. They saw a golden opportunity, and began playing the WDA and USCA off against each other to force promotion of their show lines, the banana dogs, and show line infrastructure such as the Koer reports.

The SV began to push USCA hard to promote their banana dogs through increasing emphasis on conformation shows with SV judges (who were also dog salesman traveling on USCA funds), Koer classing, and German style registry activity. The WDA began to push its own German brand of conformation show, with SV judge/salesmen in abundance.

Somehow, the old line GSDCA people could not see that their own bastard child, the WDA, was poisoning their well, undermining the credibility of their AKC show lines and American conformation shows by promoting and conducting their German oriented shows. It literally became a three ring circus, with ongoing GSDCA American style shows, USCA shows and WDA with yet another set of Germans running their shows and sales fairs. And the SV was the ring master, cracking the whip.

Over the years the most persistent and antagonistic conflict came to be the selection of the American teams for the WUSV IPO championship. Although the SV had recognized two WUSV member organizations, USCA and GSDCA, this did not entitle each of them to their own teams; only one was permitted per nation. This

became a real sticking point.⁹ In the early years working affairs were de facto under the auspices of USCA, which designated the teams to go to Europe. But under the banner of unity, meaning asserting their authority, the GSDCA began to flex its muscle and demand control, resulting in a series of compromise solutions, usually involving some sort of split team with each organization having so many slots to fill. The result was often USCA members participating in a GSDCA qualification trial to make up part of the team, since WDA had little in the way of trainers and competitors. The result of these conflicts has been escalating hostility and political maneuvering, with more rules concerning which judges are eligible to officiate at particular events and who is eligible to participate in activities of the other organization. In 2010 USCA for all practical purposes declared warfare, banned WDA members from concurrent membership, meaning that the numerous dual members were forced to choose one or the other, the infamous and provocative "Johannes Amendment" named after the prominent USCA politician, Johannes Grewe.

The result of this is that only German SV judges are eligible to do all Schutzhund trials, which suits the Germans perfectly. Thus USCA seems destined to remain a quasi-legitimate part of the world shepherd community because that is exactly where the show-oriented elements of the SV leadership want them. Sure, they will throw them a bone from time to time, allow them to send teams to the world union championships, or give some of their judges pseudo SV status, but America is going to remain divided and weak as long as they are able to make it stick.

The primary reason the GSDCA became active in SV and WUSV affairs was to marginalize the USCA, which in terms of membership numbers, public perception and links to the original heritage was beginning to eclipse the legitimacy of the establishment and thus became an increasing threat to the ongoing credibility of the GSDCA. Thus their manipulations to keep full control of American German Shepherd affairs, place USCA under their thumb, illegitimate as a national German Shepherd entity. Politically the GSDCA has the upper hand because of their AKC status. While this convoluted situation is awkward for the SV, it is the lesser of alternative evils; a divided American community is relatively easy to control and manipulate. Throughout history European elites have had a preference for dominating colonies rather than sharing power with partners.

So USCA is between the proverbial rock and hard place; in order to be a player on the world scene they would have to merge with the GSDCA, but since the GSDCA has no principles to preserve it would be on their terms, which would mean repudiating everything USCA has ever stood for. And in a way all of this is moot, for real participation in world German Shepherd affairs would mean linking the registration systems. The fact is that the AKC is never going to give up its power and the registration cash flow and the FCI is never going to make this an issue, or seriously rock the boat in any other way. Any sort of full FCI affiliation through the AWDF or any other mechanism is and always was virtually impossible.

From a long term strategic point of view, the desire of USCA to be recognized and establish European links was a twofold problem. One route to Europe, discussed to this point, was establishing a link to the SV through the WUSV, which would provide recognition and access to the WUSV Schutzhund or IPO championships. But since America is not an FCI affiliated nation, and since in the working dog world the FCI is the highest common denominator, USCA would still be on the outside looking in as far as FCI affairs went. In particular, the FCI IPO championship was emerging as by

⁹ There have come to be a number of these peculiar and irregular situations: Belgium, Ireland and other nations also have two WUSV member organizations, and the British have three.

far the most comprehensive and prestigious event in the working dog world, and American trainers had an increasing desire to compete.

Thus in order to become a full-fledged player on the European working dog scene it would be necessary for USCA to, somehow, gain access to FCI activities, directly or indirectly. Which of course was a primary reason for Paul Maloy's interest in the AWDF in the later 1980s. But direct USCA affiliation was never in the cards, for the one thing nobody in Europe is ever going to do is challenge the ultimate AKC control over American canine affairs. No matter how crass and commercial the AKC may be, most Americans continue to perceive AKC registration eligibility as the prerequisite to legitimacy. The SV as a standalone entity might be willing to go against the AKC, because the attraction of the control and registration money is enormous. But they are afraid, with very good reason, of FCI reprimand, that is that the FCI would expel the SV or the VDH (the German AKC equivalent), resulting in a second German Shepherd club in Germany, one with FCI affiliation.

Although they were very slow to comprehend it, for the GSDCA all of this ultimately turned into their worst nightmare, for the German dominated WDA conformation shows – and the confirmation events forced on USCA by the SV – put the dagger in the heart of their AKC show lines, regional clubs and breeding tradition. Thus in recent years the GSDCA has become smaller, older and much less influential as conformation events run by USCA and the WDA, under heavy SV (German) influence and generally using SV judges, became much more popular, especially among younger enthusiasts. The GSDCA regional clubs especially have faltered and their shows have withered, become fewer and much smaller.

This German Shepherd family quarrel extends much further, for it is a serious impediment to the emergence of an overall self-sustaining and independent police dog breeding and training community in America, since the first requirement would be a clear leadership structure which could deal with government entities across the board, as for instance exists in the in the Netherlands where the KNPV has very close cooperation and formal ties with the amateur training community.

In recognizing and encouraging USCA the SV created a dilemma, for they came to have two children in America, USCA and the GSDCA-WDA, where in principle ultimately only one could become blessed and the other thus implicitly declared a bastard and cut off to die. Forty years later this is still playing out; being cut off to die has turned out to be a long, drawn out and ugly process. Currently USCA and the GSDCA-WDA are in direct conflict: both running conformation shows, both conducting IPO trials, both seeking to place members on European competition teams, both seeking to outdo each other in groveling for SV favor. As a consequence, Schutzhund/IPO in America is increasingly stagnant and elitist: ever more out of reach financially for the ordinary working class person, especially the younger people, ever more irrelevant to on the streets police dog service, less and less an influential factor on the national working dog scene.

The American Working Dog Federation

The decade of the 1980's was a time of expansion, progress and transition. The *United Schutzhund Clubs of America*, under the leadership of president Paul Meloy, made major strides in bringing structure, order and stability to the sport of Schutzhund in America. The training and certification of American judges was put on a firm foundation, bringing new levels of competence and integrity to our sport fields. USCA, under German pressure, also began to provide breed surveys and other conformation events, thus evolving from its original working heritage into a more comprehensive canine organization. These events, for German Shepherds only, emphasized the changes going on within USCA as it evolved from an organization primarily supporting Schutzhund training and trials into one much more focused on German Shepherd affairs. But change brings consequences, and the emergence of USCA as a conformation and registry organization was a direct threat to the AKC and the GSDCA, for if USCA was to run conformation events based on German judges how could the AKC and GSDCA not perceive it as intrusive and eventually react? Were the USCA registration system to gain traction and credibility to the point breeders began to forgo AKC registration it would have immense international repercussions, likely causing the AKC to demand of the FCI that they bring the SV under control and restore the mutual respect of national registrations. Increasing unease among those participating with other breeds was also a less than surprising consequence.

Make no mistake: the emerging USCA activity in areas traditionally the function of national entities such as conformation evaluations and particularly registration systems has been of serious concern to the AKC bureaucracy. On one level their introduction of an ill-fated working dog program, in about 2004, a diluted copy of Schutzhund, was lame, pathetic and predestined to wither; but the fact that they would so easily abandon their historic scruples concerning overtly aggressive dogs demonstrates the pressure they perceived.

There were from the beginning sound reasons for the inclusion of all breed trainers within USCA: the motivation had been pragmatic, for the working movement has struggled in America primarily because of distance and a lack of knowledge, experience and organizational infrastructure, that is, truly effective local training clubs, the basis of the culture. When you are struggling to achieve critical mass every participant is vital and needs to be accommodated. But SV pressure on USCA incessantly increasing German Shepherd orientation created questions and anxiety in the minds of those with other breeds as to their future within USCA and the canine world as a whole. As USCA became more intimately entangled in international Shepherd affairs, the sense of those with other breeds of being expendable guests rather than real members increased, and questions about the future came into increasingly sharp focus.

Thus USCA, having emerged as the dominant American working dog organization and making real progress in many areas nevertheless suffered from fundamental internal contradictions and divided loyalties. There were four key issues:

- Was USCA ultimately to be under the control of the SV, rendering America subservient to the Germans, or to evolve into an independent organization by and for Americans dealing with foreign entities according to our own national interests?
- Was USCA going to continue emphasis on police level breeding and training or emulate the SV in diluting the German Shepherd in favor of companion and show markets?

- How was a single breed organization, increasingly foreign controlled, going to deal with the substantial portion of its long-term membership with other breeds?
- How was the unstable, adversarial situation of two diametrically opposed entities, USCA and the GSDCA-WDA, coexisting as petulant children competing for the favor of a distant, manipulative mother club going to be resolved?

Although the rhetoric is about noble breeds and preserving the heritage of the founders, ultimately these conflicts are about money and power. In the canine world the fundamental conflict usually revolves around those perceiving themselves as breed founders or their legitimate heirs and the various national and international registration organizations. These prevailing registration bodies generally dominate because of their relative size and entrenched nature; and the inherent tendency of all bureaucrats everywhere to perpetuate themselves and protect their own fiscal security and wellbeing.

Because of the enormous early popularity of the German Shepherd and the social status and autocratic intensity of von Stephanitz the SV more than any other breed club has been able to control their own affairs and act independently of other national and international canine bodies. This has been limited and to some extent diminished over time, as in the example of their losing control of the Schutzhund sport as it transformed into IPO under FCI control. Were the SV to have their own way entirely, they would control absolutely conformation and character standards and evaluations, appoint all judges, and have absolute administrative control. Not only would all German Shepherds worldwide be enrolled in a single SV registry, with all fees going to the SV, they would appoint administrators to act for them in the various foreign nations. Although they will not be able to push the AKC aside in the area of registrations and the formalities of American breed club structure, or upset the delicate balance of power between the FCI and AKC, it is remarkable how much of their agenda they have been able to implement in America, and how much success they have had playing off the AKC, GSDCA and USCA against one another in order to gain influence and control.

Paul Maloy, as USCA president, was the most aggressive and innovative player in this era. His position was difficult and complex, for USCA was the upstart organization in a world where the other entities – the FCI, AKC, SV and GSDCA – had well established formal and informal relationships, held all of the real power. The most vexing problem was that the GSDCA, as the long term AKC breed club and charter WUSV member, was legally as well as in practice the authority for all German Shepherd affairs, national and international, in America; and they were inherently hostile to and afraid of everything USCA represented. Their every move in the political chess game, as for example the foundation of the WDA, was at root intended to preserve and enhance this power, and to marginalize the USCA. The primary USCA leverage was the desire of the SV to gain power and influence in America, and their willingness to bend the rules and condone initiatives in the grey areas of formal relationships and international custom. George Collins, USCA president and WDA founder, and another shrewd politician, was in many ways Maloy's nemesis in these ongoing conflicts.

By recognizing and encouraging USCA, by gradually extending more formal recognition and particularly by encouraging SV judges to preside at USCA trials, the SV was with calculation pushing the envelope in advancement of their own agenda, encroaching on the territory of the AKC and GSDCA, risking adverse reactions. As these conflicts unfolded beginning with the founding of USCA in 1977, there were likely general expectations that these issues would be resolved within a few years,

AWDF Member Clubs & size As of 2014	
Federation of American Bulldog	22
Working Dutch Shepherd Association	26
American W Black Russian Terrier As	27
Working Riesenschaunzer Federation	42
Working Pitbull Club of America	45
North American Working Bouvier As	69
Hovawart Club of North America	109
United States Boxer Association	121
American Herding Breed Association	135
United States Rottweiler Club	140
United States Mondioring Association	188
American Working Malinois Association	216
Cane Corso Association of America	300
United Doberman Club	324
LV\DVG America	872
United Schutzhund Club of America	3645
Total	6281

that there would be winners and losers, old wounds would heal, old enemies or their successors would reconcile and stability and order in a realigned era would return. History has many examples of nations reconciling and moving forward after bitterly fought wars. But some differences are irreconcilable: the Palestinians, expected to move on and make new lives after the foundation of the state of Israel, to conveniently disappear into neighboring lands or quietly die out, persisted for untold decades, ever more determined, ever more hostile. In a similar way, the conflict in America between the AKC culture of replica working dogs, with the motto "things are different in America," and the passion behind the incipient Schutzhund movement of the seventies and eighties has proven to

be irreconcilable.

The ultimate irony is that as time went on USCA continually became larger, more dynamic and more relevant than the GSDCA; which created increasing anxiety, fear and hostility in the American establishment. This emerging vigor of USCA provided the leverage for Meloy to act. His strategy was to sidestep both the GSDCA and the AKC by seeking direct FCI recognition, thus gaining political presence and ultimately enticing the Germans to deal with the American working dog movement on its own terms rather than as a client of more easily manipulated AKC entities. Recognition of a new organization in America as a full FCI partner was and is extremely unlikely because even a hint of this would precipitate full out war with the AKC; but the desire was a practical relationship concerning working trials and affairs that would remain under the radar of more traditional kennel club affairs such as registration, breed standards and conformation judges and events.

Thus Meloy needed a multi breed national organization in order to seek an FCI relationship and as a way of resolving the complexities of a German Shepherd organization having so many long-term members involved in other breeds. A new, national level, all breed American working dog entity, with individual breed clubs, had the potential to solve many of these problems, that is, provide a suitable place for all breeds and create a national entity that could represent the American community with a single voice on the international level with the FCI and internally, perhaps with the AKC and potentially with governmental and police canine service agencies.

Paul Maloy was a dynamic and controversial figure on the American working dog scene, a man who looked to the future and took bold actions to get there, and also made enemies and serious errors in judgment. In my personal dealings with him, as long-term leader and president of the Bouvier working club and AWDF secretary, he was straightforward, direct and helpful; if I had a problem he was a phone call away. I regarded him as a friend, and was deeply saddened by the conflicts and events toward the end of his leadership tenure.

In retrospect hopes for FCI affiliation for any American organization were most unlikely to have been realized, but this was not quite as apparent then as now, and Paul was a man willing to take major risks for big ideas; if at times judgment failed him then for me he still stands taller than those who do did not fail because they did

not strive; but perhaps this is a perspective more apparent to those who have personally known failure.

While USCA under Paul Meloy was stabilizing the Schutzhund movement and putting it on a solid footing, determined men in other breeds, such as Ray Carlisle for the Doberman and Erik Houttuin and myself for the Bouvier des Flandres, were working diligently for change from within the establishment and their own national AKC breed clubs to make a valid place for working dogs within the AKC scheme of things. Magazines such as Dog Sports, to which I was contributing editor for a number of years, played a key role in the era before the internet, and the various breed club magazines provided a venue for discussion and promotion.

This work within the existing system approach was not self-evidently viable, as the earlier efforts within the German Shepherd community had resulted in the AKC coming down hard, forbidding any protection related activity, eventually leading up to the formation of USCA. Why should those in the other breeds have expected a different result? The short answer is we should not have, but many of the people involved had deep AKC roots and a strong belief that America needed a unified national system open to and accepting of police level breeding, training and competition – that we needed to make the best possible effort for unity before setting up competing and potentially hostile organizations. Ultimately entrenched AKC opposition was insurmountable, so even though some progress was made within the Doberman, Bouvier and other AKC communities working within the system was in the larger picture impossible. Looking back, this was for the best, for although attempts to include primarily show and companion oriented breed enthusiasts were often favorably received, inevitably as they began to realize that their champions were on the whole inadequate in character and a new canine world order would require that they discard much of their breeding stock and adapt new ways of training and selection their resistance would stiffen, as seen in the evolution of the GSDCA-WDA as a counter force to USCA.

Over time it became obvious that viability for the working movement demanded that it stand on its own: allowing conformation and companion-oriented organizations and people a voice in working dog affairs is to predestine failure. It was these events and experiences that led me to change direction, to champion, primarily in my Dog Sports column, a new, national level working dog entity independent of the AKC and its affiliated, conformation oriented, national breed clubs.

But much of this is more evident today than at the time: in the later eighties there were indications – or perhaps illusions – of progress and change. In 1987 Louis Auslander, AKC board member and future president, was so impressed with a Schutzhund demonstration at the Medallion Rottweiler Club near Chicago that he invited the dog, Centauri's Gambit, a Bouvier des Flandres, and an equally accomplished Rottweiler, Pete Rademacher's Dux vd Blume, to put on a Schutzhund demonstration at that year's International Kennel Club show in Chicago. And so they did. Both of these excellent dogs, both AKC Champions of Record as well as Schutzhund III, put on memorable performances before the brightest spotlights the AKC world can provide. (Unfortunately I was in the hospital recovering from back surgery, and my dog Gambit was handled by my wife Kathy at the International demo.)

Men and women in each of the other breeds were gathering together in order to establish their own working dog heritage, preparing to stand separate from the AKC. One consequence was that in 1986 the North American Working Bouvier Association was formed at the annual championships in the Chicago area, and similar new working organizations were being explored by advocates of the other breeds. An

exception was the Doberman community, where the AKC affiliated *Doberman Pinscher Club of America*, largely under the influence of Ray Carlisle, was prepared to serve as the national working entity.

Beginning in the middle 1980s there was increasingly serious discussion of a formal structure for the American working dog movement, something I highlighted and promoted in my various Dog Sports articles. The needs and desires of the working dog community, which could only be realized through such a national level organization, included:

- International conformation and working event rules and standards.
- Access to international working and conformation events.
- Recognition of European working titles, especially the Schutzhund title.
- Work related conformation and breeding eligibility requirements.

Finally, on June 17, 1989 a founding meeting was held in St. Louis, in the offices of the USCA. Present at the creation and representing their various breeds and organizations were:

- | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|
| • Paul Meloy | USCA President |
| • Vernon Crowder | USCA Vice President |
| • Erik Houttuin | NAWBA President |
| • Jim Engel | NAWBA Secretary |
| • Eckart Salquit | USRC |
| • Jacqueline Rousseau | USRC |
| • Ray Carlisle | DPCA |

All are familiar names on the American working dog scene.

After lengthy discussion, the American Working Dog Federation (AWDF) came into existence as an alliance of national breed organizations dedicated to the preservation and advancement of the police style breeds. Charter members were:

United Schutzhund Clubs of America (German Shepherd)
Doberman Pinscher Club of America (DPCA)
North American Working Bouvier Association (NAWBA)
United States Rottweiler Club (USRC).

Because of his leadership and experience in dealing with the European working dog community, and the predominant position of USCA, Paul Meloy was elected founding AWDF President. Jim Engel became founding secretary and Ray Carlisle the first treasurer.

There were immediate repercussions. The original AWDF Doberman member club was the AKC affiliated *Doberman Pinscher Club of America*. This affiliation, the increase in Doberman Schutzhund activity and the growing acceptance of the membership panicked the AKC old guard. A year later, almost to the day, this precipitated the infamous AKC edict of June 18, 1990 forbidding Schutzhund and all similar protection sports and trials. By this action the AKC demanded that national clubs for these breeds repudiate their heritage; thus exacerbating the already emerging rift within these breeds, with the AKC clubs moving to the solidification of their concept of working dogs as passive companions and show dogs devoid of their working functionality. This generated ever-increasing pressure for the emergence of serious, protection oriented national clubs for each breed. As a result of the withdrawal of the AKC Doberman club from the AWDF, there was an immediate formation of the *United Doberman Club*, which became a full AWDF member in January of 1991.

In the early years, the primary AWDF function was the annual championship, a Schutzhund trial with three teams designated by each breed club, with the aggregate team scores determining the winning team. Later this format was abandoned in favor of an open trial where entrants competed as individuals rather than members of a breed-oriented team, primarily as a mechanism of selecting teams for international FCI competition. The first AWDF team Championship was held in St. Louis on March 16-17, 1991, hosted by NAWBA, the Bouvier des Flandres working club.

Although USCA emerged in 1977 as a German Shepherd club according to its constitution, as indicated by the absence of a breed designation in the name this affiliation was not prominent in the promotional rhetoric of the era. Many local clubs projected a strongly multi breed culture, and a third of individual USCA members were advocates of another breed. This affiliation was essentially an accident of history, a response to the need for an immediate, credible European affiliation and reliable, formal access to European judges. None of this was an especially prominent issue in the early years, with the excitement of a brave new world to conquer, and those with a strong preference for a multi breed format had the option of forming a DVG club. But eventually this split persona began to generate ongoing complications in terms of events and other functions; for example the institution of a German Shepherd only national championship was greatly resented by many long standing members with other breeds, belatedly bringing into sharp focus that there were two classes of membership. In more recent years this was exacerbated by SV pressure on USCA to evolve into their American distribution subsidiary, promoting the German Shepherd show lines and other breed specific aspects of mother club programs. One of the primary reasons for the AWDF was to resolve this personally split, provide an orderly transition to a new organizational structure for individual breed oriented national working clubs, clearing the way for USCA to emerge openly as a primarily German Shepherd entity, yet providing for existing all breed aspirations.

Although there was a great deal of initial enthusiasm, over time these alternate breed clubs on the whole failed to prosper, could not maintain and expand the initial momentum. A significant reason for this was the desire to gain size and presence as rapidly as possible, resulting in the tendency to draw in people by offering something for everybody, such as agility events, herding, carting and various styles of obedience. Drawing on personal experience, leading up to the formation of the Bouvier working club in the middle 1980s the argument was that with an overt hard core working agenda such a club would have no more than twenty members; it was said we needed to attract existing Bouvier enthusiasts, unfamiliar with the working culture, in order to build numbers, that these were the people to look to as recruits for the working movement. This meant conformation shows and fun events such as lure coursing for the pet owners and the inclusion of AKC style obedience. The problem is that rather than being converted to Schutzhund these confirmation breeders, pseudo herding enthusiasts and play trainers eventually became the majority and took over the organization, at one point a NAWBA president actually refusing to endorse a protection potential as a necessary character attribute in a legitimate Bouvier des Flandres. We fell into the trap of emulating existing national breed clubs – European as well as American – and emerged as minorities in our own organizations. The net result was the emergence of AWDF member clubs dominated and controlled by people not committed or only weakly committed to the protection or police dog culture. Interestingly enough – although the primary pressure came from Germany rather than the membership – this applies to USCA as a German Shepherd organization almost as well as the other, newer clubs.



THE AMERICAN KENNEL CLUB

NOTICE

June 18, 1990

TO: All AKC Licensed and Member Show and Obedience Trial Giving Clubs
SUBJECT: Schutzhund and Schutzhund-like Events

The American Kennel Club's Board of Directors, at its recent meeting, reviewed its position with regards to Schutzhund trials.

AKC has consistently prohibited clubs from holding Schutzhund trials or demonstrations in conjunction with AKC events, or from advertising these trials in any official AKC document (premium list, judging program or catalog).

Over the past few years, the AKC has expended hundreds of man hours and committed hundreds of thousands of dollars in combating breed-specific, anti-vicious dog legislation. Any activity sponsored by an AKC affiliated club which contains an exercise in which a dog attacks, bites, grabs or is aggressive towards a person, creates a public perception that is completely counter-productive to these efforts.

In keeping with the objects of the American Kennel Club, to protect the interest of its members and advance the maintenance of pure-bred dogs, the Board has voted, effective immediately, to prohibit any club which is eligible to hold AKC events, from sponsoring any type of activity in which a dog is expected to act in an aggressive manner towards a person. This would include Schutzhund, as well as any other activity involving the biting, grabbing or attacking of a person.

Failure to comply with this policy will result in the revocation of a club's show and/or trial giving privileges. Any questions concerning this subject may be directed to James Crowley, Director of Dog Events.

THE AMERICAN KENNEL CLUB

Thus as USCA emerges as a German Shepherd breed club – only tangentially committed to a universal police dog character – in everything but name, the other AWDF breed clubs have struggled to build viable cultures and structures. Currently the *American Working Malinois Association* (AWMA) is the most vigorous and successful, running very strong national IPO championships with for instance 18 credible IPO III entries for the 2011 event in the Chicago area, reflecting the vigor of this breed in Europe and the evolving American enthusiasm. The Malinois is pretty much every discouraged alternate breed trainer's second choice, and the refreshing absence of posturing show people creates a more focused atmosphere in AWMA affairs.

The Rottweiler club, the USRC, is probably the next most vigorous, but had only four Schutzhund III entries at their 2011 National championship, not counting a couple of no shows. Current USRC membership is about 100, especially discouraging after the enormous popularity in the 1990s.¹⁰ From personal experience, the Bouvier club, NAWBA, has been in disarray for a decade, with very few championship entries, several times cancelling the event outright because of a lack of interest and support. In 2012 a dissident board group staged a coup, simply expelled the president, vice president and another officer and installed their own administration, making it unclear who the legitimate leaders are. None of the other AWDF clubs have evolved a strong national presence, and a proliferation of AWDF breed and sport oriented clubs even more marginal, empty shells created for political purposes, has diluted the integrity and credibility of the organization.

As an illustration of the fundamental cultural disconnect, one need look no further than the aborted AWDF conformation show planned for the fall of 2001 in the St. Louis area, strongly promoted by Ray Carlisle of the Doberman club. In the circulating information sheet the working requirement was to be specified by the individual clubs; only the Shepherds and Rottweilers were to require a working title for eligibility. The Dobermans and the Bouviers were to be shown, to be eligible for recognition as the best working dog, based on superficial temperament tests and there were virtually no working requirements for the other breeds. The Malinois was not to be included at all. Many, including myself, were strenuously opposed, for the evils of conformation competition without meaningful working prerequisites was one of the fundamental reasons for the American working dog movement, specifically the AWDF, in the first place. The events of September 11 provided a convenient excuse for canceling this show, and apparently it put a well-deserved dagger in the heart, for it has never come up again.

There is of course a place for formal conformation and structure evaluations, for a reasonably uniform and compelling appearance within a breed is conducive to public recognition, in the same way police patrol officers are in uniform. But competitive rankings as an end in themselves, especially in sub populations within a breed lacking a tradition and expectation of real working capability, are on the whole counterproductive. To be credible, conformation evaluations demand a serious working prerequisite, and they should be breed specific only; comparing dogs from various breeds and rank ordering them is pointless and absurd, part of the circus mentality of the show dog set.

The primary reason the AWDF breed clubs have withered is that they were built on a foundation of sand: European breed communities that – in spite of propaganda espousing a working culture – had long since degenerated into show and pet organizations with very few police level dogs, breeders or training clubs. The FCI affiliated national breed clubs in reality provided little more support than existed in America, are in fact little if any better than the corresponding American versions. Serious working elements within these breeds, as for instance the KNPV Bouvier community in the Netherlands, for many years estranged from the FCI and show communities, constituted essentially different cultures and in the longer term tended to evolve into virtually different breeds.

Beyond the lack of a supportive European community, most of these AWDF breed clubs have lacked real focus on serious protection or police level work and tended to offer play training activities such as lure coursing and agility in order to gain popularity and critical mass. Conformation competition, lacking rigorous working prerequisites, has been particularly popular; the possibility of a placement and praise

¹⁰ There was a dissident national Rottweiler entity founded by Eckart Salquit some years ago, but this does not seem to be a factor in the low USRC numbers.

from an exotic Euro judge seeming to have irresistible appeal. All of this has tended to weaken these clubs, making them superficial alternatives to the AKC national clubs without projecting any real excitement, any working persona. Although it is human nature to blame outside elements, it must be noted and emphasized that the failure of these clubs to prosper was neither caused by nor hastened by any lack of support from USCA or the German Shepherd community; in the Meloy era, when I was involved in active leadership roles both within the Bouvier movement and as an AWDF officer, every effort to provide support and extend cooperation was forthcoming.

The early years the American alternative breed Schutzhund enthusiasts suffered from an exaggerated idea of the vigor and relevance of these breeds in Europe: for instance in recent years only about 700 Dobermans and 1500 Rottweilers have been registered annually in Germany.¹¹ Given that most of these pups are produced by show breeders, the small numbers and fragility of the respective working cultures comes into focus. In retrospect the European resources for building a strong Rottweiler, Doberman or Bouvier working culture in America were greatly exaggerated in our minds; we had chosen to believe their rhetoric and propaganda about working character rather than observe closely how vigorous their programs were what they were actually doing.

The experience of the past thirty years has demonstrated that it is very difficult, if not impossible, to build strong infrastructure in America when there is not an active European community to provide support in terms of proven stock, cultural identity and leadership. Even though the SV has been increasingly unsupportive of real work, there have always been enormous resources in terms of individual German Shepherd breeders, trainers, judges and local working clubs – prospering in spite of the SV – to provide support to the incipient American German Shepherd enthusiasts. The fact that among the alternative breeds independent European breeding and training cultures were generally too small, dispersed and weak to provide the necessary support was a significant factor in their failure to prosper. In general, all of the FCI affiliated breed clubs in Germany, Belgium or the Netherlands are not serious about work, in reality little if any better than the AKC national clubs. For those involved it proved very difficult to find good breeding stock, trained dogs or trainers and breeders able to serve as mentors. The major exception has of course been the Malinois, which prospered in later years partially because there are no functional FCI affiliated organizations, their origins and support structures being in the KNPV and NVBK, beyond FCI influence.

Just as within America the primary reason for AWDF was to provide access to training resources, judges, score books and all other infrastructure elements in a way balancing unique breed requirements of camaraderie and support through specific breed magazines, web sites and national events with the economies of scale that a national level umbrella organization can best provide, on an international level the reason for the AWDF was the perceived need for an American organization able to speak with one voice for the working community as a whole, particularly through some sort of hoped for FCI relationship. A specific immediate need was to advance USCA aspirations for a place in the international German Shepherd world independent of the AKC and the GSDCA. This international initiative has met with limited success in that AWDF teams regularly compete in FCI international trials, such as the annual IPO Championship, but has not advanced beyond this level. Unfortunately, in retrospect the AWDF was able to do relatively little to resolve German Shepherd world political problems, for the impasse between GSDCA-WDA and the USCA is ongoing twenty years later, with little evident expectation of

¹¹ See detailed yearly numbers in the appendices.

resolution. Given the fragility AKC / FCI relationship the likelihood of an expanded role for the AWDF in FCI affairs in the foreseeable future is vanishingly small. My opinion is that on the whole we need to deemphasize European dependence and focus on building American infrastructure, culture and traditions according to our own ongoing needs and circumstances.

England and Canada

Although the FCI has become enormously large and powerful, significant national entities have remained outside or broken off to establish independent national organizations. The most important of these are the independent kennel clubs in English speaking nations – Great Britain, the United States and Canada.

In England, the *Kennel Club*, founded in 1873 in London, had been in existence for half a century by the time the FCI began to prosper after WWI, and, just as they have remained largely aloof from continental Europe economically and diplomatically, the Brits have largely ignored the rest of the canine world, hiding behind excessively severe restrictions, based on the rabies threat, making importing difficult and dog show participation back and forth difficult. Denial was their specialty, referring to the German Shepherds as Alsatians for years in avoidance of directly recognizing the German origins.

In the overall scheme of things British institutions and breeds have played a minor role in the evolution of the modern police canine breeds and organizations; and are thus not especially important in the context of this book. It is true that there were efforts to establish a police and military canine presence in the first half of the twentieth century, based largely on the Airedale terrier. But these efforts came to very little and current British police canine operations are today based on European breeds and practice. Even the Airedales of early efforts were largely imported from the continent.

The primary importance of the British influence for our purposes is that American institutions and attitudes were strongly shaped by British influence, with the effect of delaying and weakening the emergence of police and military canine service in North America.

The Canadian Kennel Club is very similar to the AKC in terms of organization, programs and procedures. There is a great deal of cooperation and it is common practice to show dogs, compete in obedience trials and so forth across borders. Judges commonly function in either nation.

Schutzhund, French Ring and Mondio Ring have organizations parallel to those in America, and recognition of titles in is generally international, things are set up so that it makes little difference where you live or trial.

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March 13, 2014

[Angel's Lair All Breed](#)

[Angel's Lair Schutzhund](#)

[Police Dog Book](#)